Albert S. Lyons introducing tape:

This is March 22, 1969, in the Grand Ballroom of the Plaza Hotel, at the dinner dance of the Associated Alumni of the Mount Sinai Hospital. At the present time this is the first meeting of the combined association of the alumni of the Medical Center, in which the School and the Hospital are joined.

[At dinner]

Lyons: This is a substantial organization, and it has been very rich in membership. Great men have been on its rolls, and some who have not achieved renown have nevertheless contributed mightily to the society around them and to the communities in which they found themselves.

Also, all of the members of the Alumni Association sooner or later have contributed to that atmosphere which was a combination of scientific thinking and clinical practice, which gave eminence to Mount Sinai in this city and in other cities.

But none of us -- none of us -- can feel smug about being President because there have been so many in the succession. In the audience tonight, for instance, there are many past Presidents, and those who are not will certainly one day be President. So in that sense, I am proud to be a king among kings.

It also must be said that our past President, Ezra Greenspan, is leaving the office for a much more important and difficult job, that of overseeing the new alumni bulletin and newspaper. But it is his own fault, because it was really his idea to expand what had been before. Through his application it has come to fruition. And so I would say we all hold him a great debt of gratitude, for which a round of applause! [applause]

There are other leaders and officers of the Association in the audience whom I should mention. Our ship, for instance, has had a very skillful pilot who has carried us through. She has been responsible for having us all on a smooth course, and I think she should be mentioned. I hope that she will always be with us: Bella Trachtenberg. [applause]

Our ship has also had a herald [Beatrice Aufses] who has run up the flag even when the flag was small. She was the editor of the Alumni News when it was the sole means of communication with those outside. Now she continues her job in the expanded journal. She asked me tonight to request from all here,
and from all with whom you may have contact, please to write her news, personal and otherwise, of yourselves and families.

We have also had on our ship an anchor, an anchor for years, a man who has really been Mr. Mount Sinai Alumnus. He has really been the steadying force in the organization. I mention Elmer Gais. [applause]

Dr. Greenspan reminds me that I spoke about our herald, and I took it for granted that everyone knew that it was Beatrice Aufses. [applause]

Dr. Gais was Secretary-Treasurer for many years, and in the past year we have lightened his burden. That's to say we have removed the heavy part and left him the light part, the light part being the treasury; but the heavy part has fallen on the shoulders of Harvey Feinberg. Harvey Feinberg has started in a manner which augers well for the future as he is taking up the role that was held by Elmer Gais. A round of applause for our new Secretary! [applause]

The Vice-President in the course of events will become the President next year: Lester Gabrilove. [applause] I'm delighted to precede him, and I'm glad of the opportunity, for the only time in my life, I think that I'll be able to be ahead of him.

There are others that should be mentioned. The chairmen of committees, such as Max Ellenberg, Albert Cornell, Stanley Blaugrund, and not least, the chairman of the arrangements committee for this dinner dance, which he has performed so well for so many years: Robert Nabatoff. [applause] If there's anyone I've left out, please forgive me. Even the President of the United States forgot to mention the name of one of his cabinet members.

Now, just a word about the administration, the ruling class. First, the Chairman of the Board of the Hospital, Chairman of the Board of the Medical School, and Chairman of another minor board of which the name eludes me for the moment, Mr. Gus Levy! [laughter] We respect him for these positions, but we also have a closeness to him for his own sake and for his close ties to both the Hospital and to the School.

The medical director during these past decades will be introduced later. The new medical director is new only in that his position in the office is new. In June, he becomes the medical director, but he is an old friend to all of us for almost ten years: Dr. [S. David] Pomrinse. [applause]

Today we passed amendments which have made this association an association of both the Medical School and the Hospital, so that this is now the Associated Alumni of the Mount Sinai Medical Center. It's only fitting, therefore, that we have a word of greeting from the Dean, the President of the Medical Center, in fact, the boss: Dr. George James. [applause]

James: Thank you very much, Dr. Lyons.
James: Naturally, we who represent the new Medical School, the newest of Mount Sinai's ventures, we hope it will be one of the successful ones. We are very grateful to the Alumni for their vote of confidence in indicating that they would like all of us to be a part of one big family. And therefore, we of the Medical School are welcoming those of you who are members of the Medical Alumni of the Mount Sinai Hospital.

We pledge to you on our behalf that the newest venture of the Medical Center, the Medical School, will live up to the fine traditions which you of the Medical Alumni of Mount Sinai Hospital have maintained through the years. And any of us who look at people like George Baehr and Arthur Master and Dr. Snapper, Dr. Goldberger, Dr. (?), and the rest of you -- I only know those of you that I had the opportunity to meet very briefly tonight; so I'll mention that you're here -- we will live up to the traditions that you have set, and maintain the high standards that have made Mount Sinai a name to be proud of in the world. Anywhere that any of you go in the world, you will meet our alumni. We who represent the Medical School will do our utmost to maintain this.

Dr. Lyons, we are very proud to be here tonight. We are very proud to have a medical school, and we will see to it that in the years to come everyone who meets here will look to this medical school and say: Thank goodness that Mount Sinai has broadened its vistas, has truly developed the total program in a way that has made room for medical education. Thank you very much. [applause]

Lyons: Thank you, Dr. James.

Although we have increased our area of coverage now and our membership, we have also lost much in the past year. We have been diminished by the passing of good old friends. It is really in the Association that we -- all of us -- see the long, unbroken line, of which we are all part. Would you, when I read the names of those that we've lost in the past year, please stand and recognize them as in their honor and memory.


Having dealt with the past and the future, we now come to the present, the presentation of the Jacobi Medals. The presenters have been instructed to take three minutes, and the recipients, one minute, and so everybody can enjoy themselves.

I introduce first, for the first medal award, Dr. Ezra Greenspan.
Greenspan: Members of the Alumni Association and guests, this year the medallion committee has reached back to the old Mount Sinai Hospital to honor four of its outstanding physicians. These exceptional doctors demonstrate how the promise of our future is based upon our past. It is no coincidence that nine of the twenty-five medical interns coming to Mount Sinai this July will be from Harvard Medical School.

Tonight it is my unique privilege and pleasure to introduce the first medallion winner, a man whose professional life has spanned more than half a century of medicine. At the age of eighty, Dr. Isidore Snapper is still making his daily teaching rounds across the waters in Brooklyn, in vibrant defiance of the generation gap. His desire to teach is balanced by his insatiable desire to learn. Fifty years ago he was physician to the [Dutch] Queen, and the youngest professor of medicine in Europe. He is a man whose positions of teaching eminence have covered three continents: Professor of Medicine and General Pathology at the University of Amsterdam from 1919 to 1938; Professor of Medicine at the Peiping Union Medical College in China from 1939 to 1942; consultant to the War Department, the Office of the Surgeon General, from 1942 to 1944; and from 1944 to November of 1952, Director of Medical Education and Professor of Medicine at the Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Columbia University College of Physicians. Thereafter, he went to Cook County Hospital for a year as Director of Medical Education, and then at Bethel Hospital and the Bethel Medical Center, Brookdale Medical Center, for some twelve years. After presumable retirement, he built up a first-rate medical institution there, and presently is Consultant in Residence at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Brooklyn.

In the early Twenties, Dr. Snapper, with his inimitable dramatic style, was one of the first physicians to travel by airplane for consultations in various European countries. He also made his rounds as a famous international soccer referee, who often had to be more vigorous than the players themselves to maintain self protection as well as justice. [laughter] As a Japanese prisoner of war, he studied oriental medicine, and entertained and perhaps conned the Japanese with many of his "Snapperisms."

His contributions to the understanding of disease and disordered metabolism have been legion, resulting in five or more books and dozens and dozens of papers. He has inspired numerous academic and research-oriented physicians wherever he has made his presence felt, by printed word or in person.

Always a teacher, yet quick to learn from young or old; he chastised his students, but loved them, and they have done him honor. Under his tutelage, from 1944 to 1952, the Mount Sinai house staff brought forth an outstanding group of professors and research investigators too numerous to mention and too widely distributed to even summarize at this moment. It may be said that the sun never sets on a Snapper trained man somewhere around the world.
At the age of sixty-one Dr. Snapper's stay at Mount Sinai Hospital was abruptly terminated. They hadn't advanced the retirement age, and there had been some tragic deaths of close friends, his close friends: Dr. Bill Harris, and his secretary and devoted admirer, Miss Bertha Brenner. Dr. Snapper left Mount Sinai, and I must say that those of us who knew him felt a great loss to the institution.

But we remember his vivid portrayal at the bedside of the role of the doctor, and this is his indelible contribution to clinical medicine. As teacher, author, medical historian, and raconteur, he aroused unforgettable heights of brilliance, enlightenment and humor, never to be forgotten by those who observed him. He has become the embodiment of Snapperian medicine, once observed, never to be forgotten, and often to be mimicked.

Dr. Snapper, we wish you at least twenty more years of vigorous life, so that we can celebrate your hundredth together.

It is my pleasure to give you the Jacobi Medallion as a token of our esteem, Dr. Isidore Snapper--[applause]--physician--[prolonged applause]--physician extraordinaire!

Snapper: Mr. Chairman, my friend Dr. Greenspan, I am very much honored by this gracious gift, which I had never expected.

I know Mount Sinai longer, I think, than nearly everybody of you. My first contact with Mount Sinai was in 1914, when my teacher, Lennenberg, took me to London to the International Congress of Medicine, where Dr. [Emanuel] Libman presented his examination and demonstrated his preparation of subacute bacterial endocarditis. Many years have gone by, and among these years which have gone by, there have been the eight years when I was connected with this staff. In the course of the years, of course, since I left, many of the sharp angles have disappeared, and the picture I now have of Mount Sinai is like a picture of paintings painted by my famous compatriot, Rembrandt, who specialized in chiaroscuro. Therefore, I remember only one thing: the wonderful and the excellent house staff I had in that institution. As you know, I had many different assignments in my life; the best house staff I ever had was at The Mount Sinai Hospital. And as my friend Greenspan has already alluded to, eight of my residents are full professors in the United States, between Harvard in the north, and in south, Georgia in the south. This in itself already proves how many men I had who are absolutely outstanding. And I'm sure, now that Mount Sinai has become a medical school, a few of the men who have been left in the traffic, will now get the appropriate appreciation and the appropriate titles which they really deserve.

I've seen Mount Sinai being great in the time of clinical medicine, which has disappeared. I've seen Mount Sinai great in the time of molecular biology, which has disappeared. And I see Mount Sinai now great in the times of community medicine. I want it to go on record, that if there are all schools and all hospitals in this big city have not very good relationships with the
community, it is no complete coincidence that the one which has good relationships is the Mount Sinai. I, therefore, foresee a great future for The Mount Sinai Hospital in the future of medicine, which will be more community oriented than it's ever been. Thank you very much. [applause]

Lyons: I just want to correct an oversight. There were two names that I left out. They are, in fact, really officers, Members-at-Large in the Executive Committee. One who served this past year, Dr. Alan Barnert, and the one who served this year, Dr. Sam Elster. I would think that one of the reasons that they were chosen, in addition to their energy and their judgment, was also their distinguished appearance. At tables 10 and 12, Dr. Alan Barnert and Dr. Sam Elster. [applause]

The next Jacobi Medal [by] Dr. Albert Cornell.

Cornell: Ladies and gentlemen, and honored guests, tonight we are honoring another younger, who has given a full measure of many years of devoted service to our Hospital and community, and has also added to its great fame by his significant contributions to medicine. He, too, belongs to the old Mount Sinai, and to the days of the giants, as they were then known, when, among other things -- if I may digress in nostalgia a little -- there was no Klingenstein Pavilion, or Clinical Center, no Atran research building, no hyperbaric chamber, and no electron microscopes. There was no penicillin or Salk vaccine, no blood bank, no recovery room, no ICU’s, and no Bed Utilization Committee. Patients were kept in bed for two weeks after surgery, and it was still impossible to get a patient into [the] semi-private or private pavilion.

With this background in mind, let us get a profile of the highlights of the career of Gordon Oppenheimer, or Gordon, as we all affectionately know him. Gordon was born after the turn of the century, in June, 1900, a native of New York City. Gordon must have been a pretty good student, because after graduating Columbia College in 1919 at the age of fifteen and a half -- he was a young genius, apparently -- he was accepted by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which granted him his M.D. degree in 1922. He was eager to obtain a medical residency, but as the fickle finger of fate would have it, there was none open at Mount Sinai at the time. And when Dr. [A.A.] Berg called out his name and said "surgery," someone pushed him in the back and said, "Take it, you fool, take it." And that's how Gordon accepted this position in surgery, which lasted for two years.

However, he showed his mettle. His rise was rapid, and in 1929 he was appointed as Adjunct Surgeon, which today we know as Assistant Attending Surgeon. He also worked in the surgical clinic of the eminent urologist, Dr. Edwin Beer. For four years he was acting Associate in surgery under the service of the late Dr. John Garlock. Thus, he became well trained, and excellent both as a general surgeon, but also as a urologist. In his own modest, quiet way he carried the burdens of running a service during World War II, and in the absence of his chief, Dr. Garlock, when demands outside the hospital were almost as great as those inside. His work was recognized, however, when he was...
appointed Director of Urology, and he served with distinction until his retirement in March of 1963. Since then he has been Director Emeritus and Consulting Urologist, continuing his work in the same unassuming manner, a true gentleman of the old school.

Now, as for his contributions to medicine, he has published sixty-nine scientific papers, in addition to his teaching rounds in training the younger men. His major contribution, however, came after serving as a volunteer in pathology as a young man, from 1927 to 1931, under Dr. Paul Klemperer and the late Dr. [Sadō] Otani. A number of resected specimens had come down for examination from the operating room service of Dr. A. A. Berg. Working with Dr. Leon Ginzburg, who was then surgical assistant to Dr. Berg, they both did considerable research in the study of intestinal granulomas, which they found were inflammatory lesions, and not due to tuberculosis or malignancy, as had been previously suspected. They collaborated with Dr. Burrill Crohn, who had referred some of these original cases for surgery. In June, 1932, at a meeting of the American Medical Association in New Orleans, they reported the new clinical pathological entity of regional enteritis, better known to most of us as ileitis. This landmark in medicine has helped increase the reputation of Mount Sinai Hospital as a world famous center for the study and treatment of this and allied diseases in gastroenterology.

In closing, I shall not mention all the leading medical, surgical and urological societies which have honored him with membership. I should mention, though, that at one time -- Gordon mentioned this at the last minute -- that he was a medical officer with the fire department and served the community in that way.

Gordon, we hereby gratefully acknowledge your past services, and great contribution, in bringing added glory and fame to our hospital. It gives me great personal pleasure, on behalf of the Mount Sinai Medical Center Alumni Association, to present this Jacobi Medal as a token of our appreciation. [applause]

Oppenheimer: Mr. Chairman, Dr. Cornell, ladies and gentlemen, I'm very grateful, thankful, for this expression of what I take to be your friendship -- this is mutual -- and your esteem.

In going through my records, there was just one little mistake. I really wasn't that much of a genius. I entered college at fifteen and a half; you advanced me a little bit.

But I'm grateful to Mount Sinai for the opportunity it gave me to serve, to learn, and I'm also very grateful to a Mount Sinai graduate, who helped me through everything: my wife. Thank you very much. [applause]

Lyons: For the next presentation, Dr. Samuel Peck.
Ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I accepted the assignment to present our distinguished award to my old friend, Joseph Harkavy, truly a young man in spirit, who first became associated with Mount Sinai in 1914. He spent the next four years at the Hospital as an intern and Admitting Physician. As was usual in those days, this was followed by postgraduate studies in Europe. He then returned to Mount Sinai to serve our institution for the next forty years or more, mainly in the field of allergy. At present, he is the Consultant Allergist to the Hospital.

He's had numerous prominent positions, not only as the head of the allergy service at Mount Sinai, but at the Montefiore Hospital as well. At various stages of his career he was an Associate Professor of Medicine at New York Medical College, and Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia.

Joe Harkavy, early in his career, reached an eminent position in his chosen specialty. His peers recognized his great contributions to allergy by electing him President of the New York Allergy Society in 1947, and Vice-President of the American Academy of Allergy in 1954. He served with distinction in the United States Army Medical Corps in 1918 and '19, and as a medical consultant to the Selective Service System in World War II. His honorary memberships in foreign allergy societies are numerous and distinguished. He has published more than sixty papers on various aspects of allergy, and is at present on the editorial board of the Annals of Allergy.

There is little time for me to give details of his scientific contributions, many of importance not only to his specialty, but to medicine as a whole. But I cannot close without pointing out that he was the true pioneer in studying the relationship of tobacco allergy and its role in disease. Of special importance was his contribution to knowledge of the role of tobacco allergy in cardiovascular disease. He has long documented its role, not only in Buerger's disease, and other peripheral vascular diseases, but also in cardiac diseases and coronary artery disease in particular. His great contribution was the evidence, both clinical and experimental, in which he demonstrated that it is not nicotine which directly causes these disease states, but tobacco as an antigen, giving rise to an allergic state, which plays the important role as a causative and contributing factor.

His personal and scientific career has added luster not only to himself, but to Mount Sinai Hospital and its alumni, making him truly deserving of this distinguished award. [applause]

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to express my appreciation for this great honor. Whatever I have accomplished is the result of the opportunities offered to me by our great institution and the stimulus of its distinguished staff. Thank you very much. [applause]

I'd like to read a telegram before introducing the next presentation:
This message is to express my sincere regrets in not being able to attend the annual Alumni dinner, to be present when the much coveted Jacobi Medals are presented to those whose achievements have brought added distinction to Mount Sinai.

Having worked so closely for so many years with Martin Steinberg, I would have liked particularly to pay him special tribute. His unique ability to weld a huge and diverse group of professional and lay personnel into a composite and viable whole has enabled Mount Sinai to grow substantially in every sense, and further enhance the great reputation of our great institution.

My heartiest congratulations and best wishes to each of the honorees.

Mr. Joseph Klingenstein. [applause]

Lyons: I call upon Dr. Solomon Silver to make the next presentation.

Silver: Fellow alumni, guests, this is the third occasion on which I have had the pleasure of presenting a Jacobi Medallion to distinguished sons of the Hospital. The first was to the beloved Dr. Eli Moschcowitz, my chief; some time later, to my dear friend, Dr. Lester Tuchman.

It is now my pleasure to present a Medallion to a friend of all of us. It is somewhat more difficult to speak about a man whose contributions are not in the clinical area, although he was originally trained as a clinician and holds, is a diplomate of the Board of Otolaryngology, which some of you may not even know -- but who has devoted, by far, the greatest part of his professional career as a medical administrator.

Well, medical administrators to practicing physicians hardly are, in general, in a state of good rapport. The average practicing physician, a hospital physician, looks upon the administration as something that's always in his way, making rules and regulations that make his life difficult, and perhaps even somewhat derogatory towards their contributions because they are not, strictly speaking, medical, in a limited sense of the word.

But those of us who have been associated with Martin over all these years -- during this period of phenomenal change, not only in the community as a whole, but in medicine, and more specifically, in the Hospital. He has seen, from 1946, I guess, until the present time, a complete change in the Hospital. He has seen a revolution in medical care, a transformation of a directly clinically oriented hospital to a hospital deeply involved in research, and now a hospital which will form one of the elements in a medical center, which we all hope will be as distinguished as the hundred and twenty-five odd years of the Hospital's history, and we are sure that it will.

Now in this transition, many of us do not realize the role played by the administrator: the balancing of forces, the keeping of the hospital as an entity,
and not having other areas of the center move in and diminish the importance of the hospital. He has done this wisely and well, and has created a great body of loyal and proud associates. It is not an easy task, and he has done it with distinction.

I have a rather simple rule in the Hospital about trying to place people and categorize people: I speak to Bella Trachtenberg. She's been there longer than all of us, and in her book, he's a great guy. This is okay for me, too, and I am sure for most of you.

His career in medical administration has been distinguished. He has been a leader in the profession. He has played a role in organizing much of the medical care in this state and in this city. He has been active in establishing a relationship between organizations like Blue Cross and other third-party people, who now play such a tremendous role in the financing of the Hospital.

I'm sure, over these years, he has become a modified financier, accountant, judge, and I don't know what other functions he has to perform. But I have dealt with him, and many of you have dealt with him on many occasions, and some of these were rather difficult problems. We've always found him understanding, realistic, and able to see the other fellow's point of view. He has, I think, for an administrator, developed a tremendous group of friends, and this is not easy. Think for a moment that in the past sixty years or so Mount Sinai has only had three hospital administrators. There was Dr. [S.S.] Goldwater; there was Dr. [Joseph] Turner, and then Martin Steinberg. Now this speaks well, I think, for the Hospital; it speaks well for the fact that the Board of Trustees have been wise in their choices, as we all know that they have been. And I hope that his successor will have as long a term of service as his predecessor. I don't want to make Dr. James unhappy, but I don't think you could look anywhere in the country and find deans who had such a prolonged tenure of service. [Laughter] I am sure, however, that as the tenure of service of the Directors of The Mount Sinai Hospital has been unique, the tenure of service of the dean will be as unique. We all hope for that.

He has led us through difficult times, through the times when a bed in Guggenheim was $8 to $12, to the time when a bed in Guggenheim is $100 to $125, if you can get it. This has not been easy, and this has caused rumbles of discontent on the parts of people. But I can assure you that Martin is as aware of the problems in financing hospital care as any of us are, and he is interested in correcting it, as many of us are, and he is aware of certain of the inequities that go in to make up hospital care. This is not the place to discuss them, but he knows them and he is working assiduously to see that some more equitable arrangement can be made so that hospitalization does not impoverish people, as unfortunately now it must.

He has been farseeing in all these ways, and I know that he will continue to be of service, not only to the Hospital and to the community, but in a much wider sense, to the whole medical complex. I think it is a privilege for us
to have had him for all these years, and we look forward to having the benefit of his advice for many years to come.

Martin, it is a pleasure for me to give you this medallion. [applause]

Steinberg: Thank you, Sol, for those very kind words, most of them undeserved, but they are very nice to listen to.

I -- you've honored me greatly. As a matter of fact, I feel a little bit embarrassed because it really should be the other way around: justly, you should be up here and I should be down there with the medal, because you've done so much for me, so much more for me than I ever could do for you.

I came to the Hospital about twenty-four years ago, with a little experience in Army medical centers and not much distinction. I was an otolaryngologist, and I used to think that that was some kind of a distinction; I find now that that belief is rather unpopular. However, my first day at the Hospital was a very significant point for me, because, I remember I walked up into the clinics and I walked into what was then the TAO clinic, the [unintelligible], and then by the late Dr. Silbert, and I said to them:

"I'm Dr. Steinberg; I'm with the administration. I'm new. What can I do for you?"

He said: "Excuse me." He left me, and in about a minute he was back with the whole staff. He introduced them. Now he said: "Dr. Steinberg, would you mind repeating that, what you said?"

And I said: "I wasn't aware that I said anything."

"Well," he said, "Now that's interesting. Well, you did say something, try to think."

And I did, and then: "What I said was, what can I do for you?"

So he said to the men in the clinic: "Did you ever think you'd get that kind of a statement in a clinic at Mount Sinai from the administration?"

He was really amazed, and I thought he was putting me on, but he wasn't; this really touched him. And my heart went out to these men, to think that just this little statement of "What can I do for you?" brought such an emotional response, and I realized then, although I might not be able to contribute a great deal in administration, I could certainly give a little warmth [laughter]. And through the years, although we've had times when some of you have not agreed as to tactics, we've always agreed as to goals. I've never had a day, practically never had an instance, where there wasn't warmth and friendship and cooperation.
And this is what I feel has been the most remarkable thing. These are twenty-four remarkable years. I shall treasure every day of it, and it's all because of you; you've been a remarkable group to me. I've never conceived that you could get so much warmth in a body of men, and a body of distinguished men, because I realized before I got to Mount Sinai that you are a very distinguished body. Before arriving I knew all about you, and I knew that you had stood the test of tremendous filtering to get into medical school; an even worse one to get into an internship and residency; and I knew what it meant to become an adjunct, so that I knew that you were a distinguished group. But what I appreciated most, however, was the warmth and the friendship which I've gotten through the years. I feel as though, you know, here I've had all of this, you know, and heaven too, and now this Jacobi Medal. I will ever be in your debt, and I want to thank each of you. [applause]

Lyons: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. On with the dance.

[End of recording]