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William Strain

Valilyan Strain

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: William S. and Valilyan Strain

INTERVIEWER: Rebecca Craver

PROJECT: History of U. T. El Paso

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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Dr. Strain was Museum Director 1937-46, and geology professor until 1974.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Experiences during World War II; fossil hunting on Mt. Cristo Rey amid U.S. machine gun nests; Charlie Steen, "The Uranium King"; definition of "Peedoggies"; Cap. Kidd; interesting and amusing recollections of campus life; faculty members who came to El Paso for their health; teaching load.

Length of Interview: 1 hour, 40 minutes Length of Transcript: 49 pages

C: Okay, let's start at the beginning of your experience at the College here. What was your first position?

W: I came in 1937, in August 1937, as a director of the Museum and an instructor in Geology. I taught Geology laboratories, and ran the Museum as a combined sort of thing. I had the Museum job until 1946; and in the fall of '46 I took a leave of absence, went to Stanford University to work on a Doctor's Degree. But I found I couldn't afford it out there financially, so I came back in mid-semester and went into the Engineering Department for that spring. While I was gone they employed someone else, I think Colonel Thomason actually, to run the Museum, and I never returned to the Museum at all. But the following fall, I transferred back into the Geology Department. I was an Assistant Professor of Engineering for just one semester, and then I went back to the Geology Department and I remained there until I retired in '74.

V: Not only could you not afford Stanford University, but you couldn't find a place to live.

W: I was going to school on a shoestring, so to speak, at Stanford. The only place I could find out there where I could bring my wife and daughter, who was young at the time, was \$150 a month, which was just an exorbitant amount in those days. So, I gave it up and came back. Later I went to the University of

Texas at Austin in 1955 and stayed there from 1955 to '58; completed the residency requirements; then, I wrote my thesis after I got back here. I finished the thesis and finally got my degree in August 1964. It's a terrible job to try to teach and do a Ph.D., I tell you. A lot of people do it but it's the wrong way to do it. It's so taxing to try to teach a full load, and to carry on your responsibilities that you have in addition to that around school, and try to write a thesis, too.

C: Yeah, it's pretty tough.

W: It sure really is tough.

C: Terrie Cornell told me about some of your experiences during the war when you were here, I would like to hear some of the details.

W: Well, I don't remember what I told Terrie now.

C: Well, what did you do during the war?

W: During the war, in addition to my duties in Geology, I independently studied civil air regulations and got certified by the Civil Aeronautics Authority to be a ground student instructor in aviation. And so I taught aviation ground school courses here along with the Geology. I would teach geology all day and teach some at night. And then I also taught a course in Engineering Drawing. The University had two or three contracts of different kinds with the government. We had one contract with the airlines, I guess it was, in which we

taught prospective airline pilots, and I had a class with those. One of the fellows I remember that was in there was a prominent businessman. He was Roy Chapman. Then we had the STP Program they called it, a program to teach soldiers drawing and various other things. So I taught about two or three different things all along, during the same period of time.

C: Terrie was saying something about your going out to gather fossils at Cristo Rey during the war?

W: Out at Cristo Rey, yeah, they had guards on the railroad bridges over here.

C: Why?

W: Because we were so close to Mexico that they feared planes might fly in from the West Coast or down in Mexico and bomb those bridges. Well, if they did that, they would destroy all the East-West traffic across the southern United States. And the Santa Fe Railroad runs north and south through here, and it would have blocked all that traffic. Well, with Fort Bliss being a very important military base, including Biggs Field over here, there was a tremendous amount of rail traffic in and out, moving troops and bringing in equipment. So these bridges really were very important targets. They had machine gun nests all around and observation posts so that if any plane flew over, it would be identified. Any person who went out there had to identify himself. I found

some little corals out there before the War, and I wanted to go back to the locality to see if I could find some more. They had a command post down across the street from the cement plant, right on the road there. I went down there and talked to the Corporal and he called the officer of the guard. They finally told me I could go up to the place I wanted to go, which was around Cristo Rey Road. There was another machine gun nest up there, and I reported to those fellows and told them what I wanted to do. Now, I went down about two hundred yards or so to reach the locality I wanted to go to. All the time I felt like I was looking right down the barrel of a machine gun.

C: I don't think I'd want to do that! Did the townspeople know about it?

W: Oh, sure, everybody knew those troops were over there guarding those bridges.

C: Val, what do you remember about war activities for the women? Did you roll bandages or some such?

V: Well, no, I didn't roll bandages. I think we began with "Bundles for Britain," as I recall. I got roped into playing bridge and you paid to play and that money went to buy things to send to Britain. There were sharp bridge players, and I've never been a sharp bridge player. I remember the ones who looked over your cards and said, "Oh, my dear, you should have played your ace."
(laughs) I served on the Tire Rationing Board and

finally I took a civil service job on the Gasoline Rationing Board and then sugar rationing. Towards the end of the war, we both were civil service. It was not much fun to tell a man with several children and his wife trying to get from here to there that he could buy only two Grade III tires, which meant that they were practically, you know...

W: They were retreads, weren't they?

V: Oh, all were retreads, but Grade III was the retreadiest (laughs). It felt like you were putting them out on the road... It was just really kind of heartbreaking. You heard all the sorrowful tales.

C: After the war was over, how did the student body change?

W: Oh, my stars! We were swamped, of course, with people going to school on the G.I. Bill. And it was the best group of students we ever had. Those people had been out in the world, and they'd come back to school and they knew why they were here and what they wanted. And they got in there and got after it. We had some awfully fine students. Some of these people now are prominent. They're presidents and vice presidents of oil companies and mining companies and this, that, and the other. They were a fine group of people. They had the intelligence to start with, but they had motivation when they came back. And, it was the best group of students we ever had at this university.

C: Do any certain names stand out?

V: George McBride?

W: Yeah, George is one of them. George McBride, who is a retired oil man, now lives here, lives out there in Pinehurst. George "flew the hump" in China during the war, and he is one of the people I remember quite well. An outstanding student. Offhand I can't remember any others; I just have to look up the names. Over the years I've taught so many people that the classes sort of get out of focus. They all sort of merge, you know, when you look back down the line; and when I go to one of our ex-student meetings, well, I have to have the people identify themselves before I really get it in focus.

C: I heard there was a Vet Village?

W: There was.

C: And where?

W: The vets and their village were down there where the dormitories are now, the multi-story dormitories, and about where some of the tennis courts are, just south of there.

C: Behind the Museum?

W: Yeah, in that area. They had a bunch of old barrack that they got. I guess they finally gave it to us; I'm not sure, but we got them cheaply in any case. And they transported them over to the campus and made housing apartments for married students. They also

brought some old two-story, barracks-type buildings and put them on the campus where the present Fine Arts Center is. They had two of those sitting in there, and they were used for classrooms. Physics had some classes in there, psychology had classes, and I don't remember the others right now. But they were wooden structures. Everybody was scared to death they'd burn down. Fortunately, they didn't. But a lot of the people going to school on the G. I. Bill lived down there in those old apartments, and they served us very well for a number of years. As a matter of fact, I don't believe they destroyed them until they built the apartments up on the north side of campus, across from the old gym. Another good student after war was Colonel Thomas. He was the nephew of Gene Thomas who was the Dean of Engineering for a long time. Colonel Thomas was a mining engineer, but in those days the mining engineers had to take so much geology that we made very little distinction between whether they were engineers or geologists. And to this day, many of them come to our homecoming breakfast rather than go to the Engineering Department breakfast. For various reasons some of them feel closer to us and so they all would come to our functions. Johnny Hanes is one who was there at this past Homecoming. He's awfully good about coming. He was one of the boys who was here before the war and came back. Johnny was a

bomber pilot. He is now with the Internal Revenue Service. He's a mining engineer, and he inspects mining properties, evaluates mining properties where people are trying to charge off this, that, and the other on an income tax.

V: Well, he had his own business for many, many years so he is quite capable of evaluating...

W: Well, he worked for Charle Steen for a long, long time in South America. Charlie Steen, I'm sure you know, is one of our old illustrious graduates of some fame, to say the least. He discovered uranium up in Utah and developed a national reputation. And he was selected Outstanding Ex, and of course the Outstanding Ex made a speech, which was customary. But his speech was little off color, to say the least, so he got quite a reputation.

C: After that, you mean?

W: Yeah. He had been using some rather common, ordinary, mining-type terms which you don't usually hear in polite society.

V: Charlie was aggravated because they changed the name of the school.

W: You see, they had changed the name of the school, and Charlie and others who had gone to school here were terribly upset about it because they felt that we had had a fine reputation as a mining school all over the world. And they felt the school had lost its identity

when they changed the name /to Texas Western/. And then when they did away with the mining program, that capped the _____ and we lost a lot of loyal ex-student support. Some of them haven't supported us to this very day. Some of them have forgiven everybody and come back to support us, but we lost a lot of support.

C: Well, when was that? When Liberal Arts started kind of moving in?

W: Well, Liberal Arts started moving in before World War II. They were just sort of an adjunct, so to speak, to support the mining engineers. The way this thing was written, it was the School of Mines. And then the town grew and people who couldn't afford to go or didn't want to go away would come to school out there, and they wanted a broader program. One thing that brought about the name change is a lot of people who graduated out there, like Val, wanted their degrees recognized in a different way from that of a mining school. They had liberal arts backgrounds. They felt that with a liberal arts background, a degree with a mining school didn't give them the recognition they should have. So, that side of the campus outgrew the mining people because you never have very many mining engineers. So, that was the reason the tail got to wagging the whole school, and so they changed the name then. That

precipitated an ill feeling to begin with. Then Dr. Ray did away with the mining school entirely, because the number of enrollees dropped to a point where it wasn't economical to keep the program going. And rather than play along with the situation and support the school for a time until enrollment picked up, he just did away with the program entirely. Of course, that upset a tremendous number of people. And it wasn't very long after that until we had such a dearth of mining engineers in this country, that they were flying in mining engineers, students, graduate students, from Germany to interview over here for American jobs. The oil business the mining business, both are, of course, tied to the economy. They go through kind a cycle, like this: It peaks when there's lot's of activity and then it drops off when there's very little activity, and then it goes up again. Right now the oil business is in one of these sags, but it will go back up some, I guess. The real heyday, I expect, of the petroleum industry is gone in this country 'cause we jsut about explored all of our avilable territory. But, anyway, that's beside the point. The mining business was in one of these sags, and so Dr. Ray did away with the program.

V: Well, I would like to clarify that I had no objection to having a degree from the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy since my major was geology. And I suppose

I'm one of the few people in the world who has a Bachelor of Arts and of Sciences.

W: We had a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Science Degrees in Geology in those days.

V: I got my Bachelor of Science degree in Geology in 1940. It was a Bachelor of Arts in the Sciences, and you'd get your Bachelor of Science in Mining, in Geology, or something like that. But I was studying petroleum naturally. I did most of my work at OU, so I ended up at Norman with about 45 hours to go.

C: Oh, that's where my husband got his doctorate. We lived in Norman.

W: I was going to school over there. She was a freshman.

V: A sophomore.

C: You said you taught some Engineering classes?

W: Well, I taught Engineering Drawing. That's the only engineering course that...

C: Did you participate in some of the Saint Patrick's Day activities?

W: Oh, yeah. Most everybody did in those days, anybody on our side of the green line, you know...the west side of the campus.

C: Now, tell me about the green line. Where did it go?

W: Oh, it went from over by Quinn Hall. Do you know where Quinn Hall is? Across there out to the fence, the rock wall, about there. It just cut off the mining engineering, engineering, and geology parts of the campus from the other

side, which they called Peedoggies. Cap Kidd, I think, invented that term "Peedoggie." Anyone who was not an engineer was a Peedoggie. (laughs)

C: Do you know when that green line originated?

W: No, I don't. I don't think they started naming it until they changed the name. I think that's the first time they started painting the line, after they had changed the name.

C: Was that a reaction to the name change?

W: They were trying to maintain their old spirit and identity and so they started painting the green line. I think they quit it. I don't believe they have painted in recent years, maybe they have, I don't know.

C: I think they have some green lines all over campus, but they don't divide the campus.

W: Yeah, well, this was a double green line that was supposed to divide the two parts of the campus.

C: And what went on? I mean, did they paint it in the middle of the night?

W: Yeah, they painted it at night. They'd take a bunch of kids out there and they'd paint that line. If you went out at night, you'd see everybody with a paint brush. And either the guards didn't see it or didn't want to see it, so they didn't have any problems painting it.

C: But none of the administrations tried to crack down on it?

W: Oh, no, there wasn't any point in it, really, and I'm not too sure...well, that some of the people in the administration thought it was a good thing to build school spirit,

and so forth. I don't know, but it didn't hurt anything, just a green line in the street.

C: What about some of the other activities associated with Saint Patrick's Day?

W: Well, they always used to go up to Oro Grande and have their initiations in the mines, up in the old abandoned mines at Oro Grande. And of course they did all sort of things. They made them eat various things that weren't palatable, you know, and sometimes they painted them with green paint. They would always set off dynamite on the hills around the campus, about five o'clock in the morning, to start Saint Pat's. And they got a lot of complaints about that after they built the hospital. They frightened the patients over there. And that calmed down a little bit. Then, I think what maybe finally capped it for us was they got off a pretty good shot in behind Old Main, over on that hill, and it was a little overdone and knocked out a bunch of their windows. I think that's the last time we ever shot the dynamite. Well, the police caught them a time or two, boys with dynamite in the cars, and they thought it was pretty dangerous, which it was. Well, on the other hand, they'd say the kids would get hurt, but they forgot that these students took courses in explosives. They knew what they were doing because a lot of them got out and went to work doing that. And a number of them helped Cap Kidd. And Cap Kidd was an explosives expert to the extent that he blasted out rocks under Old Main

while they continued to have classes in them. And nobody, as far as I know, ever stopped a class.

C: He must have really been an expert!

W: Oh, he was! Cap was a real good "powder monkey," as they called them in the mining business. I never heard of anything getting away from Cap to the point that it did any damage. Bert Haigh will probably talk about that 'cause Bert helped him some. But these kids were pretty expert in handling explosives, dynamite at least.

V: Have you interviewed Bert?

C: We have him on tape.

W: I've got a tape of Bert that I interviewed.

C: Really?

W: I wrote a history of our department, real small, short history of our department. You may have seen a copy.

C: No.

W: But, anyway, I interviewed Bert to get some information for that and I have it on tape.

C: Well, I would be interested in hearing it.

W: Do you want to borrow my duplicate? Or, say I think I could just give it to you people.

C: That would be great.

W: Wouldn't really do me any good in the future. I'm going to see if I can find it. It's one side of this tape; the other side doesn't have anything on it. I have Bert Haigh twenty minutes on here.

C: Well, thank you.

W: You might race through that thing to see what it sounds like and maybe you won't want it. It does have Bert's voice and some of his comments.

C: Well, I'll bet you know the alligator story.

W: Oh, yeah, I was standing behind Dr. Quinn the morning he opened the door.

C: Oh, I've got to hear this!

W: Well, the kids were always playing jokes on Dr. Quinn. He always carried on a running banter with them, and of course they'd do their best to get even with him somewhere. So, they put this alligator...they went down to the Plaza and got an alligator about six feet long and put him in his office overnight. When Dr. Quinn came in the next morning, I had a question I wanted to ask him; so, I met him at his door and he opened the door and here was this big ole alligator's mouth going "crsssshhh," like this. So, he jumped back! So did the rest of us. And the alligator then started trying to get under his desk. Dr. Quinn had a very expensive microscope sitting out on the corner of the desk, and he was afraid the alligator would knock it off and break it. So, he slammed the door and called the authorities and they sent the Park people out. The Park people tied the alligator up, hauled him off back to the park.

C: What do you remember hearing about who did it?

W: Well, I know some of the boys who did it.

C: Would you like to disclose their identities? (Laughter)

W: Not on your life!

W: The kids pulled a lot of pranks in those days. They engineered quite a few things around campus, but their initiations were always a bit colorful. They'd dress up the boys in all sorts of outlandish getups and they'd send 'em downtown to beg...to try to catch a carp in a pond down there that they had with the alligators and fry them and so forth. Some of the APO's were mixed up in the stunt. They had one boy, an APO who was a geology student, Herbert Tune. Herbert could play the guitar a little bit. So, when they initiated him, they gave him a guitar, his guitar, put some dark glasses on him, and put him downtown with a tin cup. They had him walking up and down the streets singing, you know, these songs. Anyway, they collected quite a bit of money. Every time he'd get a little money in his cup...half full or something...why the upper classman would go take the money out and duck into the nearest beer joint and have a beer. Somebody saw this and turned them into the police, and they arrested 'em for robbing a blind man. (Laughter) And that sort of thing was pretty common.

V: I remember when we first came. We came from the University of Oklahoma, which was fairly formal, especially since it had just discovered oil. A lot of people that were going to school had a good deal of money, and, so, there was a great deal formality on the campus, some of

it quite specious. But we went to an assembly out here shortly after we came. It was in Holliday Hall. Well, they said the Faculty Quartet was going to sing. And they got up there, and they did sing. It was very nice. Sonnichsen and Berkman.

W: Dr. Sonnichsen, Dr. Berkman; I don't remember the other two.

V: I'm not sure who they were, but, at any rate, the kids tossed pennies at them.

W: Oh, Forrest Agee was one of them, and the other one... I don't remember the forth.

V: But, here they were tossing pennies. Well, you know, where we had been going to school, if you tossed a penny at a professor, you might as well say "goodbye degree." And here they were just pitching them out.

C: And the Quartet was loving it?

W & V: Oh, yeah!

W: They had a big time.

V: Yes, such a good time.

W: Things were formal here, to a degree, when we got here. For Instance, when we had a faculty party, Dr. Jenness was the social chairman, and Dr. Jenness was quite formal. And when we had a faculty party, why the ladies wore long dresses, and the men wore tuxedos...dinner jackets. Oh, yeah.

C: Where were the parties held?

W: Oh, we'd have them over in Worrell Hall, I guess, which

was a girls' dormitory and had a dining room downstairs. We'd have them in there. Occasionally, we'd have it at somebody's house, as I recall. But I remember them over there, on occasions. But he, Jenness always wanted you to dressed up. And we did!

C: Was he self-appointed social chairman?

W: Oh, I suppose Dr. Wiggins appointed him. I don't know. He, Jenness, like to do that kind of thing. People would even dress up for dinner at his own house. Val and I went with his wife Amy and...

V: It was Mrs. G. Winter Smith.

W: Yeah, Mrs. G. Winter Smith. Amy and Mrs. G. Winter Smith were interested in archaeology. Of course I was running the Museum at the time, so, one day the two ladies and Val and I went on a digging expedition out here at Davis Dome. Well, I had my old field boots...we were dressed in field clothes, you know. Came back, why, Dr. Jenness was waiting for us. He wanted us to have dinner. He was all dressed up in his tuxedo, you know.

V: He insisted that we stay and we were just mortified. I can't tell you how uncomfortable I was. It was this beautiful table, laid with nice crystal, silver, the works, and you expected the butler to pop out any moment. And here we were, all sandy and dirty. And we couldn't go home to change; we lived clear on the other side of town.

W: They were living over on Fort Blvd.

V: But, they were charming. He was a charming man.

W: Yeah, he was one of the people who came to El Paso with tuberculosis. Mrs. Jenness brought him to Alpine, Texas, on a stretcher. And they lived in a tent. He was in the Navy, and I guess he retired with a health handicap of some kind, well, tuberculosis, and she brought him to Alpine, and lived in a tent there for some time. And he regained his health, and they came to El Paso. And they hired him at the University, the College of Mines, as a school doctor. The interesting thing about it is... as far as I'm concerned is...he lived to be ninety-six, I think it was. Way up in his nineties! Yeah, it's very interesting. So many people came here--Miss Egner on our staff had tuberculosis, as I understand it, and came to El Paso for that reason. Cap Kidd had it. Cap had a funny voice, peculiar little high-pitched voice. So I've been told, the disease affected his voice, but he came here for his health, so I understand it.

V: Lived to a ripe old age.

W: Yeah, Cap, why when he died, he was still teaching. But, anyway, many, many of them regained their health after they came here. Dr. Jenness is a shining example of someone who came out here expecting to die, was near death really, and lived up to be, well, in his nineties.

C: Well, the campus by now looked a lot different, and there were sorority houses right there on the campus.

V: When we first came there were no sororities.

C: When did they come?

V: Gosh, I don't know.

W: It must have been, you know, after World War II. Couldn't have built 'em during World War II, and they didn't built them before that. They really didn't have time, I don't think.

V: Have you talked to Mary Quinn?

C: No, I haven't yet.

V: She sponsored Tri Delta, I believe. Did Fay Nelson sponsor Chi Omega?

W: I don't remember. The last I saw here, her health is good and her mind is good. Fay could help you with a lot of the older stuff 'cause Fay goes way back. I don't know when Fay and Speedy got married; I suppose maybe 1918-'19. Now, Speedy was one of the first students, you know, and after he graduated, he went to Mexico for a period to work in the mines down there. And then the man who was teaching geology...I can't remember whether it was Arthur K. Adams or a man by the name of Byelaster... left to go to war. Speedy came to take his place and stayed--it was 1918--and stayed until he retired.

V: Well, you know, even when we came in '37 the faculty was so small that you could know each other and did have those parties. The place is too big now. You're lucky if you know the people in your department.

C: Did the faculty have picnics?

W: Yeah, we did. We had picnics. I remember one we had at Hueco Tanks, in later years. And we had some other picnics.

V: Christmas parties. I remember we had a "White Elephant" party at Christmas not too many years ago. Remember, Soler didn't know what a white elephant was so he took one of his beautiful boxes? And we scrambled like mad, trying to...it was one of those things where you pass it, you know, and the music stops and you get what you...and they try to stick you with the worst. And everybody fought. Oh, my golly. But I remember that.

C: Well, during the fifties the social life on campus sort of revolved around the greeks, didn't it?

W: As far as students were concerned? Or faculty? I guess it probably did because they are the ones who had parties, things going on, and so forth, whereas the nongreek group really didn't have that kind of thing. They had lots of students dances.

C: Well, that's what I was going to ask you. Where would they be?

W: After they got the first section of the student union, they were in the ballroom. It's still a ballroom up there, the old section; that's where they had the dances. Prior to that time, most of the functions were in, as I recall, downtown hotels, the ballrooms down there. (Pause) I think that's right. I could be...

C: Well, sometimes they had them in the country club.

W: Well, I think that's true.

W: When we came here, Dr. Wiggins was living down on Montana Street. The place has been remodeled...into an apartment house. Well, we used to go down there, I recall, for the Sun Carnival. We were well up above the street. We had a nice open lawn, and the faculty would all go down there. 'Course they'd have coffee and donuts and stuff, and we'd sit out there and watch the Sun Carnival. And then they bought the old house just across the street, south from the present student union. It was a homestead in there. I don't remember who owned it. At one time it had been a house of ill repute.

C: I heard that.

W: And, uh, the university bought it and when they did, they moved the president up to that house. I guess they they bought Hoover House and tore down that old house and built the present Liberal Arts Building.

C: So that house you're talking about, that house of ill repute, was where the Liberal Arts Building is now?

W: Yeah, Liberal Arts sits on the site.

C: Well, let's talk about your years in the Museum.

W: Well, when I came, it was just really the bare walls. I was the first curator they had. We had very few exhibits. Most everything had been donated, except the mineral collections. The department had gotten together a rock and mineral

collection which at one time was housed in the basement, the lower first floor, of Old Main. And, uh, it was moved over then to the Centennial Museum. I started gathering up bones, of course, for that kind of collection. We made some dioramas, wild life, natural history-type things. And then from time to time people gave us historical-type things. But there was what was called the El Paso Pioneer Association that had a collection of things. When the state of Texas gave the money--when the money became available to El Paso--\$50,000, for a museum, for a Texas Centennial, there was a great squabble went on about how to spend the money. And the City wouldn't take it; wouldn't agree to perpetuate; the County wouldn't take it, wouldn't agree to perpetuate; the Pioneer Society had a collection, they'd like to have it but they couldn't agree to perpetuate, so the University, College of Mines, agreed to perpetuate. So that's how it got out there. And it belonged to the City of El Paso as a Centennial Memorial. In later years, I understand that the City, I guess...yes, it must have been the City...who had theoretically owned it, traded it to the University for some other considerations--I think, maybe, some land. This was during the time, if my memory serves me correctly, Jud Williams was mayor. I can't remember who our president was at that time. Anyway, it now belongs to the University. But, we didn't have much money to run the Museum when I was over there. My maximum annual

budget was \$2,000, a little over \$2,000. And I had to hire students for janitors. I hired these students to clean the building: they acted as guards and they did janitorial work. During that period of time, the Junior League used to have exhibits; and we fixed up a little room down there which was used as an art gallery, which now I think, houses most of the Fox Collection which was given to the Museum. The Junior League wanted to bring in this collection of four or five pictures and was sending it around all over the country. So the Junior League got it, and they had a bit newspaper display and said the things were worth over five million dollars and this, that, and the other, and so forth. And it stirred up a controversy as to the value of it. Well, anyway, one of the paintings was stolen and we don't know just what happened. We think somebody stayed in the building, hid in the building, after we locked it, took this small picture of mother and child about that big. And I think they thought it was one of the five pictures worth more than a million dollars. I tried to get the Junior League to leave off the value in their advertising, but they didn't, 'cause I was afraid it would generate something of this sort. I don't know whether they ever found it or not. I heard a rumor one time that they did get it back but the insurance company, of course, paid off on the loss.

C: Oh, dear.

W: But that was, I guess, the most upsetting thing that

happened as long as I was over there. Uh, the boys were in the building, or were supposed to have been in the building. Of course, they weren't there all the time. They didn't know when it happened exactly, during the night, and I think, I think they discovered it maybe around ten o'clock. We closed about five. That was real upsetting.

V: You said you were the first curator. Howard was on there as director or something.

W: Dr. Quinn was actually looking after it, but I was the first full-time...

V: Or trained person...

W: Curator. Dr. Quinn...he had been in charge of the old mineral collection over there...and so he automatically got to be in charge of the Museum. But he had all these duties relative to the chairmanship of the Geology Department to take care of, and this was an extra burden. And they wanted to develop the Museum. For a long time the Museum...we had a tough time because it wasn't one of these things that developed from funds at the university. It was sort of forced on it in a way. And I know some of the administrators had said they wished to goodness we didn't have it 'case we didn't want to spend the money on it. It was hard to try to convince them that the new Museum had teaching value. And every time we got a new president, why, we had to go into another campaign to try to convince him of the value of the Museum, as far

as the teaching and the research thing was concerned. Research didn't amount to much in those days. We didn't have any money. Dr. Wiggins interviewed me for the job out here. One of my professors at the University of Oklahoma had told him that he thought I would make a good research man. Dr. Wiggins said, "Now, I want you to know that we don't want you to do any research. We want you to teach." And so what research we did in those days, we would just get on our own time and bootleg, so to speak. But it is certainly vastly different now: Research is an extremely important thing in the University system. This worked a hardship on some of us, too, because later on when we got to doing research, they wanted to see what you published. Well, in a lot of those years you didn't publish anything. You couldn't! And they didn't want you to, but people didn't understand that. So, it worked a hardship on some of us, for a time. I don't think there's anybody left down there now that had to work under that regime. They wanted you to devote your full time to teaching, which I think was all right in those days. I think the energy should have been strictly on teaching. I'm not too sure well, what we put too much emphasis on research now and we ought to put more emphasis on teaching. I personally feel that the University ought to be divided into two groups, so to speak: the undergraduate school,

which is strictly a teaching organization, and the graduate school, which is a graduate school in research. This may not be feasible under present circumstances, but I really think that both groups perhaps would gain by it. The people who like to teach and want to teach could work in the undergraduate school and teach, and the people who want to do research and work with graduate students could work in the other division. And maybe both groups would be happier and perhaps do a better job in some respects.

V: Well, I think you also were putting in the corollary that the people who teach would be reimbursed whether they researched or not. That's the trouble in modern education, in education, period, when "Publish or Perish" is the rule, then twenty four hours a day, if you use it for publishing, you're not going to use it for teaching. And you can't just go in and preach an hour and go out and forget it. I mean you don't have much to preach about that way, and you aren't very good at it. And I think that is true all the way up and down. I think our students today are getting a little cheated in many instances, not because the professor wishes to do that but because he is economically driven to it.

W: Well, you have to, under the circumstances. If you're going to survive in a university, and you want an increase in salary, you have to do it. You don't have any choice in

the matter.

V: It's the same sort of thing as public school teachers going into administration. Some of your best classroom teachers are leaving. They are the brightest minds. They go out and take another degree and become a counselor, an administrator, thereby being bored to death for the most part. But they do get enough to survive on.

W: Well, in this general vein, I think universities, in Texas state supported schools, are going to have trouble financially and money problems, until the state gets away from appropriating your money on head count. If you appropriate your money on head count, you are going to tend to pass more students than you would if you didn't know your salary was tied to it. Naturally, you're going to perpetuate yourself if you can. If you flunk too many students out of the university and the head count drops, then money to the university is cut off and you don't maybe have a job, or certainly your salary may be cut. I don't see hope for change in the immediate future. But if we were going to have a strong higher education system in Texas, I think it is going to have to be tied to a different method of appropriating money. Now, one reason some of the departments want graduate students is because they bring in much more money to our department, Ten times, in some cases, as much as your undergraduate students.

So, this is a drift in part. One reason there is a drift, an emphasis on graduate work is because your department gets so much more money.

C: Well, there have been a lot of changes and you two have certainly witnessed a growth in the school.

W: When we came here we knew all the faculty and most of the students. I knew most of the students. I see students now that tell me they were on the campus at such and such a time. Maybe they majored in English but I remember them, though I didn't have them in class. The school was so small. You see, the co-op, so to speak, was a bookstore up in the east end of the ground floor of Old Main. Dr. Nelson owned it, and he sold books in there and sodas, candy, and maybe some prepared sandwiches at times--you know, things you buy in a package. Anyway, they called it a co-op. It's sort of a misnomer because co-op implies that there is some cooperative dealings there, especially in getting books cheap or something like that. The students always complained about the prices of the books. They didn't think there was any cooperation there.

C: Well, you couldn't buy the textbooks anywhere but his co-op?

W: No. Nobody else in town sold textbooks but the co-op, and that has been true until very, very recently. The only place in town you could buy university books was the bookstore, co-op they called it, but nowadays the

bookstore. In the last few...four or five...years, why they put in a bookstore over there, I think on Stanton Street near Cincinatti, and maybe one or two other places. But up until that time, all the books were handled by the co-op. Anyway, everybody met in the co-op. You got your mail in there, and so everybody sooner or later went into the co-op almost every day. You needed to pick up your mail or to buy a coke or something else, so you saw everybody on the campus. That's one of the reasons you got to know them so well.

C: Well, there must be some advantages to the size. Can you think of any?

W: Well, it depends somewhat, I think, on your philosophy. Size for a geology department has meant graduate work. Graduate work has meant that faculty can do research, and most faculties in our field today want to some research, personal research. Time you get a Ph.D. you've narrowed yourself down to a specialized area. You are rather intensely interested in that and you want to do some research, and it's a good idea because this keeps your mind active.

V: The Wiggins' lived in that place we described, 1509 Montana, and every spring they had a party for the graduating seniors and their parents honoring them. And we all--the family wives and the lady faculty members--gave this thing, We actually arrived with our baskets or trays or whatnot, of goodies, our little long dresses; and we

had a garden party for them. We all knew each other. When I went back to school, I took a full course in order to get through, and I was taking, you know, things like psychology and economic geology.

W: Did you take comparative anatomy under Dr. Jenness?

V: Oh, heavens no! I had Ortenbaden. You remember that.

W: Oh, that's right, that's right.

C: He taught anatomy?

V: Well, he taught some courses in some department. I think what I had under him was comparative embryology. I finished a pre-med minor; it was my minor because I was interested in petroleum geology, and I had done most of the petroleum courses at the University of Oklahoma. This was a mining school, so I had to go back and do things like structural geology which I had had with Manette at the University of Okalahoma. It was a beautiful course, but it was not given from the standpoint of mining; so I took the course with Dr. Quinn, which one might say was a continuation of it, and that was Advanced Economic Geology, I think it was called, where we studied mines and the structure of geology.

C: Were there any other women in the classes?

V: Not in those classes. There were other women in courses like, I guess probably (dog barking inaud.). Because of the hassle of transferring from one school to another, I had to go back...(interruption w/dog). Oh, my gosh,

I was telling you that...

C: Sophomore English.

V: Well, it was kind of funny, since I couldn't do a great deal in petroleum here, I was filling in all sorts of things. So, actually later, a few years later, I started a Master's in English out here, 'cause they didn't have a Master's in Geology. And I was getting ready to teach. Anyway, I ended up with completing one of my minors, really a major in pre-med, because of transferring courses and whatnot. I think the kids refer to it today as testing out, but then it was called advanced standing exams. And I didn't know anything about what was being taught in school, so I started sophomore English /and the professor/ said, "Why don't you take a test and get out of here?" So I did. And I started sophomore French with Freddie Bautman. And he said, "Why don't you take a test and get out of here; you're ruining my curve." Which it wasn't because I was bright or something like that, but I had had French about six or seven years, and I was in a class of kids that were struggling with their second year. So that was just ridiculous. So, I did that and got out.

W: Kiki Escudero was in there.

V: No, I don't think Kiki was in any of my classes, but he was in school at that time. I don't remember him in my classes. But really it was pretty dull for a faculty wife.

I mean, what could they do with you in those days?
You didn't belong in a sorority--you were a married woman. And there was a schism not only between male and female but married and unmarried in those days.
I think it is less so today.

/PAUSE, then some personal conversation/

C: Do you think that women that were on the faculty and the faculty wives were together more than nowadays?

V: Well, I can't speak for anyone but myself. It would be my fault rather than being theirs, but I do think we got together more then than we do now. Maybe the ladies, the wives and staff, the faculty in a department, knew each other better then. But our department, for example, when Bill came here he made the third man, you know...the third man theme. (Laughter) But nowadays there are seventeen. So, there's quite a difference in approach. That would have covered maybe three or four faculties, in those days. There weren't all that many engineers, mining professors, whatever they called them. You know when it's large, it's difficult to get together in anyone's home. Houses aren't that big, and they seem to be getting smaller and smaller. But, you know, I can have thirty five here, just to sit around, like sorority or something. But that would be the absolute max. I'm sure a lot of the faculty wives are more cognizant of what is going on than I am. That's one of the reasons why one of us started a women's club--to try to keep us together.

*Check
again*

It was getting too big then and we had sort of a new-comer's group. Then they decided, I think, to separate them. I went to work, to teaching, so I just didn't have time to go to very many meetings. I enjoy people, I enjoy meetings and whatnot, but I always feel guilty that I am not doing my share.

W: Here's the roster of students in 1914-15. Fred Bailly enlisted in it.

C: Well, then maybe you're right. He didn't graduate till...

W: I don't know, I just really don't know. I have the data someplace; I think I have a list of all the mining engineers, but I can't lay my hands on it right now. All I could find were the geologists at the moment. Maybe, maybe Fred was '21. He said it the last time he came to the Geology breakfast, what year he graduated. It was back in the '20's, way back, I know that. Maybe '21.

C: When you were at the Museum what big collections did you receive? Did you get that Peak collection?

W: Yes, we did, we got the Peak collection. Dr. Wiggins arranged for that, and the boys that I had living in the Museum at that time were janitors and guards. And I moved it from the Peak's home over Rim Road over to the Museum and we installed it. It was a big job.

C: I'll bet. How long did it take?

W: Oh, I can't remember now but it took us some time because we had to be careful with moving it, then we had to place it on the walls in the Museum. On, it took a lot of time. We weren't really properly equipped to take it, but apparently

Peak wanted to get rid of it, and he wanted it to stay in town. Our place was about the only place it could go, but we really needed an air tight...essentially a room that could be made air tight, so one could fumigate properly about once a year. And although we did that as best as we could, we really couldn't take care of some of that stuff that should have been taken care of because, eventually, somehow, it got insects in it. The days when I was running the Museum--upstairs in the right wing, that would be the northeast wing--Miss Wise of the Art Department was in one room in the opposite wing--upstairs on the left side, which would be northwest--Jackie Williams, who was Jackie Roe before she and Jud got married, was the voice teacher. And I had a terrible with those women in the wintertime, 'cause Jackie would go up there--whe wanted to sing and keep singing and they wanted fresh air--so they'd open all the windows. So the poor 'ole boiler just couldn't heat all of West El Paso. Miss Wise would come downstairs; her kids were up there with their hands wet and they are arching over there, freezing to death. Oh, boy, did I ever have a hard time! I couldn't keep both satisfied to save my soul. Miss Wise wanted it warm, and Jackie wanted it cold. The poor old boiler wasn't big enough to handle it.

C: Miss Ball told me about a posture contest.

W: Yes, they used to run a posture contest.

C: Coming down the steps?

V: Do you remember that far back to the day of uncovering the painting, you know, in the lobby of the Museum and the story?

C: Oh, sure.

V: Well, that water color and that one over there were painted by the same man.

W: He was a young fella that I got as a Museum artist, and he painted that mural over there in the Museum. It was covered up; now they've uncovered it, and are trying to get it restored.

C: I think I saw something in there that he did of Mt. Franklin. Wasn't that a painting?

V: In the Museum?

C: Yeah, it;s part of the exhibit upstairs near Terrie's now.

W: Mt. Franklin, did you say? A little thing, about this big?

C: Yeah, yeah.

W: Sure, what that was was a background for a case I prepared and that shows the geologic formation to a view from about Juarez, see? On the mountain. Then we had rocks of the various formations down here keying to the picture. In the meantime, they destroyed the association, and so they don't have anything but just that picutre here. Also, in that upstairs room as you turn right when you get to the top of the stairs, there is a painting right next to the ceiling, I guess it's still there, about an underground mine scene that he painted, in working underground with

mine machinery. I guess it's still there. And he did the little diorama on the Indian village. Have you seen that?

C: Yeah, with the little figures...

W: The little figures and little lake and something. He did that.

C: Those figures are wax?

W: Yeah, they're bees wax. He also did the one on the mining scene where they show some underground mining, where the miners are working there, and then some stuff on top. He did that. And he did another one of the dinosaurs. I don't know what's in that case now because somebody broke in and stole the dinosaurs. And then we did another case in which we had an underground, I mean a submarine, scene of the time that Cristo Rey was under the sea here. I don't know whether they have maintained that or not. I don't think they have.

V: Well, they stole dinosaurs long after you left, didn't they?

W: Oh, yeah.

V: It's amazing what people will do, isn't it?

W: The dinosaurs were wax also. He did all this as the artist but under my supervision. I made sure that we had all of our scientific facts correct and so forth. And the boy had a tremendous talent, really, but he had osteomyelitis, and he had been treated at one time for it here in El Paso. But, he had gone...his parents had taken him back to Mexico, and during this time they made some kind

of a law change (I remember when it happened, but I wasn't particularly interested in it): People born in Mexico but who had come over here could be citizens provided they didn't go back. Well, his parents still came back, so he wasn't an American citizen. He was a Mexican citizen. But he spent nearly all his time in the United States--he grew up in Los Angeles. Why, he lived in Mexico and he commuted back and forth over here everyday. His physical condition got to a very serious point and he needed an operation, and Dr. Wiggins... Is that thing running? Well, I can't tell you all I want to tell you then. Dr. Wiggins got a prominent businessman to put up the money for his operation. I went to Dr. Wiggins with this situation, told him what it was. A philanthropic person here in town said he'd put up the money for it as long as he wanted it.

V: This was before BlueCross.

W: So, I told Sal, but he wouldn't do it /have the operation/. He wouldn't take the charity, and as a result he died, really needlessly, and quite a terrible loss because he had terrific art ability. We could have done wonders with him in the Museum. Incidentally, this same businessman is still in business here. And he has always been generous with his funds to the community. He is a real substantial citizen. I just saw him on TV right recently. He's getting on in years.

C: Well, what was your teaching load?

W: Oh, to begin with I taught labs, and of course we had heavy loads in those days. I had as many as twenty-five contact hours a week.

C: Oooh. Whew!

W: That's just the way everybody did it in those days. We went up there at 8 o'clock and we stayed till 5 o'clock every darn day. As a matter of fact we didn't have a chance to read in most cases.

C: And you didn't have any T.A.'s?

W: No, we had to do it all ourselves. And we went 'til noon on Saturdays. Well, we just couldn't do it any other way. Finally, we got to where a little later we could hire some graduate students. I remember one semester when we were overloaded, we had Alan Ehmann. Do you know Alan?

C: I've met him.

W: He teaches in the English Department. He taught some geology labs for us one time.

C: He did?

W: Yeah, but by and large we had people who were geology majors. And then we got some people from the University of Texas who had graduated and were of course graduate students; and had come out and taught for a year or two; then they'd go on back and pursue their graduate studies. But in those early years everybody taught a heavy load. Your lecture section were...oh, four or five lecture sections. Five, I think, was mostly what everybody taught. And then many of them in the advanced courses,

why, the professor teaching them had to teach the labs himself. So, boy, we really worked in those days. Those were the years when I went back at night and taught aviation ground school, too. Really put in a day.

C: Were the classes smaller?

W: Yeah, well classes were not large. Thirty-five, forty, would be a big class. And by the time our classes got to be big, why, we had to have lab assistants to cut down on the loads. I taught one section of four hundred and something--between four and five hundred--in Magoffin Auditorium which was really an audience; it wasn't a class. We didn't like it, nobody liked it but we had no choice. We just had such large groups of people. Well, we finally got it whittled down to where we could have about 150 or so in our geology lecture. We just made more sections instead of trying to do it in one or two big sections. But in the earlier days, why, your labs were small. Twenty-five was all you had in a lab. At the upper class level maybe four or five would be in the class. So, in advanced courses, though you had to put in the hours, the actual student load wasn't heavy. As now, then, the student load was heaviest at the freshman and sophomore levels. For a long time we didn't offer any geology except for geology majors. But then the demand got so great that we had to start offering geology for non-major students to satisfy science requirements. And then, of course,

in those days we got plenty, having very large sections for freshman, which we still do.

C: When was that, about?

W: Oh, that was after World War II. And Dr. Quinn was always afraid, as were others--I am not singling him out--were always afraid we weren't going to have enough students to make our sections the next semester. None of them realized--maybe some did, but some didn't realize--that the school was going to grow with the city. The earlier days, our students were practically all from out of town; our mining engineers and geologists were from out of town. El Paso just didn't furnish us enough. But then as the town grew, why, especially on the academic side of the thing--as Cap would call it, the Peedoggie side--why it burgeoned because the city was growing so rapidly.

C: And that's when most of the Mexican Americans began to enroll?

W: Well, we always had some. As a matter of fact, we trained nearly all the mining engineers in Mexico for a period of good many years. And up until about now, most of the mining engineers in Mexico were trained here--Salvador Treviño is a good example of that.

V: That class I was talking about with Dr. Quinn, the names I named were not Anglo names: Sabrano, Treviño, Palacios.

C: But they were from Mexico, not from the United States?

W: Yeah, they came from Mexico here. So, our numbers from El Paso were relatively small in those days. Well, still

really. Up until fairly recently and maybe even so now--I haven't checked right lately to know, most of our geology majors are from out of El Paso, out-of-town people.

V: Oh, our town doesn't produce very many, no matter if it is a large town, because there's not that many openings in the field. And kids are looking for something where they can get a job for the most part, unless it's one of those "up" curves, then you're inundated. Like computer science now.

W: Thinking about another one of these people who was here during World War II, or after World War II, John Lance. John Lance is now with the National Science Foundation in Washington and has been for a good many years. He went to Cal Tec from here and got his Ph.D. at Cal Tech and then taught at the University of Arizona for many, many years. Retired over there and then went to the National Science Foundation. So he's one of our stellar students. His brother is still here, Paul Lance. Have you heard of Paul Lance? Had an engineering business here for many years.

C: What do you think was your biggest thrill through all the years?

W: I guess when I was chosen the first Outstanding Professor in 1965, think it was '65.

C: How did you hear about it?

W: I didn't know about it until they announced it.

They had these meetings, you know. I have forgotten what they called it in those days--sort of like honors-type-thing--and they announced it.

V: He was quite surprised. I knew it.

W: We worked so hard we didn't have time to be thrilled much. I was going to tell you about back there early during the war years, I decided I wasn't doing enough for my country though I was working day and night. So the Navy came up with a program that they wanted to take people at my educational level, put them in as lieutenants in the Navy. So I went down and tried to volunteer. But I was so far underweight that they wouldn't take me.

C: Oh, really!

W: I weighed 118 pounds. Their weight was 135 and I just couldn't make the weight. I couldn't gain weight that fast. And then later I talked with a good many students who were then in the military service and told them I tried to enlist. "Oh, you're doing the country more good where you are right now than what we're doing," so, I felt a little better about it. But I had learned to fly. While I was teaching aviation, I went out and learned to fly a light plane because I thought maybe there might be something I could do in that respect. I never capitalized on it. Our baby was born then. I didn't want to take the risks. So I forgot about that. But it did help me in my aviation teaching.

C: Where did you learn to fly?

W: At the airport, the city airport.

V: I was rather glad they didn't take him.

W: I probably did for my country as much good as
where I was.

V: The thing is you don't get credit for it if you are a
civilian.

C: Where was Schellenger located?

W: Well, I think up in Old Main, in the basement part of
Old Main, I believe. I'm not real sure...they were at
one time, but I'm not sure of the time frame here.
They were in there, and of course they got the money
from the Schellenger Foundation and built the south
wing on the Engineering Building.

C: Well, when was Quinn Hall named Quinn?

W: Oh, it was originally called the Geology Building. Well,
originally, it was the Chemistry Building, one of the
older buildings on the campus. It was the Chemistry
Building, and then during WPA days they built the lec-
ture room on the north end of it. It was still Chemistry.
Then in the '50's they built, uh...what is now the Psycho-
logy Building was the Chemistry Building. Chemistry
and Biology went in there. Biology had been over in the
top of Kelly Hall, what was called Kelly Hall then I don't
know what they call it now. It's the little building
right east, first building right east of Old Main. Anyhow...

C: Don't they call that Mass Communication?

W: Well, they were in there for a while. Maybe that's what

they call it. The next building up that was the Biology building which was Burges?

V: Burges.

W: Burges! It was Burges Hall. Biology was in Burges. The library was in the top of Kelly. Golly, you have to think about these things. It takes a while to get them sorted out. Well, anyway, when the Chemistry people moved out of the old Chemistry Building over to their new building, the Geology Building moved out of the Old Main, what happened to be the top floor of Old Main. We moved over into the Chemistry Building and we named it Geology Building. Then, here, about three or four years ago--three years ago, I think it was--they renamed the Geology Building for Dr. Quinn... Quinn Hall.

V: There's some kind of rule that they can't name...

W: Yes, you have to be dead five years before you can name a building after you. I don't understand why you have to be dead so long.

V: Give you time to come back (laughs)!

W: For a long time, you had to be deceased for five years and they couldn't name a building for you.

C: When did they built that library building? What year?

W: The "Hay Barn," you mean?

V: I don't know. Let's see, we were...

W: Well, that was built in Dr. Ray's administration. He came right after Bull Elkins. I think he was the first one after Elkins. Had to be in the '60's, yeah, early

'60's, I think. Late '50's or early '60's.

C: What did people think about the way the building looked?

W: Well, I don't know what people in general thought, but nearly everybody I talked to was dissatisfied because they thought it ruined our motif--didn't fit in the motif at all. But I guess others must have liked it or they wouldn't have built it. But I noticed that with all the newer buildings, they have gone back to at least some elements that have a hint of the original architecture. The new library building is out and out Bhutanese. Well, it really has given our campus a distinction that few campuses have. The type of buildings we have and how they fit nicely into the setting is unique. There's not another one in the country like it. It has, I think, some real value.

C: The hill behind the Sun Bowl. I'm worried they're going to start...

W: They won't tear it down. It costs too much to take that hill down; they just have to build around it. Now, I suspect they may get over there behind Rudolph Chevrolet and knock down those buildings. At one time they had a plan--I don't know how far it went--but there was a plan at one time to build the buildings up the side of that big hill there behind Old Main, and star step it up, using escalators to get up and down, but I guess they decided it would cost too much or something. But that was talked about pretty seriously at one time, 'cause

that way they can then utilize those slopes.

V: Well, they may do it some day in the future.

W: Well, they might. But it's kind of interesting when Dr. Wiggins was here, Dr. Wiggins didn't want the school to be large. He said one time in fact that he didn't want to see this school ever get to be more than 2500. Well, that would be a controllable unit, I'm sure. So in those days they weren't very farsighted, so to speak, as far as campus expansion. And at that time they could have bought a lot of that property which is between the University and North Mesa now for very cheap prices, but they didn't buy it. They didn't think we were going to expand that much, so it would have been the advantageous thing for us to have had all that property between there and Mesa Street. To get it now would be terribly expensive.

C: Well, which of the administrations do you think did the most for growth?

W: Well, I feel this way about the administrations of the schools. I have worked under eight or nine of them. Almost every administrator made a contribution in some area. They all don't make the same contribution in the same area. So, Dr. Wiggins, for instance, was a financier: he put the school on its feet financially.

V: The Cotton Estate.

W: The Cotton Estate, so on, and so forth. He was in cahoots with the bankers downtown, and they were his good

friends and they gave him some awful good advice, and so forth, so he made his contribution there. Others have made their contribution in the academic aspects, and others have made some contributions in getting buildings. I don't know that I could personally point out any administration that I thought made a greater contribution than another. Some I don't think made as much as others, but I may be biased in that aspect. But I think they all made their contribution, and it would be very difficult for me to say, well, one made more contribution than the other. Dr. Wiggins, for instance, was awfully good with the legislature. He would go down to the legislature and talk those guys out of anything he wanted and would get money. He was sharp: If he didn't spend it all, he would give it back to them. So the next time he went down there, he got whatever he asked for.

C: Now, as I understand it, you can't do that. If you give it back, you don't get it the next year.

W: Oh, boy, that's right! But in those days, they thought he was an efficient operator, and if he didn't need his money, he would give it back to them. That year, it paid off. But, of course, this school's like all the rest of these state schools. We're always cramped for building space and state money to build with. For the most part, by the time you get a building, you've already outgrown it. This has really been the case

with us. We start planning for a building here, maybe four or five years from now you get it.

Well, by the time you get it and get in it, you're filled up. But this is just not restricted to us.

The only place I know where this isn't true, I think, is probably the University of Texas at Austin because for many years they had that fund, you know, that they could draw on and build. And they build and build and build. And I don't appreciate them for that at all.

But, from some of the other state schools didn't have that kind of money, and so they had to struggle and struggle to get a building, and by the time you got it you needed another one.

C: Well, I had better let you all get on with your afternoon.