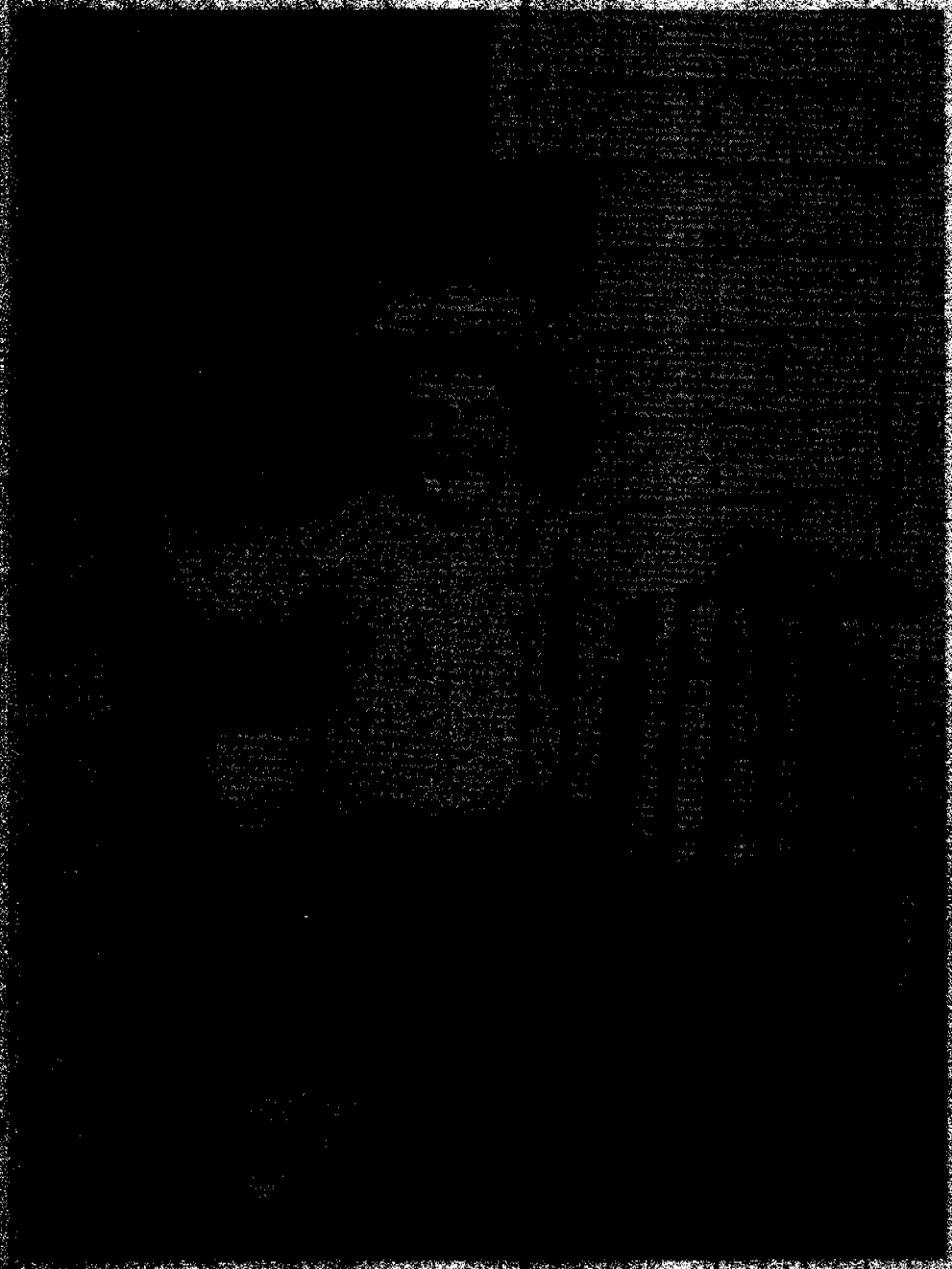
GEORGE WILLIAMS MEMOIR

VOLUME I



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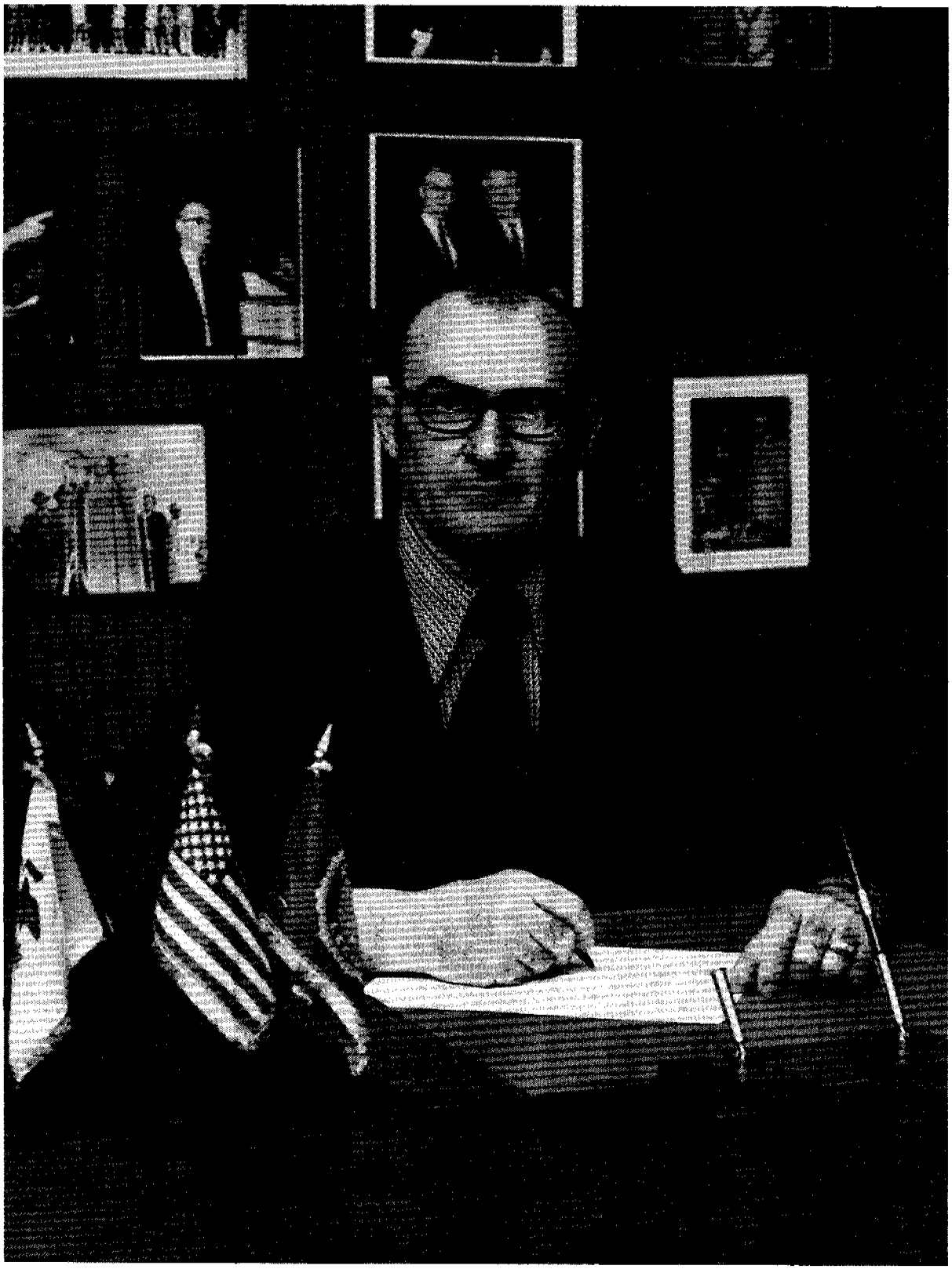

GALE WILLIAMS
ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
1961-1965 AND 1967-1973

Preface

This oral history of Gale Williams' service in the Illinois House of Representatives is a product of the Illinois Legislative Research Unit's General Assembly Oral History Program. The oral history technique adds a distinctive new dimension to the unit's statutory responsibility for performing research and collecting information concerning the government of the state.

Gale Williams was born near Ava, Illinois, August 3, 1922. The story of his youth is that of a southern Illinois farmboy. With his brothers, he assisted his father in the operation of the family farm. During his teenage years, he also assisted in the family's operation of a milk-collection route.

At the outbreak of World War II, family circumstances caused Mr. Williams to be rated 4-F by the selective service system and he did not enlist until late in the war. His service was with the U. S. Marine Corps. Upon his discharge he joined the U. S. Air Force Reserves.

Following World War II, he initially engaged in an appliance dealership. His entry into the political arena occurred in 1947 when he successfully ran on the Republican ticket for the position of Bradley Township highway commissioner. As a reservist he was called to active duty for the Korean War, whereupon he sold his interest in the appliance store and resigned from his position as commissioner — only to have the call cancelled.

After a year of selling cars, he was able to obtain a patronage job as a license inspector for Secretary of State Charles Carpentier. During his tenure as an inspector, from 1953 until 1957, he became active in the local Young Republicans organization. In 1956 he successfully ran for the office of Jackson County coroner and four years later was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives. At the same time, 1960, he entered the vocation of mobile home dealer in which he still at this writing is engaged.

His tenure in the Illinois House of Representatives, from 1961 to 1973, was broken when he made an unsuccessful bid for the Illinois Senate in 1964 causing him to be absent from the 1965 session.

Mr. Williams' major legislative achievements were in the fields of economic development, transportation, conservation and agriculture. His memoir, while focusing on such legislation, also recounts many personal and political subjects.

Readers of this oral history should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word. Its informal, conversational style represents a deliberate attempt to encourage candor and to tap the narrator's memory. However, persons interested in listening to the tapes should understand that editorial considerations produced a text that differs somewhat from

the original recordings. Both the recordings and this transcript should be regarded as a primary historical source, as no effort was made to correct or challenge the narrator.

Neither the Illinois Legislative Research Unit nor Sangamon State University is responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

The tape recorded interviews were conducted by Horace Waggoner during the fall of 1981. Mr. Waggoner was born in 1924 in Waggoner, a small farm-service community in central Illinois. At age 18, he enlisted for military service in World War II and, as a U. S. Air Force commissioned officer, continued to serve until 1973. Upon leaving service, he resumed his formal education, achieving a masters degree in history at Sangamon State University in 1975. His association with the Sangamon State University Oral History Office dates from 1976.

Betty Lewis transcribed the tapes and, after the transcriptions were edited by Mr. Waggoner and reviewed by Mr. Williams, Julie Allen prepared the typescript. Florence Hardin compiled the index. The Chicago Tribune and Carbondale Southern Illinoisan provided valuable assistance in the research effort.

Table of Contents

Note on page location:
Volume I: pages 1 - 121
Volume II: pages 122 - 244

Preface v

The Years Before 1

Family background - Farm life - School - Ava, Illinois - U.S. Marine Corps - Appliance dealer - Highway commissioner - Car salesman - License inspector - Marriage - Young Republicans - Coroner - Mobile home business

The General Assembly Years 64

Campaigning - Getting started - First caucus - Legislative reform - Reapportionment and redistricting - Judicial reform - Transportation legislation - Conservation legislation - Economic development legislation - Public utilities, railroads and aviation legislation - Agriculture legislation - Industry and labor relations legislation - Personalities - Elections legislation - Education legislation - Public aid, health, welfare and safety legislation - Running for the Senate - Revenue legislation - Budgeting and appropriating - Civil rights legislation - Ethics and conflict of interest - Constitutional change - Crime and corrections legislation - Patronage and public employees - Leaving the legislature

The Years After 235

Mobile home business - Supporting Ogilvie - Advice on how to campaign - Advice on preparation for legislature

Index 239

Illustrations following pages 64 and 188

Volume I

Gale Williams

SESSION 1, TAPE 1, SIDE 1

Q: We'll start off with a vital statistic or two. What was your birthdate sir?

A: August 3, 1922.

Q: And where were you born?

A: Ava, Illinois.

Q: What was your father's name?

A: Denton Williams.

Q: And your mother's name was?

A: Bertha.

Q: And what was her maiden name?

A: Lively Williams.

Q: What's your first memory of your father?

A: My first memory of my father, when I was real small and . . . I don't know what age I was when I first remember but — of course I have a twin brother and my first memory of him was him always playing with — holding both of us, playing with us two a great deal. He was great to always be playing with us children.

Q: What do you remember of the home where you were born in Ava?

A: My first memory of the home — of course I wasn't born right in Ava, it was out in the country about two miles north of Ava, and of course it was just an old farm house, extremely old, part of it was log. I remember it just strictly as an old house, I mean extremely old. And we had no electricity, you know, it was all kerosene lights, and coal or wood heating-stove in the wintertime.

Q: What part of the house was log?

A: The kitchen part and a pantry part on it. And then of course they built on to it back in those days and cut the logs and had the lumber sawed and built on to it you know. But it was extremely old.

Q: How long had your father lived there?

A: Well he — well of course they lived there longer than I was old. They had bought it, the land, back before I was born. They'd lived there thirty-some years before they sold it. Of course in the meantime I was born and went to the service and moved away. But they bought it before I was born.

Q: And was your father farming the land there?

A: Yes he farmed and he also worked in the coal mines. He done both.

He had an eighty-acre farm there and then he had bought some more land, I think forty acres, and he farmed, and our farm was very hilly. And he had mostly dairy cows, milk cows. And of course we sold the milk — or sold cream back in those days you know, and then they sold the milk then.

Q: Did you have your own separator for the cream then?

A: Yes. Yes, I can remember the old separator. They had the old smokehouse and the separator. Of course when you brought the milk in, why, you separated it and kept the skim milk to feed the hogs and stuff that we raised you know. We raised a lot of hogs back in those days. It wouldn't be a lot in todays terms but back then my father raised around one hundred head of hogs all the time. That was considered quite a few back fifty years ago you know.

Q: What kind of hogs were they.

A: Just — mostly the Hampshires, the red Hampshire hogs. Yes. And of course the milk cows that we had, they weren't thoroughbreds. They were mostly just Jersey cows. We milked about eighteen cows by hand — there was six of us children. And like I say we had no electricity and it was all handjob, we had from twelve to eighteen cows all the time that we milked.

Q: What kind of barn did you have?

A: Well we had a — to start with we had a real old barn and it was pretty well dilapidated and it caught fire and burnt. So then we cut timber and had lumber sawed and the neighbors helped and we built a new barn which was, in that day, was considered a good barn. It was probably the largest barn in that area at that time. It was rather large. We stored a lot of hay in the barn too, had a huge loft, entire upper part of the barn was in a hayloft. We stored hay there to feed the cattle in the wintertime. But back then it seemed like we had severe winters too.

Q: How many stanchions did you have where you did your milking?

A: We had about fifteen stanchions. And then we had another part that — where we could run those in that were gentle and we didn't have to put them in a stanchion to milk them. But we had about twelve, fifteen stanchions of where we put them in most the time. And sometimes we'd take shifts too. We'd milk the first bunch, then turn them out and bring in the rest of them and milk them too.

Q: I suppose there's a lot of barn cleaning involved also with . . .

A: Oh yes, my father was very strict about that. The cattle, their stables had to be cleaned every day. And same way with the — with the — we had several head of horses at the time too, that we farmed with 'cause we didn't have tractors. And we had to put fresh bedding in for the horses every day and the horses had to be curried every day. And the milk cows, in the summertime they had to be sprayed for flies, too, so the flies wouldn't bother the cows. Back in those days he was fearful that that would hurt them on the amount of milk they would give. So we sprayed them every morning and every evening to keep the flies off of them.

Q: How many horses did you normally run there?

A: We normally had eight to ten head of horses. Because there was four of us boys at home at one time and everybody had a team. And we generally had an extra horse or two in case one got it's neck sore or got hurt or something, or got sick, but we had from eight to ten head all the time.

Q: I suppose you raised your — the calves from the cows or . . .

A: Yes, in most cases we did. He would go to a sale, farm sales, and buy some cows but he also would — would — we raised a lot of them. We'd keep most of the calves. If they were good healthy looking calves, we'd keep them. Keep them until they were grown you know, and milk them then.

Q: How much of the eighty acres was in pasture then?

A: About twenty acres of it in pasture. And then of course he farmed another eighty that he rented for, oh, as long as I could remember. An old gentleman owned it. They had nothing in writing. My father just farmed it every year, the whole time I can remember up till — up till I went to the service and then he bought forty acres more land too. So altogether he farmed about two hundred acres with horses.

Q: Boy!

A: Which was a pretty good-sized farm back those days.

Q: What kind of horses were they?

A: They were just regular work horses, they weren't thoroughbreds. Most of them were — were really western horses. He bought them at St. Louis at the auction. Because back in those days you could buy them real cheap. And he'd go up there and buy them and us boys would break them to work. Bring them home and then we'd — we had one old horse that we used that was real gentle, and we'd use him to break these western horses with. Most of our horses were western horses. And when we first got them they were extremely wild. But they would turn out to be real good horses.

Q: How would you go about training one?

A: We had regular stalls in our barn. The first thing we'd do is bring them in and we'd use other horses, older horses, to get them to go in the barn and once we'd get them broke to be tied — that was the hardest part, getting them broke to be tied, 'cause most of them had never been tied when they was brought into the stockyards to be sold. And that would take some time. We'd get them in the stalls and of course then we would — next thing we'd do is rope them, and tie them, and we'd take water and stuff up to them for a few days until they got used to the rope. And then we'd start putting the harness on them, and then we'd take it off and — just inside the barn, till they got used to that. And then we'd put a saddle on them and tighten the girths and all that stuff until they were — till they got used to it. And then we'd harness them and the next move would be take them

out with the older horse, and we'd always tie them to him, and put them to a wagon and — until we started breaking them to work.

Q: I'll be darned. Did you ever have any problems with this other horse . . .

A: Lots of times.

Q: . . . keeping them under control. What kind of problems would you have?

A: When you break — when you first start out, they'd try to rear up, they'd try to kick, they'd try to do everything. But he was — he was good at it, and they'd soon calm down, and just go right along.

Q: How many would you train in a year usually?

A: Well we trained — we generally — we trained, generally trained, two or three at a time. And then we'd get them broke and then dad would get some more. We didn't exchange horses real often. I'd say if he — on about three or four different occasions he went and bought like a half a dozen head of them. And bring them in and we'd train them. They were good riding horses too. Very fast, most of them. And most of them were extremely good workhorses. They were very tough and hot-lived, they wouldn't overheat very easy. But we didn't change them very often. When we got them, we kept them.

Q: Did you have any experiences in your broncobusting . . .

A: Well, I never — but my brothers did, my brothers tried some of that. And they were fairly hard to learn to break to ride. They were really tough. But once you got them broke they were just as gentle as they could be. We had them that you could — we got them broke to where you could leave them stand and they'd stand right there, they wouldn't leave. But it took some doings to start with to . . .

Q: Did you have a favorite that . . .

A: Oh yes, we had a pair of roan mares that he bought at the stockyard that were branded on the neck and the hip both. And they were pretty as pictures. And after we got them broke they were just as gentle as a dog. Gentle as they could be. And they were good to work and they were good to ride. And everybody in the country talked about them, how pretty they were, strawberry roans.

Q: Was your dad then a good choice then of horseflesh?

A: Oh yes, he knew horses, yes. He could look at their teeth and tell you how old they were and all that, which I couldn't do, but he could.

Q: Where did he learn that?

A: Just in growing up with horses and all. And he worked with different horse buyers too, he'd been around them a lot. Because he spent all of his life on a farm. His whole life.

Q: There around Ava?

A: Yes he was actually born and raised at Campbell Hill, Illinois, which is four mile away. Him and my mother both. And they grew up in that area. And then they bought this farm by Ava and there's where they lived most of their lives.

Q: You remember any of the trips to St. Louis to buy horses? Did you go on any of them?

A: No, I never — I was too small when he first started going. I went to the stockyards with him several times to take like hogs and stuff to the market but I never went with him to buy horses. He went up and done that on his own.

Q: Did you raise any beefs on the farm?

A: No we didn't have beef cattle. No, all of ours was milk cows. We didn't raise any beef cattle.

Q: How about butchering? Were you involved in that?

A: Oh yes.

Q: What did you do?

A: We butchered our own meat every year. We butchered from six to eight head of hogs. And we generally — we'd just set one day aside, and the neighbors would come in, we'd invite them. The butchering was kind of like a threshing back in threshing-machine days. We'd invite all the neighbors in and — that is, three or four of them — and you'd always go out at daylight and get the water hot, and that's when you started the butchering. You'd do the butchering and the rendering of the lard and everything all in one day.

Q: What was your job?

A: Us boys, most of our job was to help scrape the hogs. (pause) The first thing they'd do, of course they'd shoot them. And dad was always what they called the sticker. He's the one that would stick them to make sure they'd bleed good. And then we'd drag them up and fill this barrel with hot water and you slosh them up and down in there and bring them out on a big platform and there's where you — back in those days you scraped the hair off by hand with a butcher knife. Just take a knife and scrape them. They would — that was our job. Just help do that, then help render the lard. Of course you had to stir the lard you know. And they put all the fat meat in the kettle and you stir it and stir it and stir it, until it's lard you know.

Q: Did you do that over an open fire outside?

A: Yes.

Q: A regular big iron kettle I suppose.

A: Yes, a big iron kettle, yes. You had to stir it, if you didn't it would stick, and then that would ruin it you know. No you had to keep stirring it. Somebody had to stir it all day long until it was done.

Q: That must have been quite a job.

A: That was a job. That was a job.

Q: How did you go about curing the meat when — after your . . .

A: Well my father done that. We had what they called a smokehouse. And they would put hooks like in the hams, and in the sides, when they hang it, and then he would salt it too. They'd put salt on it, and then — I don't remember how many days he would smoke it but they'd use — they had to use hickory wood to smoke it with. That was the old-timers' — you couldn't use any other wood but hickory. And you'd smoke it for so many

days. And then he'd lay it up on shelves and he'd put more salt on it. And that would make it keep. And it would be real good after it got seasoned.

Q: Were all these for your own use then?

A: Yes. Yes, we butchered — we raised just about everything that we used back in those days. We raised our own meat, our own vegetables. My mother used to can, oh, like two or three hundred quarts of corn, green beans, and peaches. All summer long she would can fruit and vegetables as they became available.

Q: I suppose you did a lot of hoeing in the garden then?

A: Yes, a lot of hoeing. No boy liked that either. We raised all these vegetables and of course you had to hoe them to keep it — you know to keep the weeds out of it. And me and my twin brother, of course we were the youngest and up till we got big enough to work out in the field we had to do more hoeing and all those things in the garden, truck patch we called it. Where we put out a big patch of potatoes and you had to spray them for bugs and all of those things.

Q: How did you go about storing the produce? She canned a lot of it I guess but potatoes, for example, how did you . . .

A: Well we had a — we built what they call a storm cellar. It was a big concrete underground cellar and we fixed bins in it. And we put like the Irish potatoes, we called them, in — we had a big bin for those. And then we'd have sweet potatoes too, we had another bin for those. And then we had shelves in the basement that she stored the canned fruit in. Just shelves after shelves of like canned corn, canned tomatoes, canned peaches, green beans, everything that was raised on a farm really we canned it.

See we didn't have no money. Back in those days we didn't have any money. And I can remember we used to store our wheat when we would thresh. And dad would take, during the course of the winter, take like three bushel of wheat to Ava to the mill and they'd give you 100 pounds of flour for it. And that's how we got our flour.

Q: Did you have an orchard there?

A: Yes we did. We had ten acres of orchard for a long time. Peach orchard. Almost ten acres, about one acre of it I guess was apple trees. But we raised our own peaches and our own apples. We'd make apple butter in the fall. Of course we sold a lot of peaches too.

Q: I was going to say, at ten acres . . .

A: Oh yes, we sold a lot of peaches. And we had people every year look forward to come — ours was those Elberta peaches and they were really good. And a lot of our customers looked forward to coming out and . . .

Q: Did they do their own picking or . . .

A: No, we done it back in those days. We done it.

(taping stopped to meet Mrs. Williams, then resumed)

Q: Then you were selling the peaches but not the apples I guess.

A: No, we didn't raise enough apples to sell, but peaches we did.

Q: What kind of apples were you raising?

A: They were a Delicious apple, I think they was called the Yellow Delicious back in those days, but we didn't raise many of those. Just had a small amount.

Q: Just for your own consumption.

A: Right. But peach trees we did. We — every year we sold . . . if the frost didn't get them, we always had quite a few peaches to sell. Considered quite a few back then.

Q: That would be the spring frost that . . .

A: Right. Freeze late, freeze around Easter or something. If you'd get a freeze around Easter, it'd generally get them. But we raised quite a few of those.

Q: I suppose you picked all those by hand.

A: All by hand. Yes. We used to hire — my father used to go to Ava to town, and back in those days there's always men around that wanted jobs, and you could hire them for about fifty cents a day. And he'd hire a bunch, anybody that they could find, during peachtime. 'Cause it wouldn't last long, you know maybe it would last a week or ten days at the most. And we'd start picking them. But what the public didn't buy, if they didn't buy them locally, then we would put them in bushel baskets and he'd take them to St. Louis to the market of a night after we'd pick all day. If we didn't sell them — if people didn't come out and buy them, then we'd put them in baskets and take them to St. Louis, down on Market Street. And there's a market there that would buy them — buy all you would take of them. So if they didn't buy them, once in a while he'd take a load in to St. Louis.

Q: How would he do that? Load up a wagon and . . .

A: No we had a truck. We had an old Chevrolet truck, I believe it was, back then. It was an old-timer, they called it a ton-and-a-half truck, which was small when compared to today. But he'd load it up, put on every basket he could put, and be gone most of the night taking them up there and back.

Q: Did you ever go with him on any of those trips?

A: No, not on those I never.

Q: What about fieldwork? What was the first fieldwork you were involved with?

A: The first fieldwork I was involved with was a walking plow.

Q: Oh?

A: Following a walking plow. And I was nine years old. We couldn't get help and me and my twin brother — so we had some horses that were gentle and put my older brother in front, in case the horses tried to get away or something, and we started plowing.

Q: You ever have the plow throw you?

A: Yes sir. Lots of times. It was just about every corner for a while. When you'd get to the corner.

Q: You say you were nine years old. You weren't — must not have been very big at that time?

A: No, I wasn't very big. But we couldn't get help and so we'd hold the handles and get to the corner, why, if the plow — the plow a lot of times would get us down but we'd get back up and horses'd get it straightened up and go ahead and plow.

Q: How much acreage would you plow in a day?

A: Well we always figured if you plowed an acre in a day it was a big day's work, back with a walking plow. And that's a — that's about as good as you could do then.

Q: Were you working around stumps at that time or was this . . .

A: We had some but not many. Most the fields that we worked in, me and my twin brother, would be fields where it was real good plowing. Main thing you had to watch for was snakes.

Q: Oh?

A: That you didn't plow out a snake because, if you did, you better get out of the furrow.

Q: How about bumble bees?

A: We had bumble bees, you watched for them too. If you plowed out a nest of them, you knew it too.

Q: Then what did you move up to then when you moved from the walking plow? What was your next implement?

A: Well the next implement we had was an old sulky plow, they called it, and that took three horses, and it had a seat of course, you got to ride. And of course then we used sulky plows and walking plows until — until — of course later in life then the first tractor we got was an old — what they called an F-12 International. It was a small tricycle-type tractor. And that was our first tractor. Up till then we had farmed with horses all those years. We always thought dad would never get a tractor. We thought everybody and his brother would have one before we would, because us boys, he had us there to follow them plows, but he eventually bought one. And then of course — then we started on getting different types of machinery. That made it a lot easier too.

Q: Did you find a difference in the plowing? I guess with a tractor you could plow a bit deeper than you could with the horses?

A: Oh yes. Yes. And you made it look a lot prettier too, your ground would turn over a lot better, because the plow set steady and it wasn't in and out like it was with a walking plow. It was a lot better.

Q: I suppose you managed a harrow also.

A: Yes, yes we did. After we'd plow it then of course — back in those days a harrow was a big thing. Use a disc and a harrow you know, get it in shape. Oh, you done it all with a tractor then. We kept horses for a long time and we used them for different things, like mowing hay and stuff, because back in those days we didn't have the money to buy all the extra equipment. Dad just got that gradually. You know the first thing we had was a tractor and a plow and a cultivator. And then we got into the getting the mower and all those extra tools that went with it, that made it so much better.

Q: How much grain did you usually grow?

A: Well back then, the grain — the ground didn't produce like it does today. Because we limed it but we didn't have it tested and we were — a lot of times we were doing the wrong

thing to it. We wasn't putting potash on it and fertilizer like we should. And you take back then, if you got forty to fifty bushel of corn to the acre you were doing good. And wheat, if you got twenty, twenty-five bushel to the acre you were doing exceptionally good. I can remember years that we got ten and fifteen bushels to the acre. And we limed it, my father was the first one north of Ava to put lime on ground. But we should have had it tested because a lot of times it didn't need so much limestone, it needed potash or something else you know. So then later on in life, why, he did have it tested and we got to putting on the right thing, of course it got to producing a lot better too.

But for a long time we didn't raise — we didn't have that many acres out. We wouldn't have out over, like — they rotated crops back then. Thirty or forty acres of corn is about all you could get out in the spring with horses. You'd get anywhere from thirty bushel to fifty bushel to the acre, so you didn't raise a lot of bushels. And wheat was . . . in the fall they'd rotate it, they'd take — they — like if you put a field in corn this year, then next year they'd try to put it in some kind of clover or something. In order to let it rest from the corn. But wheat, you'd get anywhere's from ten bushel to twenty bushel to the acre on the average, and that was about it. And you was lucky if you got twenty. I can remember one year when I was a kid, we had some ground that made sixteen bushels to the acre that year, it was a bad year, and that was the whole talk of the threshing run, was how my dad's wheat turned out. Sixteen bushel to the acre. And now they wouldn't even — they wouldn't hardly mess with it for that — you know.

Q: I suppose you had a lot of manure spreading to do from the barn . . .

A: Yes, we did. We took — like I said earlier we cleaned out our stables every day. Of course we stacked it outside. Well then, whenever we couldn't do nothing else — my father always managed to have work for us boys. And if it rained us out of the fields or something, or like in the winter we couldn't — a lot of work we couldn't do, why, we'd take and we had a manure spreader — generally took four horses to pull it — and we'd load that thing up — 'cause it was big — and we'd spread manure. Haul it out and spread it in the fields, if it wasn't too soft in the fields to get over them. And if you couldn't use that, you'd load it up in a wagon and take it out and spread it with a fork, just take a fork and spread it. That's when it was good. (chuckles)

Q: That got to be work . . .

A: Yes, that got to be work.

Q: I assume you did a lot of corn cultivating then with a . . .

A: Yes we did.

Q: Did you have a two-row or one-row?

A: One-row walking cultivator.

Q: Walking cultivator!

A: Walking cultivator. Yes, you had to follow it, behind it; had two handles you had to hold.

Q: Was this the one that would collapse on you every once in a while or was it fairly sturdy.

A: No, this one wouldn't collapse but you had fenders down there and you had to hold it just right if the corn was small; if you didn't, you'd plow out your corn. Then of course after it, the corn, got up bigger we had a disc cultivator that we could use too, now that you could ride.

Q: A disc cultivator?

A: Cultivator, yes.

Q: Yes. It had regular discs, as a disc?

A: And it had fenders. That's what you used to lay it by with. Back in the old days they thought you had to pile the dirt up against the corn to hold it up or — afraid the wind would blow it down. And we'd use that, always used that, to lay it by with. And it'd get the weeds out of the center of the rows too. When I was real small, too small to hold the handles, a lot of times my older brothers would make me and my twin brother — we had two older brothers — and they'd make us drive the team. We'd set up on the cultivator and they'd walk and hold the handles. And we'd drive the team so the team would straddle the row like they were supposed to. Make it easier to plow. And we hated that job.

Q: Got dull after a while.

A: Oh yes, you had to make them walk real slow. If you didn't, you'd cover up the corn because the corn would be real little. Oh we hated that. We hated that.

Q: Did you do much shucking corn?

A: Yes. Really did. Back in those days, for several years, what we done was what we called snap it. In the fall of the year — we'd leave the shuck on it. We'd bring it in with the shuck on it because a lot of it we had ground to feed the milk cows. And dad, if he ground it with the shuck, why, you're — just extra . . . food you had for those cows. And then of course we had some of it that of course we shucked right in the fields, but a lot of it we would what they call snap it, and just leave the shuck on and bring it in that way. Oh yes, we had to shuck it by hand too. If we didn't shuck enough corn for, like for the horses and stuff like that, we didn't feed them ground corn, but we would have to — on days that it was raining and you couldn't work, he always managed to have us a job for — we could always go down at the barn and shuck corn.

Q: I see. (laughter)

A: Always had something to do.

Q: How about shocking corn? Did you do much of that?

A: Some, I done some, but we didn't do a lot of that. But we did do some because we had neighbors that done that a lot. They had silos. And they'd have it shocked and then they'd bring it in. They'd have a silo filling and they'd bring it in, we'd haul it in and do it that way. But we didn't do much of that ourselves. But we had neighbors that we used to help do.

Q: Well let's see. (pause) I'm going to have to change the tape here and maybe this is an appropriate time . . . (addressing Mrs. Williams who has been standing by with genealogical data)

SESSION 1, TAPE 1, SIDE 2

Q: First of all, let's see, who are you?

HFW: I'm Helen Falkenheim Williams, I'm the wife of Gale Williams.

Q: And I understand that you do a lot of genealogy.

HFW: I love it. Every spare moment I've got.

Q: Oh is that right? (laughter) Well the main thing we're concerned with here — first of all with your husband's family background. How far back have you traced the Williams family?

HFW: The Williams family I haven't gone very far but on the Shelton's I've gone back to 1539.

Q: Well. The Shelton's now are . . .

HFW: That would be Gale's grandmother, his paternal grandmother. And then the Lively's, which is his mother's side, goes back six generations and I'll have to look for the date here on that.

Q: Okay. Well, let's see. First of all with the Williams now. How far back have you traced with them?

HFW: Not very far, just to his grandfather. He came from Tennessee.

Q: I see and what was his name?

HFW: His name was Henry Williams. And he was born — you want the dates?

Q: Yes.

HFW: He was born 24 December 1844. And he died 26 October 1875. He was a Civil War veteran.

Q: Do you know where in Tennessee? Did you . . .

HFW: No. So the story goes, his father came from Germany. But I haven't been able to trace that.

Q: And he came from Tennessee to Ava, in this area?

HFW: Jackson County, yes.

Q: To Jackson County.

HFW: Closer to Campbell Hill, which is about four miles from Ava.

Q: And this was the paternal grandfather.

HFW: Yes.

Q: What about the paternal grandmother?

HFW: That was Martha Shelton.

Q: And you say you have traced the Shelton's back quite far then?

HFW: Yes, I go back to 1539 on the Shelton's.

Q: I don't know that we'll want to put the whole record in there. Where were they at that time?

HFW: They were in Tennessee also.

Q: Okay but . . .

HFW: They came from Tennessee to southern Illinois.

Q: Excuse me now, 1539 you say?

HFW: No, they were in England.

Q: So they are originally English, and when did the family in the direct lineage come to the United States?

HFW: Well we have a pretty good history from Thomas Shelton, when he got into Tennessee.

Q: And that was when?

HFW: Well he lived in . . . he was born in 1829.

Q: In England.

HFW: His name was Leonard Thomas Shelton.

Q: And he came to the United States you say?

HFW: Yes.

Q: To Tennessee?

HFW: Yes.

Q: What part of Tennessee?

HFW: Manchester.

Q: Manchester. Now this — Leonard Thomas Shelton would be the . . .

HFW: It would be Gale's great grandfather.

Q: I have a time keeping genealogies straight now. And his daughter then married Mr. Williams.

HFW: Right. Yes.

Q: And what was the daughter's name?

HFW: Martha Elizabeth Shelton. She was born in 1851 and died in 1920.

Q: And they were married where?

HFW: In . . . Tennessee.

Q: In Tennessee before they came to Illinois.

HFW: Their marriage records I found in — close to Manchester.

Q: And they came to this area here?

HFW: The understanding was that the two Shelton brothers didn't agree; one fought for the South, and one fought for the North. And that's why the one came up here.

Q: I'll be darned. Now that's the paternal background, how about the maternal background now.

HFW: Gale's mother was Bertha Mae Lively. And she was born in Brownwood, Texas.

Q: Oh?

HFW: On 4 November 1884.

Q: What was her father's name?

HFW: William Abner.

Q: Let's see, let's skip on back then. Where do you start with the Lively's?

HFW: Well Bertha's — Gale's mother, Bertha, was born in Texas. Her father had left Jackson County with his family and gone to Texas. They were kind of Indian scouts . . . . homesteaders. And in Texas he met Mary Ellen Mills, and married her in Texas. William and Mary had three children and the grandmother died in childbirth, with the third child, and was buried in Texas, and then William Abner came back to Illinois then.

Q: Now how far back do you trace the Lively's?

HFW: Long way. Well when they came to Illinois it was in 1808.

Q: And they came from Tennessee also?

HFW: No, no they came from South Carolina to Illinois. How the Lively's got in there I really don't know because they called them . . . Scotch-Irish, and this group came from Abbeyville, South Carolina. But the Lively's came also with this group, although the Lively's are from England.

Q: Oh. So they must have met in Northern Ireland, didn't they, and . . .

HFW: And came over.

Q: To South Carolina, I see. So the Lively's are English then.

HFW: Yes. Now there is a Lively Family Association in the United States. Very active.

Q: What about the maternal background of Bertha Mae Lively?

HFW: Well the Mills, I can't go back any farther than the great grandmother on the Mills. I'm trying very hard in Texas but not doing much good. But on the Lively, like I say, I can go back six generations on that.

Q: Now Mary Ellen Mills, that was the grandmother, was it not?

HFW: Right.

Q: And the great grandmother was . . .

HFW: I'm not sure of her name.

Q: Do you know the great grandfather's name?

HFW: No.

Q: Neither one. But they were in Texas.

HFW: They were in Texas. And they remained in Texas.

Q: (pause) What was your father's name?

HFW: Denton. Denton, Herbert. He was born in Jackson County.

Q: In Jackson County also. How did he happen to meet Bertha Mae Lively?

HFW: Well they were both farm families, and — just through the community.

Q: Is anything known of the courtship?

HFW: Well I don't imagine it was very romantic at that time, it was pretty primitive. (laughter)

Q: What about brothers and sisters.

HFW: He had . . . one brother — two brothers, John R. and William, and he had three stepsisters.

Q: Do you have their names?

HFW: Yes. The stepsisters were Sarah, they called her Sally, and Maude and Rebecca.

Q: These were stepsisters?

HFW: After Mr. Williams died she married Snyder, George Snyder.

Q: I see. And . . .

HFW: He did have one real sister Mary.

Q: Mary.

HFW: Yes. She was called Min, M-I-N.

Q: And what about Bertha Mae Lively's brother's and sisters?

HFW: She only had one living brother and his name was Perry. They had the baby, as I said, died in childbirth — the mother died in childbirth and the baby died.

Q: Amongst all of these that we've named — let's see now there would be no record apparently then of Revolutionary War service?

HFW: I have none on Gale's side.

Q: I see, okay. But there is on your side.

HFW: Yes.

Q: I see. And how about Civil War, you mentioned . . .

HFW: Gale's grandfather Henry was in the Civil War.

Q: Was anything known about the service there?

HFW: I have his service record but I didn't bring it out tonight.

Q: Well where did he serve? Do you have any idea which army, was it east or west or . . .

HFW: I'm sorry I can't say without looking at the papers.

Q: Now he was the one that was on the side of the North though?

HFW: Right.

Q: And he had a brother that went to the South.

HFW: Yes.

Q: How about the Spanish-American War?

HFW: Gale's father's cousin was in the Spanish-American War but, other than that, none that I know of.

Q: None direct. How about World War I?

HFW: I don't believe there was any in World War I.

A: Some of dad's cousins . . .

HFW: Not in direct line though.

Q: Okay let's see now. We have this all on the tape thank goodness because I haven't written down much. (chuckles)

HFW: You might be interested, I don't know whether you are or not, but, on the Lively's, they were like I say Indian fighters and so forth. And when they came to Randolph County from South Carolina in 1805, there was two brothers, Joseph and John. And then in about 1823, John moved to Washington County, a neighboring county. And the Indians were on the uprise there and so forth and, in short, the family was massacred. And they have a monument up there to the family. And if you'd like to read it for your own use, I'll give you a copy of that to read, but the . . .

Q: What year was that?

HFW: In 1823 I think it was. And the only one surviving out of the massacre was the little boy and a hired hand. Everyone had moved out, they were afraid. But Lively didn't think that they would be attacked. And they could hear cattle at night and they knew that there was something out there and the wife got scared. So he — he didn't move his family out but he sent the little boy and a hired hand out to do work and while they were out working the family was massacred.

Q: I'll be darned. Well, and this happened in 1823 . . .

HFW: Yes.

Q: . . . in Washington County. My goodness. That's quite far south for an Indian massacre at that time.

HFW: Yes.

A: Called the Lively Massacre.

HFW: Yes.

Q: I see. How about . . . were any of these individuals that you know of involved in politics in any way?

HFW: Not except like for road commissioners or township officials, something like — in a county.

Q: No senators or representatives or anything of that nature.

HFW: No.

Q: Could we turn to your side of the family now.

HFW: We'll try.

Q: What was your mother's name?

HFW: Inas Reaba Hill.

Q: And what was your father's name?

HFW: Anton John Falkenheim.

Q: And where was your mother born?

HFW: Mother was born in Lockwood, Missouri.

Q: And where was your father born?

HFW: My father was born in Baldwin, Illinois, Randolph County.

Q: How about tracing back the Hills, your mother's side.

HFW: My grandfather fought in the Civil War. And in the beginning the family came from Ireland, and landed in South Carolina. They came with the Scotch-Irish to Randolph County in 1801. Most of them arrived there on Christmas Day.

Q: Oh! I'll be darned. How did they come? Have you traced that?

HFW: Yes, I've traced that, they came up through Tennessee. And one great grandparent rode horseback all the way.

Q: What was your grandmother's name then?

HFW: On my mother's side?

Q: On your mother's side.

HFW: Rachael Beattie.

Q: Beattie?

HFW: Beattie.

Q: And what's the background on the Beattie's?

HFW: Well they were just a pioneer family that came from Ireland, from South Carolina to Randolph County. Farmers. When they got there, mother said she could remember the family telling that they — there was a lot of wood, and the grandparents said that this would make good ground because, "If trees grow, anything will grow." Where, if they had taken some of the flatland, it would have been better.

Q: How about the Falkenheim's?

HFW: My grandfather came — his name was Frederick Falkenheim, he came from Germany in 1855 with his grandparents and he was only, I think, three to four years old when he came. And he had three brothers.

Q: Did they come directly to this part of . . .

HFW: They came from New Orleans up the river to Randolph County.

Q: And they came from where?

HFW: Out of the port of Hamburg, but . . . I've drawn a blank on what town it is right now. (chuckles)

Q: Bremen?

HFW: No.

Q: Wilhelmshaven?

HFW: It — it's a small little town in Germany.

Q: Who's the most distinguished in your family background?

HFW: I guess my — on my mother's side. Archibald Thompson fought in the Revolutionary War.

Q: Where? Do you have any . . .

HFW: He fought in South Carolina.

Q: On which side?

HFW: (chuckles) Well they say some of the Thompson's were Tory's too, so I don't know, but he was with Sumter's outfit.

Q: Oh.

HFW: I can't give you the company number.

Q: Do you recall any particular exploits that he's counted for?

HFW: Nothing outstanding.

Q: Let's see now, in the Civil War was . . .

HFW: My grandfather, William John Hill.

Q: And do you remember any particular thing about his exploits in the war?

HFW: No, just things that I can remember mother telling which was just like any other soldier, you know. But he did stand in line, she remembered him telling that, to even to get a drink of water and when he got up there, they knocked the cup out of the hand and it was time to go on you know.

Q: And are there any politicians in the background on your side of the house?

HFW: Well as a matter of fact my family is of the opposite party of my husband's.

Q: Oh is that right?

HFW: Yes.

Q: Well. (laughter) Gee whiz. Well that's like my family, my wife is a Democrat and I'm a Republican.

HFW: My uncle is, and has been, Democrat committeeman in Randolph County for years and still is.

Q: And who is that?

HFW: Frank Cook from Chester.

Q: Cook.

HFW: Yes.

Q: (pause) And that's a Democratic committeeman you say?

HFW: Yes, yes, precinct committeeman. My aunt was a Democrat county chairwoman for a while.

Q: In which . . .

HFW: In Randolph County, Frank Cook's wife. Her name's Laverne. She was my father's sister, on the Falkenheim side.

Q: Okay is there anything else on the family history that you think you might like to have recorded?

HFW: I don't know. (laughter)

Q: There's so much history involved.

HFW: Yes. And a lot of time spent in it you know.

Q: Well all I wanted was a general picture of the background leading up of course to when it was that you (refers to Mr. Williams) began to be conscious of these individuals and remembered talking to them and that sort of thing so that's where I'd like to pick up then.

HFW: Maybe he told you there is several sets of twins in his family.

Q: Well we only mentioned the one set of twins.

HFW: There's more.

Q: I see. Okay, well I sure appreciate the history work.

HFW: I'm sorry I couldn't help you more.

Q: No that's fine, that's — all we wanted was a general picture. (turning to Gale again) Good place to start. Of your father's brothers, that's John R. and William I believe, do you recall those two at all?

A: Yes I do, yes.

Q: What do you recall of John R.?

A: Well I was very young when he died. I don't recall just how old I was but I wasn't over I don't imagine ten or twelve years old when he died. And he was a bachelor, and had never been married. My father and him were very close. He was the oldest and my father was much younger. And my father's father died when he was eleven years old, and he went and lived with this older brother John R.

And I can recall him coming to our house and staying like for a few days at a time and then he would go back home. And he batched and farmed is what he done. Back in his early days, before I can remember of course but I've heard them tell about it lots of times, he went and homesteaded land in Oklahoma, after my father was grown. And he went out there and homesteaded land from the government, and obtained I think eighty acres of land from the government by home — had to live on it five years for the government to give it to you. And I know when he died he still had his old pearl handle .45 pistol and my father's older brother got it and my father got his double-barrel shotgun that he had.

So, but I can recall him very well and of course us kids used to love to hear him tell about when he was homesteading land out west. Because he'd tell about the Indians you know. But he never had any squirmishes with them, or he always told us that. His feeling was that you had to stir them up or do something or they wouldn't bother you. But he saw a lot of guys — Indians chased a lot of guys, but it was generally guys that had stole some of their horses or something, he always said. Apparently he got along very well out there, and . . .

Q: What did he do with the land out there?

A: He later sold it. And they always said that it's close to where Oklahoma City is now. But I know I can remember them talking, when we was little, that if he had kept it it might have been worth a lot of money, you know, back in future years. But no — I can remember him though, remember him quite well.

Q: Did he say what he was doing with the land out there? Did he farm during that period?

A: He farmed. Yes, he farmed it. I don't know what he raised on it but he called it farming it. But they had to — see back in those days, for the government to give it to you, you had to live on it five years. And they give you what they call a sheepskin deed to it then. The deed was wrote on sheepskin. And they called it a sheepskin deed, and he had a sheepskin deed to the ground.

Q: Did you see it?

A: No, I never saw it but I've heard dad talk about it lots of times. See, my father went out to the state of Washington to homestead land too. Back before I was born. And you had to put your name in — they had a drawing. And when he got out there, his name

wasn't drawn. And they just had so many acres. And there was lots of them went, on a train. But he never got to homestead any land at all, and he of course came back and went ahead and farmed up north of Ava.

Q: Do you remember talking with John R. then on any other subjects beside the . . .

A: No, not really. Only he — when he came he was always — stayed — he generally stayed two or three days at a time back in those days, and of course us kids was always — he was always playing with — especially me and my twin brother, we were the smallest. My twin brother actually was kind of his favorite. We always thought — you know we always said that after we got grown because he was always giving him, seemed like, more stuff than he did me. Not that he didn't like me too, but my twin brother and him seemed to be really closer you know. But he'd come and stay and we'd talk him into taking us hunting and stuff like that you know, just when we were kids. He wouldn't stay long, two or three days and he'd go back home. But all he done was batch and farm. No, I can remember him, remember him quite well.

Q: Do you remember the grandfather that lived with him there?

A: No. No, I don't — he was dead before I — before I was born.

Q: Oh I see.

A: Yes. I only remember — I only remember one — one grandparent, and that's on my mother's side, William Lively. I can remember him, I remember him well. He died in 1939. And the way I remember that, his funeral was on the day Hitler bombed Poland.

Q: Oh is that right. I'll be darned.

A: Of course that left — I was about, seemed to me like eighteen years old then, or something like that, eighteen or nineteen. But he lived to be close to eighty years old as I remember. And he was — he got sick and died. I don't know what from even, but I know they used to laugh about he didn't go to a dentist until he was seventy-five years old. He was tough as a knot. And he's the one of course that his wife died in Texas, from childbirth, her and the baby both died. And I know they used to tell about they came to Illinois in a covered wagon. My mother was like I think two years old or something when he finally came to Illinois. And her brother was two — I think two years older than her. But . . .

Q: And he was a farmer also?

A: Yes, he farmed. When he came to Illinois, when I can first remember him, they lived right close to Rockwood, Illinois, up here close to Chester in Randolph County. He lived on a farm up there. He farmed in that area. I can remember two or three different farms that he lived on, in the time that I can remember.

Q: Did he ever talk much about Texas with you?

A: No, not too much. He talked some. Us kids used to get him to talk about when he worked on a ranch.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

Q: You say he was interested in a ranch in . . .

A: Yes, he was a cowboy. Worked on a ranch in Texas. And even to this day some of my — one of my brothers has got the old powder horn that he used to use, but it's so old that it's got — looks like little termite holes in it or something. It was a bullhorn and

of course they had it fixed where they kept it — that's where he carried his gunpowder in. Yes, he was a cowboy and worked on a ranch in Texas, close to Austin, but I don't know just where — I know my mother always talked about it being close to Austin too and of course she had . . .

SESSION 1, TAPE 2, SIDE 1

Q: Let's see now, we've said near Austin, he was working there. Did he ever indicate to you why he wanted to come back to Illinois?

A: No, he never. I really don't know that. I know I heard him talk about when they came back. I heard him talk about my mother's mother that died too, about he had to haul her into some little village and they had to make a casket for her, to bury her. My mother always thought she could find her grave, but we never did get the chance to take her down there to see. But I don't think she could have, because I'm sure there wouldn't be any more — nothing more than a wooden marker, you know, which would have been gone. But no, I don't really know why he decided to come back.

Q: Let's see, how about your Uncle William, on your father's side?

A: Yes, of course I remember him well too. I don't remember what year he died, but he's got boys, he's got one boy my age and he's got one a lot older than me. And of course he lived up here by Swanwick, Illinois, which is in Perry County. And he lived there of course all the years that I could remember. And we used to go there — of course back in those days you know all they had was an old model T Ford, and when you went up there you stayed overnight. And they had children the age of me and my brother. And generally we got to go along of course, I can recall visiting them a lot of times. Of course he was a farmer. They milked a few cows and farmed some ground and that's the way they made their living. All very poor.

Q: Do you remember talking with him on any particular subjects?

A: No, no, I don't, only just concerning farming and stuff like that because I was a kid and — I mean I was grown by the time he died but I never talked to him that much. He was extremely hard of hearing and he was very hard to talk to because of that, he didn't wear a hearing aid or nothing, and you had to almost holler for him to hear you.

Q: Oh, that would make it difficult then.

A: Yes, he was very difficult to talk to him very much, and especially for us kids to.

Q: What were the roads like in those days when you . . .

A: Most of them was dirt roads. Most of them was dirt roads up until — they started rocking some of those old country roads back in 19 — after — during the Depression, when they had the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] camps and things like that and then, when Roosevelt got elected and come along with WPA [Works Progress Administration] programs — but up until that I don't know of any roads that was rocked around Ava or Campbell Hill, any rural road. They were all dirt roads. And of course when it rained the only way you could go was either walk or horseback, or team and wagon. And we lived almost three mile north of Ava, and I can recall going to town many a time with a team and wagon, riding a horse and also walking. Us boys, like on Sunday to go to Sunday school and church, we'd walk to town, lots of times, either walk or we'd ride a horse, but regardless, we had to go.

Q: This is about two miles was it into town?

A: Yes, almost — it's about two and half mile. And our parents was . . . us kids went to church every Sunday morning.

Q: What church was that?

A: First Baptist. Went to the First Baptist or the Pentecost. My father was Pentecost and my mother was Baptist, and my mother was more firm about going to church than my father was so we generally went to the Baptist church. But we walked a many a Sundays to go to church. It was either that or ride a horse. Unless the weather was real good and then, if it was my father, had a model T Ford, he'd take us in. Then we'd all go. But if the weather was bad us kids would go and a lot of times he'd stay home and take care of the livestock and stuff like that. But us kids went.

Q: Well what work was done on the roads in those days? Did they drag them or . . .

A: Yes, they'd usually drag — and generally it was done by the farmers that lived along there. I can remember a many a time after a rain, dad would have — my older brother would take four horses and we had a drag, and we'd drag it all the way to Ava and back. All the way to town and back, we'd drag it, drag the ruts full and make it smooth. And then maybe the next time it rained maybe one of the other neighbors would. Oh, I can remember many a times dragging the road, and you had to watch that the drag didn't catch a rock just right and flip with you. Because you'd ride it or put weights on it to make it drag better.

Q: Was this a wooden drag or . . .

A: Yes, wooden drag, the one we had. It was a wooden drag with a steel blade across the bottom of it. And you'd put weights on it and that would make it go down in the dirt a little more and you'd do a lot better job of dragging. And of course after a rain they'd wait — they waited until it started drying, then that's when they'd drag it. Fill the ruts up. Because back in those days the old cars, if you — if you went, you had to put chains on them and they would really cut the ruts out if it was muddy. Them old hills you'd have to just go at them as hard as you could to get over, if you got over.

Q: What would you do if you didn't get over?

A: Just back up, back over to one side and leave it set, and walk on to town. I've seen many a time they couldn't get over the hill and just back up and leave it set at the bottom and walk on and then you'd come back, you'd turn it arou — get it turned around, and go back home.

Q: What about your aunts on your mother's side there, Mary for example — Aunt Min was it?

A: Yes I can remember her real well. I can remember most of them. She lived in St. Louis when I could first remember. Her and her husband, she had several children too. I think they were all girls except two, had two sons. One of them lived to be real old, just died about a year ago now. He lived here at Tamaroa, he was a lawyer. But she was — I can remember her — she's been dead several years now, I don't remember what year she died, but she's been dead, oh, I'd say probably twenty years.

But she was very active, her and her husband both. Her husband worked at a factory in St. Louis but I don't remember what it was. At one time he worked at mines when they lived in southern Illinois. At Willisville, back years ago, there's no mines there even, now. But he worked at the mines and of course back then the wife didn't work, she took

care of the children. Then they moved to St. Louis and she run a rooming house there and he worked at something but I don't remember what.

Q: Do you recall visiting with them in St. Louis?

A: Oh yes, I do. Yes, I can remember our father taking us up there and we'd stay overnight, and I can remember several times that . . . back in those days whenever he took us up there. And they would come down every so often too and generally stay all night and then we'd generally have a big chicken dinner the next day on the farm and then that evening they'd drive back to St. Louis.

Q: On your visits up there did you see much of St. Louis? Did you get around . . .

A: No, not generally. No, we didn't. We generally didn't get very far. Just right around there.

Q: How did you get across the river? Was there a bridge in . . .

A: It was what they called the Old Free Bridge then. It's the MacArthur Bridge now, but they called it the Old Free Bridge then. And I think — it seems to me, like though, it might have been a small charge even then but they called it the Free Bridge. And that's the bridge we went across. I know they lived on Chouteau Avenue somewhere but I don't remember the address.

Q: How about your Aunt Sarah, or Aunt Sally, was it?

A: Yes, they — she — I remember her. She was — she lived about, oh, about a mile from where I grew up. And her and her husband farmed. And they had a fairly large family, I think there was five or six of those children. And they lived just about a mile north of us, on a small farm. And they milked a few cows and raised crops you know for a living is what they done.

Q: Yes. So you must have seen them quite often.

A: Yes, I did. Real often. And their children, I think they're all living yet except one. They've got a boy my age, and then they got one a little bit older, and one or two a little younger too. But they . . . yes I've known them well, because most of the kids are about the same age as me and my brother.

Q: Had her husband always been a farmer?

A: Yes, I think so. I knew him and knew him well, and all the years I knew him he was a farmer. Now they had a little oil well north of Ava back when I was a kid. They struck oil out there. It was a shallow well, and it was on his farm. But they struck it and they piped it — they run a pipeline to Ava. They piped that oil to Ava and loaded it on a tank car there on the railroad. I don't remember how long — it didn't last — I don't know how long, maybe a year or so, but it didn't last too long until they got they idea of drilling it deeper and bringing in more oil. But when they did, they hit water. They brung in water. And that was the end of the — and I don't know why they've never went back out in there and drilled for oil, but they never have. And they had oil at that one time and they had enough to pay to pump it too. And they — back then in those days they used an old gasoline motor to pump it. And they called it Big Bear. You could — from anywhere in the area you could hear that motor running night or day. It pumped night and day. And, boy, it was a big one. We used to go over and watch them, if they stopped the motor like for maintenance, then we liked to watch them start it because a guy would get on the big old flywheel — that's the way they turned it to start it — and he'd take his

foot and he'd get on it and — to get it turned over, to get it to start. Then of course he'd have to get off you know. (laughter) But that's the way they started that motor.

Q: Did you watch them when they drilled that well . . .

A: No, I didn't. I don't even re — I don't remember anything about them adrilling. I remember the well real well but it was already drilled when I can remember it. It might have been there longer, more years, than I even think it was. But the thing that all of us kids remember from going over there, they had a little old house built over it, a metal building, and of course that old motor made such a noise that everybody in the country went out to watch that thing. It was a monster of a motor.

Q: About how old were you at that time?

A: I was probably seven or eight years old. Very small but I can well remember it. And I know they had a man that pipelined it to Ava, which, from where this pump was, would have been a good three miles, or a little more. And they had a man every day rode that line to see if there was any leaks. Once in a while you'd see oil leaking out, and of course they'd stop it and fix the leak. But he checked that line every day.

Q: Well it must have been producing quite a bit of oil then.

A: Yes, I think it was. Because he checked that line — I know he was supposed to check it every day.

Q: Let's see now, how about Aunt Maude?

A: Yes, remember her real well. Her and her husband was farmers. She was married to a guy by the name of Joseph Bower. And they lived out southwest of Ava which would still have been in Jackson County. She taught school for a while too. That was back in the days when you didn't have to have a lot of education to teach school too, and — I'm sure she taught school for a little while. And then of course her husband farmed all the years I can remember. And I can remember way back on them too. Because he's not — they've been dead a good while but not that long. I'd say they've been dead . . . oh, probably — he's been dead about, oh, I'd say twenty-five years, her about twenty. But even after I got married we rented a house from her for a while, so we can remember her real well.

Q: Where was that? In Ava?

A: In Ava. They had a house in Ava too, besides living on the farm.

Q: I see.

A: And their plan was to retire and move to town. But he died before they got to do that. And then after we got our own house, then she eventually sold the farm and moved into Ava, after he died. He had a heart attack and died real sudden.

Q: How about Aunt Rebecca?

A: Yes, remember her. She was raised on a farm — or they lived on a farm just north of where we grew up about, oh, about three mile north of us. And we visited with them a lot too when I was a kid. They — had children too, my age or just a little older. And they — yes, we visited with them a lot. They lived on a farm, her husband was strictly a farmer all the way. And I don't know of anything else he ever done. They milked cows and raised crops. That's about all there is to do in that area.

Q: What about George Snyder, the stepfather involved there?

A: I never did know him.

Q: Didn't know him at all.

A: He died before I could remember. I don't even remember his wife which would be my grandmother, my father's mother. She died too before I could remember. Now my older brother, just older than me, name of Floyd, he can remember, but that's all. She died before we were born.

Q: How about your Uncle Perry on your mother's side?

A: Oh yes, remember him well. He was a schoolteacher.

Q: Oh, he was?

A: Yes. He was a schoolteacher, he taught school until he retired. Oh, I guess he taught school for, oh, probably thirty years I would imagine. They lived in — he lived in Willisville, Illinois. That's in, that's in Perry County. And lived there and taught school for years there and then his first wife died, had cancer and died. Then later on, several years later, he remarried, and that's the — the lady that he married then was from Sparta, which is Randolph County, and she was a schoolteacher. And then they moved to Sparta. They still lived at Willisville for a few years, both of them taught there in the area, but then they moved to Sparta and they taught up in the Sparta area, her and him both, until they retired. And they're both dead now. He's been dead probably, oh, I'd say fifteen years, and she's been dead I would say maybe ten. But they both taught until they retired.

Q: Do you remember any discussions with him on any particular subjects?

A: Only — well he used to — we used to visit with them a lot and they used to visit with my parents a lot too because my mother and him was the only two on her side of the family. Just general discussion though, you know. I've heard them talk about their father, you know, things like that, but — see they were both real small even when he brought them . . . came to Illinois from Texas, because they didn't really remember it. My mother always imagined she could, but she really couldn't. She always imagined she could find her mother's grave if she just had the chance. And us boys, our plans always was to take her back down there just to satisfy her. But we never did get it done. She got sick and she was sick for a long time before she died. Fell and broke her hip and all that, and she just never — we never did get to take her.

Q: Did you have occasion to talk with any of these uncles or aunts concerning politics in any way? Were they interested in . . .

A: No, the only one that, on my father's side, that was ever in politics was this Aunt Mary, Min we called her. Her son, who lived up here at Tamaroa, that died about a year ago, he was a county judge in Perry County for, oh, I think maybe a couple — that's — couple or three terms. That's back when they had to run on political party, back several years ago. And then he got defeated, and of course he practiced law then. And . . .

Q: What was his name?

A: Howard Bagwell. But he was elected judge, I think two or three terms in that county. Now that would have been back, oh, several years ago. Because he lived — he just died last year but he was — he would never tell his age.

Q: Oh?

A: But we know nearly he was in his eighties last year. But he never would tell his age. And he's only — he's got two sisters living yet. They live in California. And they wouldn't tell his age at the funeral even, because that was his request.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: And he just would never tell his age. Of course my mother would have been living, she would have known his age because she's like my wife, she kept those records on all of them. But we figured he was — he had to be in his eighties. I don't think he was in his nineties yet. But he was really old and he was active up until — pretty well till the end too. Drove his car.

Q: Did you know him while he was in the judgeship?

A: Yes. But I was small, but I knew him, yes. Yes, he was elected judge in Perry County on the Democrat ticket, back whenever I was real young.

Q: You said your father was involved with coal mining at one time?

A: At one time, yes. Short time. He worked at the mine — there was the mines around Willisville. And he worked on top. He always said he wouldn't work underground, and he was one of those that worked on top there. And he used to go — we lived north of Ava then — and I've heard him and my mother talk about what hardships they had. He would go take a team and buggy, and go early, like on Monday I guess, he always — first part of the week and he wouldn't get home until maybe Friday night. He'd stay all week. And . . .

Q: How far was the mine away?

A: Well to Willisville, the way he would go then, it would have been about six mile I would imagine, with a team and buggy. And they had a livery — what they called a livery stable there in Willisville. It's where they kept horses, and he would keep his team there, and then he'd come back home — if there was work all week, why, of course he'd come home on a weekend. And if there wasn't course he'd come home sooner.

Q: Well let's see, how old were you at that time?

A: Oh I was — I don't even remember him working at the mines as such. I can remember him coming home but as far as what he was doing I don't remember. Of course I know now he worked at the mines. See, I was the youngest and I had one brother that was twenty years older than me. And then I had another brother that's about, oh, he's, let's see, he's eight years older than I am. When those boys got up big enough to help, then dad would go and work at the mines all week and then come home.

Q: I was wondering who was doing the work.

A: Right. And they would take care of the livestock, especially in the wintertime.

Q: What's your oldest brother's name?

A: Floyd. He's dead now. He died in 1950, had a heart attack.

Q: And what was the next brother's name?

A: Raymond. And he's still living.

Q: And your twin brother's name was?

A: Glenn. And I've got another brother, Archie, that's just older than me and Glenn. He's four years older than we are. And I've got a sister that's in between my two oldest brothers. Had one girl.

Q: And her name . . .

A: Her name is Ruth. She's actually the oldest living now of our family. My oldest brother died. Then her and then Raymond.

Q: Let's see now. (pause) You say you were attending the Baptist Church normally.

A: Yes.

Q: What do you remember about social life when you were quite young, say before — pre-school let's say — what'd the family do in those years?

A: The only social life there was, back whenever I was even going to grade school, was — we went to a grade school in the country. It's on the corner of our place, about two and a half mile north of Ava, called Edwards School. It had a nickname but nobody would believe they called them "Pluck'em Inn".

Q: "Pluck'em Inn?"

A: "Pluck'em Inn." But the real name of it was Edwards School. Back in those days, when they first started, of course there was a lot of children in the country, and they got that nickname. Now later there wasn't very many kids went to country school.

But about the only social life you had, like was on a Sunday afternoon, is you'd either play ball or you'd go swimming, if it was in the summertime, ride horses, and we done all of those things. Pitch horseshoes. I remember when I was a kid it was a big deal to play ball, it was a big deal to go swimming. And play horseshoes, choose up sides, see who could win. We'd wrestle. Just — all your recreation, your social thing, was with neighbors you know. Neighbor kids would all get together and have a ball game or — or we'd ride horses or whatever, you know.

Q: You do much fishing?

A: Some. I wasn't much on fishing. Now, couple of my brothers were, but I never done much fishing.

Q: Where did you do your swimming?

A: Creeks and ponds. Right there in the area. We had a pond on our farm then that was fairly new and we'd swim in that and we had a neighbor that had a pretty good-sized pond. But creeks was mostly it. We had some creeks there in the — some neighbors that had creeks went through their farm. Some of them had pre — wouldn't be big swimming holes today but back then it was called — we thought it was pretty good.

Q: Did you do much hunting when you were young?

A: Yes, done quite a bit of hunting. We — of course we hunted rabbits and quail, and me and my brother, my twin brother, we done a lot of trapping too.

Q: Oh.

A: Of course we'd — anything to make money. And we trapped skunk, possum — that's about all there was to trap right there in the area where we were. There was some foxes, but the foxes were smarter than we were. We couldn't catch them.

Q: Well.

A: We had some neighbors that knew how to trap for them and catch them, but we didn't. But we caught a lot of skunk and a lot of possums, stuff like that and we'd sell them.

Q: How did you go about trapping skunk for example?

A: We'd find their den. And we'd set the trap and try to cover it with leaves and catch them that way. Same way with possum. Now they're pretty easy to catch, 'cause they're not that smart an animal. And of course you'd run your traps every morning, and back then a skunk hide was worth — was — if you got a — like what we called a star, which was one with not much white on it, you got one dollar for it. Now if it had a lot of white on it, you wouldn't get over thirty-five, forty cents. Same way with a possum. An old possum hide was only worth about thirty-five cents. But, man, that was money then. (laughter)

Q: Did you do the skinning yourself?

A: Oh yes. Me and him done the skinning, yes.

Q: Did you stretch them then or . . .

A: Yes, we'd send off to Sears and Roebuck generally, or we'd take a board and make a stretcher. Take a board and sharpen it on one end and smooth it off so that it wouldn't damage the fur. And stretch it over that. But you could also — we could buy a wire stretcher out of Sears and Roebuck, or Montgomery Ward, catalog back in those days for little or nothing. They were steel wire and they would — just slip it inside the hide and it would stretch when you turned it loose. That's what we generally used. And they were real good at stretching the hide.

We'd let them dry and then we'd take them to Campbell Hill, there was an old man there that was a fur buyer. And we'd take them to him and sell them to him. And he bought furs from, oh, everybody. We'd go there and he'd have a building full of fur. And he'd take it to St. Louis then and sell it.

Q: Did you ever get caught by a skunk on the wrong . . .

A: Yes sir. Sure have. Taking — you catch them in a trap and — especially if you was going to kill them with a club. I know one time I struck at one and missed it and — he really fixed you. That's all you had to do, stir him up. Oh yes, me and my brother both got it a lot of times. And my mother'd make us — she'd put us outside and make us go out in the garage and change clothes and leave them outside 'cause you'd stink so bad. You'd stink something terrible, once they'd squirted you.

Q: What do you remember of your mother in your early days, pre-school days for example?

A: The main thing that I always remember about my mother was she worked all the time. And . . . but I never heard my mother — she always tried to teach us kids, you know, to — she was a strong believer in, "You do what's right." Every Sunday you went to church, you went to school every day, and when you got home you worked. And that was all my parents knew. And that was the backbone of the whole thing right there. Do anything in the world for us kids. She'd patch clothes, I could see her yet today setting

and patching overalls that would have holes in the knees. We'd get to playing in school and tear a hole in the knee. Get home and, man, she'd make you get them off and she'd turn that leg wrong side out and put a patch on it and you'd put it back on. That was the way she done it.

But my mother would — even whenever we were old enough to work in the field, she'd milk the cows of an evening, if we could stay in the field and work late. And she'd get all that started. And of a morning, while we were out of a morning milking the cows and doing the feeding, she'd get breakfast for all of us, and she'd bake biscuits every day my father lived. Every morning she'd bake biscuits, 'cause my father loved them.

SESSION 1, TAPE 2, SIDE 2

Q: What was your favorite food that she fixed.

A: Oh back then us kids loved them too, good hot biscuits was good for anybody. And she'd bake biscuits and she'd fry eggs and bacon every morning. And she'd make gravy. Of course I don't eat gravy anymore. My wife can't understand that. I said, "If you was raised on it, and you had it every day for about twenty-one years of your life," I said, "you'd get burnt out on it." Because I was twenty-one years before I left home. Anymore I don't care for it, but she used to get up and she'd bake biscuits and fry eggs and bacon every morning of the year. Sunday and all. There was no holiday for that.

Q: Then did you have any household chores, in the house itself?

A: Not much. The main — about the only thing we would do is, like of an evening a lot of times — in the wintertime I'm talking about now — is we would wash, me and my brother, would wash the dishes for her, or we'd dry them. Of course we generally talked her into doing something. We'd talk her into making us homemade candy, or something. We'd tell her we'd do the dishes and all those things and generally we could con her into it, you know.

Q: What kind of heat did you have in the house in those days?

A: We had a stove that burned wood or coal either one. We burnt — most of the time we burnt coal in it. But now the cook stove most of the time with it we burnt wood in it.

Q: So you had to cut wood in the timber I guess?

A: Oh yes, we had to cut wood. Yes. We cut a lot of wood in the wintertime.

Q: Was there timber on your dad's acreage?

A: Yes, yes. Yes, we had some, we had one forty acres that he bought that had a lot of timber on it. And we cut a lot of wood on it. But we would burn coal mostly for heat. Burnt some wood, we cut — we cut wood, but a lot of times most of the wood we cut it up and she used it in the cook stove.

Q: Where did you get your coal?

A: With a team and wagon, there was mine's right east of Ava, called Morgan Mines, and also a mine called Berkner Mines. And this Doc Berkner here in Murphysboro his father's the one that had the mines. And we used to take a team and wagon and go to either Morgan mine or Berkner mine and get a wagonload of coal. And . . .

Q: And where'd you store it? Did you have a coal shed?

A: Yes we had a what we called a coal house. We had a building there that — we called it a coal house. We'd dump it in there and then we'd take it out a bucket at a time. But we'd burn coal and we'd burn wood too, but naturally us boys always tried to talk dad into burning coal, because you didn't have to cut that. (chuckles) Cut that wood.

Q: So I guess you had a big woodpile then out back.

A: Generally, yes, pretty good-sized woodpile. We'd cut wood.

Q: Did your dad have occasion to take you behind the woodpile very often?

A: Oh yes. My dad was very strict. And us boys were determined to smoke and my father was determined that we wouldn't and he'd always catch us smoking grapevine or cornsilks or something. And my dad was one those kind that he only believed in telling you one time, that was all. And he would really give us a whipping if he caught us smoking or something. That was the biggest thing we'd get in trouble for.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: Today I don't smoke at all.

Q: Well. (laughter) What would he use when he whipped you?

A: Generally a razor strap. (chuckles)

Q: Oh is that right?

A: Yes. Had one of the old razor straps. Yes. My dad just didn't believe in telling you anything but once, to get up of a morning it was just one time. He just didn't believe in running back in there and begging you to get up, when it was time to get up he'd holler, "Get up," and that's what he meant, and we all got up.

Q: Well.

A: And we all had our chores to do. What we done before breakfast, while my mother fixed breakfast, we'd go and we'd milk and we'd feed the livestock, feed everything. So the horses — he thought they had to have time to eat too. First thing we'd do is feed them, because we was going to be working them. And then by the time we'd get the milking done, and time we'd eat and all, then the horses would have time to eat too. You didn't mistreat the livestock, not at our house. He didn't believe in mistreating the horses, the livestock at all. Every morning we had to curry them horses. You didn't dare harness them without currying them. Because it made them look pretty. And that was just the way he trained us.

Q: Was your mother a strict disciplinarian?

A: Yes she was. My mother was very strict. You could talk her out of things some way more than you could my father but my mother was very strict as far as a — they weren't always whipping on us but they didn't have to, because we knew when they told you something — you knew when they meant it and when they didn't mean it. And, if they meant it, you just didn't question it, you went and done it, you know. But if she told you not to do something, you just didn't do it, you just forgot it that's all. You were going to get in trouble if you didn't.

Q: Did you go to town on Saturday night generally?

A: That was the night to go to town, Saturday night. And we would work — we'd do about anything mom and dad wanted us to do to get them to take us to town on Saturday night. That was always at Ava. I can remember when I was a kid you couldn't find a parking place in Ava on Saturday night. The stores stayed open until nine, ten o'clock at night. The gas station stayed open for those who had a car. Oh just any — any business there, hardware store, all of them, everything stayed open until nine, ten o'clock at night. And everybody'd go to town on Saturday night, and they'd do their shopping and visit with everybody. I can remember them standing on the street and talking and talking and talking. Barbershops would stay open. The old saloons would stay open, they were always there, two or three of them. Just everybody stayed open.

Q: What would you do there?

A: Us kids? Just play. We'd run up and down the streets just like any other kids seeing what — seeing what was going on. They had an old theater there for a while but didn't have the money to go. So there wasn't too many — was very seldom you got to go to the show, and then it would make you so late getting out that the parents didn't want you to go a lot of times. But you'd just play with other kids up and down the street, that's all there was to do.

Q: Did the merchants have free shows occasionally?

A: No, no, they didn't. No, the merchants — course they had — they had several stores there and they even then had one what they called a farmers' store, it he had a little bit of everything. The hardware stores would have pretty much just about anything too. And — no, there wasn't much to do, only just go to town and get us a bottle — of course you'd do anything to get a bottle of soda back then. They were a nickel, but that was a lot of money if you didn't have the nickel. And they'd get a sack of candy, you know. Of course you got a whole sack of candy back then for a nickel or a dime you know. And . . . some of the merchants too, like me and my twin brother we were twins, and a lot of times they'd give us something you know.

Q: Oh?

A: Oh yes, they were always — twins was something then. I can remember one store that'd always give us a cookie apiece when we went in there. Of course we thought he was the greatest guy there was because he gave us a cookie. And old man Kent Keller was congressman too from this district back then when we were kids, and I can remember he used to give us a nickel apiece a lot of times when he'd see us. And of course we thought he was the greatest. We didn't know what a congressman was but he was alright, we knew that. (laughter)

Q: I'll be darned. What — because you were twins you mean?

A: Well that was one thing. Him and my father were real good friends and they grew up together, pretty well, and then us being twins, and he always — a lot of times he'd see us and he'd give us a nickel. Course we thought he was just something, you know, because he did do that. And . . . oh yes, and they — us being twins — course they were always — somebody teasing us you know, or something back in those days. Threshing time they was always getting us to wrestle and . . . they'd give us a nickel or something to get us to wrestle you know and all that stuff you know. Yes, it was something. We was the only twins out in that area then.

Q: What did you do on the threshing crew?

A: Well when we first started, of course we were too little to do anything except carry water. And we had an old horse and we'd hang a couple of jugs over the saddle. We'd

ride around and take water to all the guys working in the threshing, like the pitchers and the guys on the wagon because it was extremely hot weather back in threshingtime then. They generally done the threshing in July, you know. And all we could do was carry water around to them. But we got paid a little bit for it. Of course that was big money, anything was money, you know, to us then. Because we didn't have any.

Q: Did you work on the crew later, at other times?

A: Yes. Pitching bundles and . . . yes.

Q: Pitching.

A: Yes. Generally pitching bundles. Because they always get the young boys on that because that's really work. (chuckles) And the older guys get the wagons you know. But, oh yes, I worked pitching bundles.

Q: There's a technique to building a wagon, isn't there?

A: Oh yes. You had to lay them with the butts out you know. If you didn't, you's — the whole load's liable to slide off on you. Oh yes, you had to learn that. You laid them on there in rows. I've done that too. Laid them on in rows and lay a row in the center to hold them, and then start your next row. If you didn't . . .

Q: Where did you learn that? Who taught you?

A: You just picked it up.

Q: Did you . . .

A: Yes, just watching the others do it, you know.

Q: Did you ever lose a load?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Oh, you have?

A: Oh yes. Get on the side in the wrong place and just slide right off. (laughter) It sure would, and you got to pick them up too.

Q: What about pitching a load off into the separator?

A: Yes, you had to throw the . . . let's see, you throw them with the heads facing the thresher I believe. There was a technique to that too. You either throwed — either the butts or the heads to it all the time, you throwed them the same way. And of course you — you didn't pitch them real fast cause you clogged up the — the big threshing machine. 'Cause if — especially if you had a machine where they pitched from what we called both sides. There'd be a wagon on each side of it unloading, and you took your turn pitching a bundle in there or you clogged the threshing machine up. Oh yes, I pitched them.

Q: Kind of dusty job.

A: Yes, it was. Sweaty and dusty. Generally tied an old red bandana hankerchief around your neck, if you didn't the chaff'd get down in your clothes and — very uncomfortable.

Q: Did you ever work on the separator itself?

A: No. I've watched them work on it lots of times but I never really worked on it. I've seen it clogged up and seen them take it apart, but I never actually done it.

Q: Who had the threshing ring when you were a kid?

A: Threshing machine?

Q: The machine itself . . .

A: Well the machine — the man that had the threshing run that my father was in, the years I can remember, was a man by the name of George Cluster. And he run that threshing machine year after year, and then — and then when he got real old his son by the name of Bill Cluster, who was a lot older then than I am, he run it then. And they're the . . . and I only remember one other man that ever run a threshing machine out through our area was a guy by the name of Buck Bowers from Ava. Now he had a threshing machine. And they would bid on those runs. The way they would bid, they'd charge so much a bushel. That's what the machine operator got. I don't remember what the bid really was. But that's the way they bid on them runs. And George, old man by the name of George Cluster, got a — I only remember one year that Buck Bowers done it, the rest of the years he done it. And that was years and years too.

Had a big old threshing machine and a big old steel-wheel tractor that they pulled it with. And then they'd get it there and they'd set it and they'd block the thresher and then they'd get the tractor out and they'd set it and block it and hook the belt up, you know, to it. Let her set and run.

Q: (chuckles) Don't see those many times anymore do you?

A: Oh no, you don't see them unless it's just in a antique show or something.

Q: Let's see, when . . . you would have started to school about 1925 I guess. No, it would have been later than that.

A: No I was born in 1922, and I started to school in 1927 when I was five years old.

Q: And this was a country school, I guess one-room school.

A: One-room country school.

Q: Do you remember your first teacher?

A: Yes. Reba Woodward. He's been dead now several years, his sister's still living here in Murphysboro. Yes, I remember him well, in fact he taught the school three years.

Q: Oh. Your first three years . . .

A: Yes, it was him. He was one fine man too.

Q: What do you remember about him?

A: Oh he was big, and real jolly person. He was strict, but he was good to the kids, the kids all liked him. And he'd play at recess time and all with us you know. He was real easy to get along with. The children all liked him and they done good under him too, because he was very helpful with you. Of course back in those days they'd give you a lot of lessons to do and you had to take it home and study of a night too. Because when you got home, after you got your work done, my father, the next order of business was, "You get them lessons." You know. And you had to . . . and back then reading, writing, and

arithmetic was the main thing. And they'd give you so much writing to do, penmanship they called it. And they'd give you so many problems to work, and you worked them, and you took them back and they graded you on them. And your parents would make you do it too.

But he — back in those days schoolteachers were real common. You know they'd visit — they'd visit the homes too back in those days and I can remember a few times when the weather was bad, because it was two and a half mile out of town, he'd stay overnight. He'd stay overnight with us. And then we had back in those days too, like a lot of times you had a single teacher, they'd stay right in the district. They'd pay rent you know. I remember one year a lady from Murphysboro stayed at our house for one whole school term. She'd go home maybe on weekends or something to her parents, but she stayed with us one whole year. I remember another teacher staying with our neighbor for a year or two.

Q: Mr. Woodward was married then.

A: Yes, I think he was married because he didn't normally stay with anybody. He was married.

Q: What do you remember about the course work in say the first, second, and third grade? Was — any particular . . .

A: No, I don't. I know that it always seemed to me like they made us do a lot of writing, you know. An awful lot of writing. Then on — generally on Friday afternoon they'd have spelling contests. They'd have all kind of contests at school then. Especially spelling contests, and stuff like that. Kids would choose up sides, see which side could — and the teacher would give you the words you know — to get kids to spell. Everything they'd have contests for. A lot of times on Friday afternoon too we'd have a ball game, you know.

Q: To play another school?

A: Yes, we done both. Ball team in our own school and then when I was a little older they'd play another school too, another country school. One year I went to school in — at Denmark and the man that taught it was Leroy Bigham. And Time School which was not too far away his sister taught. And that year, a lot of times on Friday afternoon, the two schools would play each other. And that was always quite a deal because it was a brother and sister teacher. And we'd have quite a ball game.

Q: And this was baseball I guess?

A: Softball.

Q: Softball.

A: Yes, softball.

Q: What other kind of sports were involved at that time?

A: About the only kind of sports that were involved then was — well there's baseball — softball then. And we played a lot of softball and — at school that was the main thing you played at school then. About the only thing too, outside of hide-and-go-seek or something like that. But in sports just ball was about it.

Q: Did you have a Christmas program?

A: Oh yes. Yes, back in those days, the country school, they always had programs. They had box suppers in the fall. And of course they'd — the girls would all have to bring a

box and of course the — like parents, if they had older girls too at home, they could bring a box you know. Of course that was always the gimmick to find out whose girlfriend she was and run the box up on him you know, or somebody else buy it, you know. And of course at Christmas time we always had Christmas program and we'd have a tree, and that was always a big deal. The parents would always come and participate, you know. You'd draw names to get some kind of a little gift. They'd limit it to what you could spend you know. But that was always a big deal back in those days. And Christmas time and the box suppers both.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

Q: So how often would they have these socials at the grade school then?

A: Well the box supper, they'd have one in the fall, and then they'd have their Christmas program. And that was their two main socials of the year. Unless they might have a — in between those times they might have a pie supper, or something they'd call it. The purpose of the school was to make a little money, you know, for activities for kids you know. Of course they wouldn't make much, but back then they thought it was. But they tried to make a little money out of it to have more activities for the kids in their school. Of course they never did make much money.

Q: I suppose you had a last-day-of-school celebration, a picnic . . .

A: Yes. Always had a last-day-of-school — and generally a picnic deal. Where the parents would come, they'd bring basket lunches and all those things.

Q: Did they have a PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] type organization of any sort . . .

A: No. No, they didn't have. Not then.

Q: Were either your father or your mother involved with the administration of the school?

A: My father was a school director for several years. Yes they — back in those days if you had a large family sooner or later you're going to wind up being on the school board. But he was on it for several years. And they'd try to — but nobody — back in those days very seldom anybody wanted to serve. The only time you'd have any contest in a school election was if somebody got mad at the teacher, wanting to fire the teacher, and then they'd run for school board to get at the teacher. But my father never had any problem with anybody. My father, in the first place, was so strict that us kids, if we got a whipping in school — if we got a whipping at school, we'd agot one when we got home. That was just a standing rule.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: That if you got into it at school, he was going to make sure you got a good one when you got home. That was the way he believed, so you didn't dare get a whipping in school. Just didn't dare.

Q: How many children were in the school at any one time?

A: Well when I went we had — well we never had very many the years that I went because most of them had already — that's when the country schools were starting to fade out too, really. I'd say we had . . . well one year I went, we probably had twelve or fifteen, you know, maybe eighteen, but it trickled down to the last year I went, there was just three of us, country school. Me and my twin brother and a neighbor boy.

Q: Let's see now, that would have been about 1935?

A: I would imagine, around that, yes.

Q: I'll be doggoned.

A: Just three of us, all there was. A couple of neighbors that had children had moved. They didn't own their land and they had moved away, and nobody moved in with children. And they just kept — it just kept changing. Back when my older brothers went, why, they had a school full of kids, but it got down to where there just wasn't any left to go. Of course that's one thing that caused them to do away with the old country schools too. Now there aren't any kids in the country anymore but . . .

Q: Well let's see, what teacher then followed Mr. Woodward?

A: Woodward — a guy by the name of Robert Morris. One-armed man. And he was from Carbondale I believe, around Carbondale. Taught up there. And then we had a lady by the name of Ruth Henley. She was from Murphysboro. She's the one that stayed at our house for a year or two, she only taught I think two years. And then we had a man by the name of Roscoe McBride, he was from Ava. And then we had a woman from Ava by the name of Lettie Bilderback.

Q: What do you remember of Robert Morris?

A: He was a real fine man, and very easy on the kids. The thing that we remembered most about him was a lot of times during the day he'd go to sleep.

Q: Oh is that right? (laughter)

A: Yes, he'd go to sleep and — but he was real nice, and good to the kids too. And he got along with the parents too real well. We never had any bad problems with — during my school days. I've heard some of them tell about them before when they — but that was when they had a lot more at their schools. Because back when my older brothers went, my, they had so many kids at school — in those one-room schools you know. But by the time me and my twin brother came along the enrollment was way down, it just kept going down. About the most I can remember was twelve or fifteen kids at school, and then it just dropped down. Some of the families moved away that had four or five kids in school. First thing you know, there wasn't hardly anybody left. Wasn't many left.

Q: You say Ruth Henley was there following Mr. Morris then.

A: Right. I believe she followed him.

Q: Yes. Let's see, this would have been your fifth grade then I guess.

A: Probably.

Q: That's a rather important grade in anyone's life.

A: Right.

Q: What do you remember of Miss Henley and her influence?

A: She was real good to the kids because she was young. I think she must have been just out of college, I'm not sure. And she was real young and of course the kids just loved her. Because she really worked, she got out at recess time — now Mr. Morris and them were — he was fairly up in years, you know, when he taught. But now she come along and she was young and she'd get out there and just play with the kids you know. And the kids just loved her, they really did. Then the guy that followed her, Roscoe McBride, too

they — they liked him, he was young. And he'd get out — and in the winter, sleigh ride with you. And she did too. They got out and we had a hill there and during recess we'd get out and sleigh ride. They'd sleigh ride with you, and all that stuff you know. And actually the kids just loved them, you know, for that.

Q: Then Lettie Bilderback was it?

A: Bilderback yes. Now she was an older lady. She was real good, but she was really strict. But the kids did like her. And she was always trying to have some activity you know. But she didn't get out and play. She was just too old for that sort . . .

Q: But there were only three of you then.

A: There was only three that year.

Q: My goodness.

A: Yes. But she was good to us kids. She would always bring us stuff to school. She'd bring us an apple a lot of times, and stuff, which we thought was great. Anybody that would give you anything when you ain't got nothing, you think they're great.

Q: Yes sir.

SESSION 2, TAPE 3, SIDE 1

Q: Wonder if we could talk a litle bit more about the school. To start with what kind of heat did you have in that schoolhouse, the one-room schoolhouse?

A: It was a coal stove. Heated with coal.

Q: It had a coal bin out there?

A: Yes, they had a little old house out there that was . . . one side they put kindling in it and the other side they put coal. And they generally hired students to — the teacher — it was up to the teacher to build the fire. But now, for about three or four years, me and my twin brother we were janitors for the school too. We'd go over early of a morning and we'd sweep the school all out and we'd build the fire and then we'd go back home because we lived just a quarter of a mile from school. We'd go back home and then when it got schooltime of course we'd come back.

Q: What kind of kindling did you use, cobs or . . .

A: Cobs and just little old wood that we'd split up. Most of it was cobs though, a lot of it.

Q: Was there a stable there at the school?

A: No. No there were no stables, all they had was two outside toilets, one for the girls and one for the boys, and then they had the coal house and what we called the kindling house.

Q: Did any of the kids ride horses to . . .

A: No, none of them rode horses to school. They lived — about the farthest away any of them lived was like I'd say a mile, a mile and a half. And they all — they'd walk it or their parents would bring them sometimes.

Q: Did you go home for lunch then, since you were so close?

A: No, we generally took our lunch. We hardly — very few times we ever went home for lunch. We'd take our . . . my mother took a molasses bucket, that was our dinner bucket, and she'd put us a couple of sandwiches in there and some cookies or something and generally an apple, that would be it.

Q: Did you take cream for snow ice cream in the wintertime?

A: Oh yes, lots of times we — there'd come a big snow, we couldn't wait to make snow ice cream. My mother would put a little bit of vanilla extract with it and put some cream with it and, boy, it was delicious. It was delicious.

Q: What did you think of the education you got there in that school?

A: Well the main thing that we got back then — of course there wasn't very many kids and the teacher could be a lot more personal with children back then. They played with you at recess times. They — things that they taught you — main things were reading, writing and arithmetic. And by the time you got through the country school, you really knew those things. A lot of things that — now I know kids today are more educated in math and stuff like that but most of them can't hardly write their name. And they can't — when it comes to arithmetic, like working problems, a lot of them just can't — just don't have it.

Q: Calculators.

A: That's right, they need a calculator to do it. Where back in our day, you just had to learn it, you had to know it. They're amazed at me today, young people that work around me, at the way I figure things, you know. Like when it comes to figuring, like on homes that we sell, figuring the payments. A lot of times they're messing around with a calculator and I've done got it figured up.

Q: Well.

A: But those are things that we had to learn. We had to learn how to write and we had to learn how to read, we had to learn arithmetic. Teachers were very strict in those days. They had control of the children too. Teacher — you looked to a teacher about like your second parents you know. And whatever that teacher told you, you obeyed. Without any question. And kids today just — they don't have that discipline over children today. They just don't have it.

Q: I believe you indicated there was considerable homework that you had to do.

A: Yes, back in those days they gave you your lesson for the next day. Teachers would. They assigned you so many pages in different books that you had to study from. And you had to take that home and study that that night. And of course your parents were aware of all this and after you got your evening meal over and your work done, then before you thought about any play, why, you had to get your lesson. And generally you had to put so much of it down in writing. And my father and mother, you didn't get to do nothing until you got that lesson. And then after that was your time for playing, like, back in those days of course, kids, we played dominoes and we played Rook and different card games. My mother and father didn't believe in any gambling at all. So the only thing we could play was like dominoes and things like that that wasn't considered gambling. And they were very strict about it.

Q: (pause) I get questions occasionally and they — they just fly off in the air. (laughter) At that time, let's see that would of — in the 1920's — would have been in the prohibition days, was there much moonshining and that sort of thing in your area?

A: Yes, I think there was, but now I didn't know it. I heard my father talk about it. And I know — I can remember several times the sheriff's coming to our house and asking my father about different people. And at that time I was so small I hardly realized what they were doing. The sheriff at that time was — name was Flannigan I believe. A fellow by the name of Bill Flannigan, and he knew my father, and apparently in this — not so much in our area as it was south of Ava — down in those hills they was — in fact they arrested several I think several times, for having stills and bootlegging whiskey. And I think one guy was sent up — I don't think he was sent up for — bootlegging, I think he was sent up for — sent up to the prison for — they'd had some robberies there at Ava. The store and the bank had been robbed, and several things had been robbed. And — and they put up at his place. And I think that they actually sent him up for that, but he also I think had a still too, and all that stuff they found.

Q: I noticed — let's see I believe it's on your mother's side — you're related to the Sheltons. Was that the Shelton gang?

A: Well some of it — if you go back very far it was. Now one of the Sheltons was supposed to have been a nephew. I know one of the Sheltons at one time came to visit whenever me and my twin brother was small. In fact he took us to a — took us to a movie that night at Murphysboro. And we found out later that he had been very closely connected with the Shelton brothers.

In fact he told us one time about he was hauling back a truckload of whiskey from down south somewhere, and the police had caught him, and were holding him, and his two uncles, which was Carl and Bernie, come up in a car and he said they got out and, when they found out what it was, they just tied the police up and had him to drive the truck on. They got out of their territory. He told us about that incident, was the only one I recall him really telling us about. He thought that was a big thing. Carl and Bernie was his uncles he said, and they just tied the police up to a tree and told him to drive on and they stayed until he had time to be out of their territory and then they come on.

Q: I'll be darned. (laughter) Gee. You mentioned the show there. Was there a county fair near you there?

A: No, no, the show that he took us to was here at Murphysboro. The old Hippodrome Theater.

Q: Oh?

A: And he brought us all the way from Ava to Murphysboro. Course we thought he was just one fine guy. Little did we know — we didn't know much about him. But he liked us kids and he took us to the show and bought us ice cream and I don't know what all. And we really enjoyed it.

Q: Was there a county fair in that area?

A: No. No, Ava has — still has today what they call the Ava Homecoming every year, it's an annual thing. And some years they have it two days, some years three days. Back when I was a kid, it was always a two-day affair. Of course back in those days they didn't have like livestock showings or nothing. It was just a real big homecoming where they'd have — a lot of families would meet and take their dinners. I can recall my father and mother taking our lunch and some of the relatives meeting there and we'd go to the Ava Homecoming and have dinner together and all those things. I can remember them going with team and wagon. And they'd take feed for the horses, and unhook them and tie them to the wagons so they could eat out of the back of the wagon while we were there. And they had a lake, you could water them at this lake.

Q: Was there a park there around the lake?

A: Yes. There was a park there, it was called — it was Wright's Park. An old gentleman by the name of Rollie Wright owned it. And it was a big — it was a big thing for Ava. They had a field out there from it and I can recall Paul Montgomery, who was an aviator, he brought two or three planes in there one year, and they'd take people a ride in them. Back when they had the old open cockpits. And later he was sent to prison for bombing down in Kentucky when they had a big coal mine strike. He'd done some bombing down there and they caught him and they sent him to prison over it.

Q: He was bombing from the aircraft?

A: Yes.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: Yes, he was doing some bombing. And they — and they sent him to prison over that. And so that was the end of him coming to Ava.

Q: Did you get to ride with him?

A: No, I never got to ride. We were real little and the plane was open, and our parents wouldn't let us.

Q: Afraid you'd fall out I guess.

A: Right. Afraid we'd fall out.

Q: Where did he land there?

A: Right — just right west of where the park was but the same man owned the field. And he'd come in real low and land and . . . he was quite a showman. He'd come over real low and he'd yell at people and then he'd circle again and then he'd land. Of course back in those days both cockpits were open, where the passenger set and where the pilot set. They'd have to wear goggles and those caps, leather caps you know. It was quite a show.

Q: What other type of activity did they have at the homecoming?

A: Well they'd have like a — they used to have a — they'd always have a band, generally from KMOX, Pappy Cheshire. I can remember that — they were on a KMOX radio show back in those days. And they always tried to get them down there for the homecoming, or someone of that stature, to — because everybody — back in those days of course there wasn't any TV, and a lot of people didn't have radio. But Pappy Cheshire and his gang would come down to the homecoming and make music.

Q: And this was a band from KMOX you say?

A: Yes. They were the most popular band in our area. If you could get them — and I can remember several years they had them down there. It was a musical band, they sang, and they had some girls on it and they'd come down and of course everybody went to see — hear that band. And they had a dance floor there at the picnic area too. And of course they had a stage and there used to be a guy too came down from KMOX by the name of Charlie Stuckey. And he had — he was a musician. He could fiddle and all those things and he generally come down with Pappy Cheshire's bunch. And they came down often enough that they had a lot of friends in our area. In fact a gentleman that later bought the newspaper at Ava was a very close friend of theirs. Of course he could get them down here most anytime.

Q: Bought the newspaper in Ava?

A: Yes, a gentleman from Ava bought it from some older people that had it, and he was a good friend of this Charlie Stuckey and some of them. 'Cause he'd been in St. Louis for several years and he also was, you know, pretty — pretty good with musical instruments. And after he got there I know one year he got Charlie Stuckey and his bunch back down there even after this Cheshire had died. So he had a lot of influence with them and he knew them all from that radio station. He knew them all.

Q: Did they have ball games?

A: Oh yes, always had a ball game. Yes, they'd have a baseball game and like back in those days different towns would have ball teams. Ava had a pretty good ball team and then the Jacob area, they had a good ball team, down in there what we call from the bottom, Mississippi bottom, and they had a good ball team, Willisville and those different towns, and they would schedule ahead of time. They'd have a ball game every day. It'd be Ava against some other town.

Some of those boys got to be pretty good ball players. Some of them even finally went professional like Joe Grace that died here a couple of years ago, got killed in a car wreck. He was from down in the Gorham area. And then there was a boy by the name of Glidewell. There was several boys down in there that played back earlier in some of those small-town ball games that turned out to be big league ball players.

Q: Did they play with St. Louis then did they?

A: No. Joe Grace I think had played back with — when the Browns were in. And the Glidewell boy I think played with Pittsburgh, some of those eastern teams. And there was a boy by the name of Geiger too, that played with one of those eastern teams from down in there. Most of the boys are still living too. The Grace boy got killed in a car wreck here at Murphysboro about, oh, seven or eight years ago. Him and his wife both.

Q: Now this homecoming, is it still going on?

A: Yes. It still goes on. They just had it here a couple of weeks ago. Yes, they still have it yet today and they still have big crowds. They — well I don't think they have the ball games yet, they may. But they'll have a band and a big dance of a night and — and I didn't get to go this year but they had big crowds, they always have.

Q: Let's see, you said you had traveled to St. Louis when you were young a couple of times to visit you aunt there. Did you do any other traveling around this part of the state or anyplace?

A: You mean back in those early days we're talking about?

Q: Yes.

A: We used to go to St. Louis occasionally when we were kids. A carload of us would go up like to a ball game. I can recall a few times that — like three or four of us, or half a dozen of us, would get in an old car and we'd chip in and we'd go up and watch the ball game you know. We loved that.

It was always my luck nearly always to get on a one-way street going the wrong way. And the police would eat you out and just scare you to death because we were just little old country boys and we was already scared automatically. One time they — they like to died laughing at me. I got on a street going the wrong way, he made me back all the way back down it. But he didn't give me no tickets, so I was — I was pleased. (laughter)

Q: Well. Let's see you graduated from grade school — in what year would it have been?

A: Oh my, that would have been . . . it must have been around the 1930's. No it wouldn't have been in the 1930's.

Q: Well let's see now, you would probably have started in about . . .

A: I was five, I'd been seven — at — five years old and eight would be thirteen . . . must have been around 1935.

Q: Around 1935.

A: In that — in that area.

Q: And where then did you go to high school?

A: Well my high school background is — is a strange one. I only went to high school just a few days. And then I took and . . . my father got sick and — and me and my twin brother, we only went a short time. In fact just a few days and we had to drop out. Then after the war was over, after the war was over, we went and took these GED [General Educational Development] courses. Went over to SIU [Southern Illinois University], and we got our high school diploma that way. We completed those. And I took some correspondent courses too. Now he didn't take those, I did because they were in salesmanship. And that's what I was wanting to get into, selling something. And I even took some of those after I was married. And . . .

Q: So that would have been after the war that you took those?

A: Yes that was all after the war.

Q: What did you do when your father became ill?

A: Well, of course when he became ill the first time, there was still three of us boys at home. And we would — we was able to go ahead and — and take care of things. And he got over that one pretty well. He had a light stroke is what he had. And he got over that, gotten straightened up pretty well and then, later on, in later years, then he had a — he had a — they first thought it was a heart attack, I guess it must have been a light stroke again, really. And he never — he wasn't an invalid but he never was able to work anymore.

Of course there was just me and my twin brother at home at that time. And we really had the work to do then, because we had the farm agoing and we had the — what was considered then — we was milking a lot of cows, what they — what would be considered then. We was milking about fifteen to eighteen head of cows. We just — we had a milk route that we run for eleven years. Got up at four o'clock every morning. And . . .

Q: Where was this, in Ava?

A: Well no. What we — we still lived where we always did, but we picked up milk around different farmers' places. We had the biggest route that Midwest Dairy had at that time, that was here in Murphysboro. We'd go around to these different farmers' houses and pick up the milk. They'd set it out in cans. And we'd bring it down to the dairy. And it took half a day to get it done.

Q: Did they furnish the truck?

A: Oh no, we had — dad got the truck before he got sick. He bought the truck and then — me and my twin brother weren't even old enough to get chauffeur's license. We were only

sixteen years old when that happened. Well, we went and talked to the state police, one that was on that we knew at that time, and he said, "Well it would be debatable whether you would meet it or not anyway," because we actually weren't — he said there was two ways they could look at it. If you hauled for hire, why, you had to — legally you was supposed to have it, and we got paid a commission. And he said, "It's a sure thing I'm not going to bother you." We told him what our problem was and he said, "I don't think any of the rest of them would." And we never were bothered. The minute we got eighteen, why, of course we went and got our chauffeur's license. We just couldn't get them at sixteen. And he was sick, he wasn't able to lift nothing. And there wasn't nobody else to do it.

Q: That must have been quite a job if you picked up the milk and took care of the farm at the same time.

A: It was a lot of job, I don't mean maybe. And some of the customers that we picked up milk from, they'd come out — they just couldn't believe we could handle them cream cans, no older than we were. Because them cans were about as big as we were. But we did. And we done it for eleven years. We done it — of course dad had been doing it a long time. We, me and my brother, didn't do it for eleven years, but all together it was eleven years. Actually after he got sick, I — I think we probably done it for about two years after he got sick. And then we sold the milk route to a neighbor, it was too much for us.

Q: What did you have to operate the farm with at that time, still the one tractor or . . .

A: Yes still one tractor.

Q: And the horses I guess.

A: And the horses, we kept those for a long time. And then we would hire somebody to help in, you know, in peak season. Like for getting the crop out, we'd hire somebody for a few — two or three weeks to help us. And same way when we were making hay or — or threshing or whatever. Anytime it was a rush, we'd — we'd just hire a guy or two to help us. For a short time and then we'd let them go and get it back to where we could handle it.

Q: During those years did you have any time off to go on vacation or anything?

A: I didn't know what a vacation was.

Q: Is that right?

A: Never really got one, no.

Q: Just a day off to run to St. Louis occasionally.

A Yes, that'd be all, and that generally on Sunday. Yes. And that wasn't very many times. I never started going to St. Louis much until — until — really very much until after the war, come home from the service. Then I got to going to St. Louis a lot.

Q: Were there places around near that you went to, like Menard's Home over on the river and that sort of thing?

A: Yes I've been to those kind of places. We used to go to those. I can recall my parents even going up to the Kaskaskia, you know, and taking our dinner and — and they'd have a family reunion every year, and they'd have it at — I can recall a few times having it at Kaskaskia State Park too. And of course you'd always go down to the old home and

generally drive down by the prison. All those things. Oh yes, we've been all over southern Illinois pretty well. But didn't get to go very much. Didn't have the money or the transportation either.

Q: And the cows wouldn't wait then.

A: No they wouldn't. You had to be there.

Q: So this . . . then you would have continued — when? right up until the war at that type of work?

A: Right. Yes. When I got to — I was the last one to leave home. Me and my twin brother went — was going to volunteer — they kept a — they put us in 1-A, which meant we was going to go. Then before we would be called they put us back in — I think it was 4-F or something — because we were with agriculture and my father sick, and wasn't able to do nothing. Well finally we decided — dad said if we wanted to we could volunteer and just — we'd just sell out. So — so went and — going to — and I didn't like the navy, but I was going to go in the navy so me and twin brother could be together because that's what he wanted.

Well we went over to Marion to sign up. And that was after the Sullivan brothers had went down. And then the recruiter told us right off — right point blank that no way we could stay together. He said you could sign up but — he said you could go through basic training — but after that you will not be together, you'll be separated.

Q: This was the Sullivan brothers aboard a destroyer that had gone down.

A: Right. Yes, they had gone down by this time, and that's when the government had decided not to leave brothers together. And he told us that — there was my twin brother and I, and a friend of ours — all three of us were going to sign up for the navy and stay together. But he told us that no way that me and my twin brother could stay together. So I told them guys if they wanted to go ahead they could, I was going back home and just wait. Because I hadn't been put back in 1-A yet. I'd been in it and then been taken out of it and he had too. We knew we was going to go but we just didn't know when. So they decided they was going to go ahead. And so I said, "Well I'm going back home."

Well then I was deferred for quite a while. I don't remember just how long, but for quite — it was quite a long time. Of course the doctor had sent a letter down to the draft board in the meantime about — telling them that they couldn't take both of us. That it would just be — would would just be a tremendous hardship, and we'd just have to cease the farm operation completely. So in the meantime they left me in 4-F for a long — for quite a long time, but then they got to where they went back to the same old tricks. They'd put you in 1-A and then — you'd go down and talk to them — I went down and talked to them one time and asked them if they could give me time to sell everything, if they'd give me thirty days. Well in the meantime then I'd get a card from them that put me back in 4-F. So it went on for a long time and finally my — my father, he wasn't able to do nothing, and he said, "Let's just have a sale and have it over with." And I said, "I think we'd just as well." And they had put me — the next day after the sale I got a card I was in 4-F. So I went back down — whatever it was to be deferred — I went back down then and told them that we'd had the sale and I was ready to go. So then they sent me a notice — well in the meantime, when I left for my physical, then I decided well I didn't want the navy and I figured that's what they were going to stick me in so I'd just take the army, or the Marine Corps.

Q: This is where, St. Louis?

A: No, Chicago. They sent me — they sent them to St. Louis for a long time to be examined but then they switched that to Chicago. And that's where I went. Whole bunch of

us from this area. But after I got up there they give us a choice of what we wanted. They was needing men in all of them and I took the Marine Corps. Me and a great big guy I never had met before, but I liked him, got acquainted with him, and we got — we got — we took the Marine Corps and they stamped our papers, got in there and then he was color-blind and they kicked him out. And that was the last I saw of him, I've never saw him to this day. (chuckles) But I went on and went to Paris Island and took my training there.

Q: Where did you stay in Chicago?

A: They put us up in a hotel there that night and the next day they shipped us right on out. They didn't take long. (laughs)

Q: This was all by train I suppose.

A: Oh yes, all by train. And we went to Paris Island on a train — took us, seems to me like, two or three days to get there. They picked up men all along the way. And by the time we got down there we had a lot of cars on that train. And all — and I mean a lot of men too.

Q: What did you think of Paris Island?

A: That was some place. I wouldn't take nothing for the experience but I wouldn't give anything to go back. I've been back one time on a visit, just to see it. But that's where they separate the men from the boys. And that was an experience that nobody would forget. Because when you're swore in — and I'll never forget that — we were swore in in Chicago. And the guy was about half-drunk that swore us in. The last thing he said to us — I'll never forget it — he said, "I hope you make damn good marines."

And from there on I mean we knew who the boss was, because they started laying the law down to us. And when we got off the train — it was in July, and hot as it could be down there. And of course he had our shirt collars unbuttoned and our sleeves rolled up and, brother, they told — they made us get them shirt collars buttoned and sleeves rolled down and told us to get in line and we didn't know what line they was even talking about.

Q: Were you in uniform at that time?

A: No, no, we was in civilian clothes.

Q: I see.

A: And they loaded us on trucks just like we were cattle. And it didn't matter how many men was in that truck, they could still put more in. And they loaded us in there and took us in and I mean to tell you that's when it all started, right there. That was some experience. They took us down to issue us clothes and they didn't even ask you your size, they just — the guy would yell out some size, and they'd throw them at you. Give you a seabag to start with. And when you got through you had a seabag full of clothes, none of them fit.

Q: Oh. Well. (chuckles)

A: And three days later then you'd go back and — they told us that — that in three days we could go back and exchange them for clothes that would fit. Of course you had to take the whole sackful back just about. Oh that was some experience there.

And took us in and put us in a big building that had showers in it, had us to strip off, and they cut our hair and then we went through the shower. (laughter) Then they give

us back our clothes until we got in and then we had to get in the marine dungarees and stuff you know. And nothing fit, just nothing.

SESSION 2, TAPE 3, SIDE 2

Q: Then what was the training like? What kind of a program did you go through there?

A: Well the marines had — they're very tough on discipline, very tough, and they trained us and trained us and trained us. In rifle, bayonet fighting. It was all — none of it was — it was all for bayonet fighting mostly back in those days. It was for the — and they told us all the way through that we would be — we would be going to the Pacific when we left there.

At that time they had cut it to thirteen weeks I believe, our training. And they had us up at five o'clock of a morning and we'd be going until nine, ten o'clock at night. But a lot of our training was for — well to get you in shape, but thank goodness I had came right off of the farm, and that part didn't bother me. But we had a lot of guys from Chicago and — we had a lot of guys from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, some of those big cities, and I felt so sorry for them, they just couldn't take it. They'd fall, they'd faint. They'd do everything. And the marines they wouldn't pick you up. They'd leave you lay. And it looked so horrible. But eventually somebody would go and check on them but they never — on all of our field hikes and all, they took no transportation with us. You just got back — and you got back the same way you got out there, you walked. And . . .

Q: What happened to those that couldn't hack the program?

A: I don't know what happened to them. Very few ever flunked. They'd just train you until you did. And we had some that would try going on sick call of a morning. But they weren't very sympathetic for that either. Boy, it was — very few guys got away with it, most of the guys wound up finishing. But they just — they just trained you and they just shoved you around until you got with it.

And they trained you on, like assault courses you know. Like what it — a lot of it was like if you come in I guess to villages and went up on roofs and doing, you know, doing all that kind of stuff. And the main thing was to get you in shape. And we practiced bayonet fighting, days and days and days of that. They'd have — you'd be running — they'd have dummies just there, you know they had some way of making dummies pop up in front of you, and they was right at you you know and they didn't care if one hit you, you know. They didn't care. And they'd have — you'd have your bayonet fixed you know and you had to stab them and all that stuff you know. And then they had you practice bayonet fighting, you know, with other guys.

Q: With other guys.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you use a bayonet or did you use a simulated . . .

A: Well we used a bayonet but we kept the scabbard on it for a long time, and then finally — but you'd get to where — the other guy didn't want to be hit either, so you guarded against that you know.

But it was really — and on the rifle range they trained us for days on different weapons too. Started — you started out with a .22 rifle, but I'd been used to them. But a lot of people hadn't. I found — I couldn't believe how many men had never fired a rifle. And

then they went to carbine and then the M1, and the BAR, and all those — all those guns, you know, that they had. Some of them they had different names for them. One of them we called it a rising gun. It was almost like a little machine gun of some kind. And then the .45 pistol, and all that. They give you training on — on every kind of gun, handgun, that you could possibly carry. Ours was — all of our training there was for — really hand-to-hand fighting.

Q: So you didn't get any training on mortars or anything of that nature?

A: No, none at all. Hand grenades, yes. Yes, we had a lot of hand grenade training. Throwing and . . .

Q: Did you have any problem learning how to throw the things?

A: No. You didn't have any problem learning how to throw them. (laughs)

Q: Get rid of them, huh?

A: That's right. (laughter) They'd tell you to count to ten I think it was but I don't — I never heard anybody count past about four or five. (laughter) Man, you just throw them.

Q: Yes.

A: That's when you go down to the ground. You know . . .

Q: How was the food?

A: The food — I — at the time I thought was terrible but it wasn't all that bad when I look back. It was like K-rations and all but you could live on it. But the hardest part for me: my parents even though we were poor, they did believe in being clean. And our cooking utensils, or utensils, were — everybody dipped them in the same barrel, you know, after you got done eating.

Q: To sterilize them.

A: Oh yes, there wasn't no way it could have been clean you know. Just no way. You had two barrels, you dipped them in the first one and then you rinsed them off in the other, everybody rinsed in the same barrel. It just — that was the hard part for me to get used to because you just knew your utensils wasn't clean, you just knew that.

Q: What'd you think of the noncommissioned officers that were training you?

A: Well — well they were tough too. I mean tough. They were the toughest men I was ever around in my life. We had a little old sergeant that was in charge of us that — he'd been on Guadalcanal when they first — when — when the Japs first hit it, and it blowed up his hand and stuff. And after we got done with training — of course at that time I was one of the older ones in our group, but we had a lot of seventeen-, eighteen-year-olds too. And I was like twenty-one or twenty-two, something like that.

Q: What year was this?

A: That was in — when I went in was in 1945.

Q: I see.

A: July of 1945. And I wasn't in very long — the war ended, oh, about seven or eight months I think after I was in. Let's see now, I got off of what I was going to say.

Q: You had a sergeant who came back from Guadacanal.

A: Oh yes, yes, from Guadacanal and he came back, and he was one of the toughest men I ever met in my life. I mean he was mean, he was just tough. And he'd go on every hike with you. He done everything and he was a real marine. He was always — every morning he was spic and span. And he'd march anywhere anybody else marched. And — but he was a tough cookie. And, after we got done with basic training, we were around there for a few days. I got pretty well acquainted with him then. Not during basic training, because he didn't visit with nobody. But after that was over and we were stuck there for a few days, then I got to — he took a liking to me and I got to know him quite well. But he was just a tough — he was a small guy but as tough as a knot. And he knew that Marine Corps manual from cover to cover.

Q: Is that right.

A: And he just knew how to train guys too, and he got everything out of them. He could get the best out of you.

Q: Did you have any time off while you were there?

A: No. The whole time I was in basic training never had a — never had a day off.

Q: That's thirteen weeks?

A: That's thirteen weeks. They never give nobody any — only thing you could get off for was on Sunday morning to go to church. And you had to sign in — sign out then sign back in the minute you got back. And you better not go anywhere else either. (chuckles)

Q: What kind of quarters did you have?

A: It was just an old one-story barracks building, that's all it was, with bunks in it. It was just an old — they made it because they had so many down there. Their regular barracks was all full. They had — when I was there, they had twenty-two thousand marines on Paris Island.

Q: Twenty-two thousand, my.

A: Twenty-two thousand. And they had these barracks they built and they even had — it was in the summertime — they even had tents they put up. Because it was sandy out there. And they put up tents for a lot of them. Had them living — oh they had them living everywhere.

Q: Well where did you go from Paris Island then?

A: From Paris Island . . . we didn't know at the time when we finished training why they detained us for a while. Detained us I guess for — I think about two months at Paris Island. Everybody was on pins and needles but we — we knew something was wrong but nobody could — they had a new story every day. But in the final analysis was, why, the war — the Japanese surrendered. And — or the Germans surrendered I believe it was.

Q: The Germans surrendered in May.

A: In May. Well this would have been the Japanese surrendered then. So then — then they immediately sent guys like me, they sent us out to different bases to do guard duty. And they sent me to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. And they gave me a delay in route like a — I think it was ten or fourteen days. And I went by my home — come home and then went on to Philadelphia. And I was there about six months I believe. Worked at the

prison there most of the time. Stood guard duty. The brig, they had about seven hundred prisoners there. At . . .

Q: These were marine prisoners?

A: Well they were navy, navy and marine prisoners, yes. They had been — they was in there for all kind of reasons. Most of them had went home and didn't come back and some had got into all kind of trouble too. And we worked those and then I got sent back to Patuxent River, Maryland. That's down out of Washington, D. C., about seventy mile. And that's a naval air test center. And down there I done guard duty for a long time there. Then finally, why, I got sent back to Great Lakes for discharge. It was about — I think all together it was about fourteen months.

Q: What did your family think when you walked in in your marine uniform on leave?

A: Oh man! My mother — of course my mother thought of me — the last one to leave. They didn't like to see me go but they thought that was the thing.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes. So they thought that was it. And my twin brother took the navy of course. And me and him got home together at one time. Of course we razzed each other the whole time we were home.

Q: (chuckles) Where did he go?

A: He went to — he went in in the early part of the war and he went to Great Lakes and took his training there. And in — then they shipped him right from boot training right out to Pearl Harbor. And they sent him to a radar school there for ten weeks. There was about twenty-five of them, or twenty-six I believe, in his group. And then the funny part was they sent him on to the Pacific. And it — they joined — I believe it was the Third Marines — his group did and they done the radar work for this marine detachment. And he was on three invasions out there. And one of them was in the Solomon Islands and I think the Russell Islands and New Caledonia or something. Several of those islands. He was on three invasions. They was out there a little over a year, and then they had to bring most of them back, they had malaria. Had the big sores that come on and they had to bring them back for a while.

And then the wind-up, they put him in — most of his group I think they helped train others then when they got back. When they first brought him back they sent him to — after they let him come home I think for thirty days, then they sent him — sent him I know to New Brunswick, Maine. To some naval base up there to help I think train in radar.

But he went right on to Pearl Harbor and then after ten weeks there he went right — they sent him right on to the Pacific. Him and this friend of ours that was — whenever I went — was going to go with them, they went to Pearl Harbor together but they took him — they separated them, put him on a ship, and he got it shot out from under him out there the first part of the deal.

Q: Gee. (chuckles)

A: And he wound up — he was in too until the war was over. He survived the war but he really — it kind of messed him up. All those experiences that he had. And even yet today — he's still living, this friend of ours is, but I think he draws disability from the ser — I don't think he's able to work. You know.

Q: Yes. So then you got out in — would be 1946?

A: Yes 1946.

Q: What did you do when you came home?

A: Well the first thing I done I went home and . . . of course my parents they didn't want me to do nothing for a while, and I said, "Well I'll try it for a little while." And that's when they had that deal where you could sign up and draw — I think they called it 52-20. Supposed to have been able to draw twenty dollars a week I think for a year, if you didn't work, or something. Well I come down and signed up for one check. And I messed around home and went and visited all of my brothers and my sister and everybody and then after the second week I just couldn't take it.

So I went to some friends of mine who had got out of the service earlier, was working at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis. They was converting all of them barracks into apartments for these returning GI's that were married and had families. So I went up there and — and they told me — I said, "Well I don't know how to carpenter." And they said, "All you have to do is tell them you do," said, "and we'll show you." So I went up there and told them I was a carpenter and went up with them and got me a permit from the union. They was giving any serviceman, just about, a permit. And I worked up there for about three months. I didn't like it a day.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: No, I didn't like it. I liked the money but I didn't like it at all. I wasn't a carpenter and I was doing something that I just despised almost. I could get by but that, you know, that was all.

Q: What kind of carpentry work were you doing there?

A: We was in — we was putting partitions in barracks and, you know, and doors and stuff like that you know. And so they could make them into regular apartments is what they were doing. That was the fastest way to get housing for these servicemen. So after about three months they layed off a bunch. And this foreman come around and he really liked me and . . . well I used to on weekends when I was home I'd go rabbit hunting. He loved rabbits. I'd take him some rabbits. He said, "You know I got to lay off a bunch." And I said, "You have." I said, "Am I one of them?" And he said, "Well" — I said, "Why don't you just lay me off and let somebody else stay." I said, "I don't like it anyway." And he said, "You mean that?" I said, "Yes I do." I said, "I'd just as soon go back home." So I was in the group that got layed off. And so I went back home then.

Q: Where were your folks living then?

A: They were still — they had bought a house in Ava in the meantime, they'd sold the farm, and they bought a house in town, and had moved into town. So I went back home, went back and stayed with them for a while. Then I bought — the man that owned the hardware store in Ava by the name of Homer Cupp had died while I was gone to the service. And his widow had kept — what I call an elderly gentleman — that Mr. Cupp had had working for him and he was running it. In the meantime she wanted to sell it. So in the windup I bought that.

I ran that store then for a while and then — that was my first experience at politics too. This was all in 1947. I took and — and they — I had just — of course like I said just got home from the service and my father being a registered Republican, why, here they come one day. And me and him was together. And they flagged me down and they had my first schoolteacher, this Mr. Woodward, that I went to school to, they had him. And a gentleman by the name of Phoenix who was the Republican precinct committeeman, and they flagged us down and they wanted me to run for highway commissioner in Bradley

Township. And my father said, "Oh, my." And I said, "My father would never want me to do this." And finally he said, "But he can if he wants to. He's been in the service, it's up to him." So then I said to them, I said, "Well there's no way a Republican can get elected in this township." And they said, "Yes" — they were convinced I could win, I don't know what convinced them.

Q: Who were these people now?

A: This was a fellow by the name of Red Phoenix and Reba Woodward my first schoolteacher. And he was a strong Republican too. And they said — they said, "Yes, you can win." And I said, "No." A Republican hadn't been elected in I don't know how long in that township. That township was strong Democrat. I asked him, "Who's the Democrats going to run then?" Well they didn't even know that. And the Democrats hadn't had their caucus yet either. They had a caucus to nominate township candidates. So I said, "Well, I'll let" — I told them I'd let them know the next day.

Well the next day here they come again. They didn't wait for me. Here they come and they brought someone else with them but I don't remember who that was. So finally I told them I would do it and I had no idea of what I was getting into. They just — they just talked me right into it. So they had the caucus the next day then. That's the reason they was in such a rush because this caucus was right close.

So I went to that, the first one I ever went to in my life. Somebody got up and made a motion they nominate me and somebody seconded it, first thing I knew I was nominated. And I was the candidate. Well then, you know I got to realizing then what I was in for. And I got to thinking about all the friends I grew up with and they were all Democrats, if you — if you looked at their party affiliation, and I said, "Oh my, I'll never be able to get them to vote for me."

So then the Democrats had their caucus the same afternoon, and they nominated a guy that lived about two mile from me on the Democrat ticket. He also had got — just got home from the service. And he was really well liked too. And I was . . .

Q: What was his name?

A: Albert Froemling. And his father and my father were very good friends. And he and I were good friends and are yet today. So the minute they nominated him of course I immediately went and saw him. And I told him, assured him, that I wasn't going to say nothing about him, but I was going to try to win, but I would never be guilty of saying anything bad about him. And he said, "Well I'm not going to say nothing bad about you either." I said, "Well I hope not but," I said, "even if you do, I'm not going to to you."

So I just took and I started out and I went and saw everybody in the township. I mean I went to every house and I talk to everybody. He just about done the same thing. But at Ava — Ava and Campbell Hill, the two towns are in the same township. And he was listed as being from Campbell Hill because he lived closer to Campbell Hill. And he went to church at Campbell Hill where I went to church at Ava. We were up at Ava. I was considered from Ava even though I lived out in the country. He was considered from Campbell Hill.

Well in the windup, the campaign, the election, got pretty well down between the two towns. Nothing that he or I could do to change it either. Well when they counted the votes at Ava, there was right at five hundred votes that day, 490-some votes, I'll never forget it, and I had got them all but sixty-four. Well then of course this Republican precinct committeeman he immediately got in the car and drove up to Campbell Hill to see — there had been three hundred and some vote up there. And he got them all but fifty-two. But in the end when you added up the total I won by forty-four votes I believe. And he and

I laughed about it a lot of times that — how the two towns — how it worked out. People just layed down their party affiliations and went out and voted for their hometown boy is what it amounted to.

Q: I see. I was wondering, actually it wasn't — it was kind of a nonpartisan . . .

A: Oh, it wasn't — oh, it was nonpartisan. Why, Ava is the Democrat stronghold in that township too, where I lived. Campbell Hill basically was Republican. Ava was strong Democrat. But as it turned out the towns pretty well supported their own candidate. And it was actually good for he and I both because we didn't — I didn't win by very much, so it wasn't nothing for him to feel bad about either. And we were both kind of glad of that, that it was close. Because he is a good man, and he was then too.

Q: What did you do on that election day?

A: Oh, I hauled voters. All day long.

Q: Oh, did you!

A: I hauled the last voter in and the last man to vote that day was a guy by the name of Forrest Russell, who was a barber. And they held the election in his barbershop. And he had to close that day, as far as cutting hair. And he cut my twin brother and my hair for years. And he was a strong Democrat. But he had told me all the way along he'd go vote if I thought I needed him. Well I went over to his house and got him up, he was laying down, and he said — said, "I'm agoing in and vote the Democrat ticket." I said, "Well I'm going to take a chance on you anyway." I said, "I don't believe you will when you get in there." And when he come out, he said, "I voted for you." He said, "Don't worry about it." But I hauled voters all day long. And I'd go out and drive — walk up on their porch and they'd holler, "We're Democrats. Get out of here." They teased me all day long. But they voted for me.

Q: I'll be darned. Well then what was the job? Taking care of the highways then in the township?

A: Yes. Yes. We didn't have no money. You had to talk everybody into helping do it. That was the sad part. There wasn't no money for me either.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: It was the most thankless job you could ever get in your life. What we'd do, we'd — the state had a program back then that if the farmers would get a stretch of road ready and the highway commissioner would designate that road, they would put the rock on. Up to so much, so many dollars worth. So you'd take a road — that's how they got all them roads rocked around Ava basically, back years ago. We took and we would designate a road that was going to be the one that we'd put the rock on that year. Well then we'd get everybody together and we'd take tractors and teams and stuff and get it ready and then right at the last we'd take up a donation, and we'd get the county — they had a man with a motor patrol, and back then they only charged you what it cost to do it, and I think it was like four dollars an hour is all you had to pay. He'd come and — it had to bladed up to a — meet a certain standard. Why, he'd come and do that just before time for them to start rocking. And that's how we got those roads rocked.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: It was a lot of work for nothing.

Q: So the township didn't have any equipment at all then.

A: Had an old Caterpillar that wouldn't run. And we finally just — we just got — the board just give us permission, we sold it and turned the money over to the township. It wasn't worth nothing. We couldn't afford it, and so we just sold it.

Q: Did you have any problems in getting the people to help, tractors and that sort of thing?

A: No, it was amazing. You know, we'd have a meeting and we'd tell them what we could get if we done certain things. And we'd explain to them and I'd just — I'd get the treasurer of the township to go along, and the clerk too — to where they'd know that there was just no money, you know there just wasn't any. We only got like eleven hundred dollars a year. Well that wouldn't even buy the material to fix the bridges you know, a lot of times. And I'd get them to go along to let them know that we weren't, you know, we weren't telling them something that wasn't true. And let them know that I was working for nothing too. So that's what we would do, and they were very good about it. And they'd go right along, they were tickled to get the road. If you was living out in a — on a mud road you'd do about anything. We would — we'd just simply tell them the facts you know. And tell them what we — what we'd have to do to get it. And they were very good about it.

Q: So other than having the patrol available the county wasn't helping either with . . .

A: The only way — what we would do is, with the county, what little bit of money we got we generally'd take that and use that to hire the county to grade certain roads too. And the county was very good about helping the townships then. Because the county didn't have a lot of money either, but townships didn't either. And we'd hire them to grade certain roads, you know, each year, and keep them where people could get over them you know. Of course then farmers would . . .

(taping stopped to consult with customer, then resumed)

Q: So while you had this commissioner position you were also still working at the hardware — owning the hardware store.

A: Yes. Yes continued to have the hardware store, yes.

Q: How did you like the hardware business?

A: I liked it. We had appliances with it. We immediately — my brother and I had it — I first bought it by myself and then he bought in with me and came in with me.

Q: This is Glenn?

A: Yes, Glenn, yes, my twin brother. And we got signed up with some appliance companies. Crosley was one of them. They were hard to get then, because they didn't have very many appliances, you know there were shortage — still shortage from the war. So we got signed up with Crosley and we got signed up with Philco. Those were I think our two main ones at that time. So then we sold a lot of appliances. Now we liked it but we only stayed in it about four years. And I had signed up in the air force reserves.

Q: Air force reserves?

A: Yes. After the war. And when the Korean thing broke out they — they called me back, and then I got to Scott Field, and then they didn't take me. And to this day we don't know — don't know anything. They never told us. They called so many of us out and said, "You're going home." And that was it.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: So — but in the meantime I had sold my store. When they first called me I went and asked them to give me ninety days to get rid of my business. They said they couldn't do it. So I went ahead and hurried because my brother didn't want to keep it my himself either. It happened — just lucky we got a buyer. And I sold it to a guy by the name of Elmer Crawshaw. Then after I sold it and reported to Scott Air Force Base, reported up there on Sunday afternoon, when we had to report in, and the next morning they phoned down there and had me and I don't know how many more, there was some others though, had us go up to the main gate and the guy was — said, "It's going to be a while before you're being moved," and I thought he meant he was shipping us out somewhere. So finally I said, "Where am I going?" He said, "Haven't you been told?" I said, "No sir, I haven't been told nothing." And he said, "Well you're going back home."

Q: I'll be darned.

A: So I came back home that afternoon. And that's when I went to work then — and I had resigned the highway commissioner's job too, in the meantime, had to do that.

Q: Burnt your bridges all of a sudden.

A: Right. Had to get rid of everything. And right in the middle of the term, I'd been in two years and it's a four-year term. So then I came back and I went over to Voglers at Carbondale, and went to work selling cars. And I sold cars for — this was in 1951 when I started, and the 1952 election came along and that's whenever Charles Carpentier got elected secretary of state in Illinois, in 1952. So in the meantime I'd worked for Voglers a year and then I got a chance to rent a lot there in Carbondale, right down from Voglers' lot on Illinois Avenue, and I put in a used car lot of my own, and sold used cars. And then after Carpentier got elected, I put in an application for a job as automobile investigator. So my brother, I sold out to him . . .

SESSION 2, TAPE 4, SIDE 1

Q: What was the automobile inspector job like?

A: March — that was the deadline, that's generally when it was — you'd be called out, they'd send you — and they'd have a big meeting that day and that night at midnight we'd start checking for licenses at some intersections. And of course they'd get publicity, that would get people on the ball, if they hadn't bought their license, to get them. We'd do that for the first — well generally for the first couple of weeks after the deadline, they'd keep us busy.

They'd have so many of us to report — like one time at Kankakee, they had — about forty of us reported there. That's when the truckers were trying to get out of buying licenses. They were licensing them in Alabama and some of those southern states where the licenses were real cheap, and they actually lived in Illinois. And we had to check the bill of ladings and we'd check where they picked up their freight and we'd check where it was going, because a lot of times they had phony bill of ladings and stuff. And at Kankakee the next day the — the mayor finally had got ahold of Carpentier's office and asked us to stop. We had all the parking lots full of trucks. We sold I forget how many thousands of dollars worth of licenses there in a day's time. Them truckers, they'd lived in Illinois but they wasn't buying Illinois license.

They'd generally send you out of your own territory too, to do the trucking you know. And they'd have — my, when I got up there they was about — they had about forty of us there. They'd always have a big bunch of you. They'd put on a big show and they'd get

people to buy them there too. Because a lot of people would just put it off back in those days. But I done that for three years and ten months.

Q: How was it you came to get that job?

A: I put an application in with the Republican county chairman here in Jackson County. He was a good friend of mine, a fellow by the name of Dunk McGregor. He told me when I put it in, he said, "I might be able to get that for you." And wasn't but a few days when he called me and he said, "Can you go to Springfield with me tonight, or this evening?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "They're going to give you that job." And he took me up there, and I had to go to school thirty days in Springfield. Stayed up there and they had a whole bunch of us to come in that they'd hired at — all over the state they hired investigators.

Q: Where did they do the training?

A: They took us over to — they had the — I believe it was in the Centennial Building or the — one of those buildings there and they had some — they had some instructors there that had been there for years and they started in and just schooled us — we had thirty days of it and I mean every day and generally until nine or ten o'clock at night. And we'd come home on weekends and go right back on Monday and I got so sick of that I couldn't see straight. But we'd come home on weekends and go back on Monday and start right in again.

Q: Where did you stay while you were up there?

A: At the . . . St. Nicholas Hotel I believe is where we stayed.

Q: Well did they put you up there?

A: Oh yes, they put — they paid our lodging, yes, while we were up there. And they furnished our uniforms and everything.

Q: They put you in with the Democrats then?

A: Oh yes.

Q: At the St. Nicholas?

A: Yes, yes they did. I'm sure it was the St. Nicholas where we stayed. In the school I went to. Oh yes they furnished us a car then too. And it was a plain car, but it had the siren and everything on it that the police cars had. It was quite an experience. I really enjoyed it. It was a job you could help people on too. I didn't like to write tickets. And they were always after me to — they was always after a guy that didn't write tickets you know. But my theory was that if I stopped somebody that didn't have a license, if he'd order them — I carried applications with me, and if one of us investigators signed it it didn't have to be notarized. So if they — if the person was willing, I'd have him go get a money order, I'd just follow him into a town and have him to get a money order made out to the secretary of state's office. I'd sit down and write out — I wrote out a many of them in my car, have him to sign it and I'd mail it in for him.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: That way we knew it was mailed and then I'd give him a receipt, he was all squared away. The three years and ten months I was on I don't guess I wrote a half a dozen tickets. If they were willing to get them and — secretary of state always told us that, "If they'll buy them, that's what we want. We don't want to penalize people but they do have to buy them." And I was very good at persuading them to buy them. I'd rather do that

as to write them a ticket. Then they still have to buy them, and you just penalize them and most of them had families and they were short of money or they'd done had them. And I made a lot of friends. A lot of friends.

Q: Did you work in this particular area then?

A: Yes. Yes, this — I had five counties to start with because they were short of investigators. Because it was under a patronage system to start with. This — it was the whole time I was on but it's not now. I had a big territory but I had my own county here as one of them. Then later on they cut it down to where I had two counties as they got more men. I think each — I think an investigator pretty well has just his — just the one county I think is the way they're doing it now.

But I made a mountain of friends while I had that because I — the dealers got to where they'd call me, they found out I wasn't a bad guy. To start with, they don't want to call a law enforcement official, generally, if they got a title problem. But when they find out you're there to help them and not hurt them, the dealers always called me and they'd send people to me, you know they'd lose their driver's license, or they'd let it expire. Well we could renew them back then, an investigator could, up to a year without making them take a test. And I never made nobody take a test. If they'd already had it, they'd already passed it once, I'd give them a Rules of the Road booklet generally and tell them to read it and, "I'm going to go ahead and renew your license." It would make them feel good. And then they would a lot of times write nice letters in too about you you know, about the service you'd give them.

I made a lot of friends in helping people. A lot of people lose a license plate, didn't know what to do. And they'd go to their dealer where they bought their car and they'd tell them to call me. And all you had to do was fill out a form and send in a dollar and they'd send you — they'd get you another plate made. Or if you'd send both — you'd send the other plate you had left in, they'd send you a new set for two dollars. And — but I carried all those forms with me.

Q: Did you have an office in the district here?

A: I had an office at my home. The state didn't pay nothing for it, it was just — I'd done that for my own convenience, just to help people. I closed in my porch at my home where I lived then, and had it fixed to where, if people needed help, why, they could come and I had everything right there. And I'd help them.

Q: Let's see now along — you were married in 1947.

A: Right.

Q: Where did you meet your wife?

A: At Ava. She grew up there too. And I did too. We just met there in the restaurants and stuff there at Ava, that's how we got started. Went together for . . . oh, I think off and on about a year. And we got married. I was twenty-five years old then. And her folks was there in Ava too.

Q: Where did you go on your honeymoon?

A: We went to . . . well the first night we came to Murphysboro, we had car trouble. And then we went up the northern part of Illinois where my sister — I got a sister that lives up close to Galesburg.

Q: That's Ruth, is it?

A: Ruth, yes. And she lived up there then. And we went up by her place and stayed a couple of days and just bummed around and — we was only gone about a week and we come back home. We already had us an apartment rented and everything.

Q: In Ava?

A: In Ava, yes.

Q: Now you said you were "in the house" — you fixed an office "in the house," you must have moved from the apartment to a house then.

A: Well when we got married that was back before I was an investigator. And — yes, I wasn't an investigator until we moved to Murphysboro.

Q: Oh I see.

A: And in Murphysboro then we had bought an old house — we first rented . . . there was an old house that was fixed into like a duplex here in Murphysboro. And the boy that lived on one side, and his mother, owned it and they rented us the other side. So we lived there for a short time and then we bought an old house on North 15th Street. Same street that we rented this place on too, and that's — it had a big porch and — so I had that all closed in. I was going to have it done anyway. And it worked out perfect to have the little office fixed there too. And we closed it in, fixed the floors and fixed it with knotty pine, made it look nice. And that's where I had my office on this job then.

Q: And you were at that job for about four years you say?

A: Yes almost four years.

Q: That would be to what, 1955?

A: No I went to work in February 1953, and I was in there until the early part of 1957.

Q: I see. Some time along the line here you must have started working with the political organization?

A: Yes I did, I did.

Q: What's the first thing you did with the political organization?

A: Well the first thing I done, when I went down to see about applying for the job, of course right off the reel he asked me if I was a registered Republican. I said, "Yes sir, I am." And I told him he could check with the committeeman at Ava where I'd come from. Well he knew him well. So I started helping in all the elections. And also donating to them too. Didn't have much money but I donated twenyy-five that year, which was big to me. But I worked in the — well Walter King who was vice-president of the First National Bank then, at that time, and that's where I went to do business, he was the precinct committeeman in the precinct where I lived in Murphysboro. So I went — every election, I worked in all of them from then on.

Q: What types of things did you do?

A: In the election? Haul voters and try to get people out to vote. Anything he asked me to do but that's what basically it was. He generally put me — and he had an older lady that lived in that precinct, and she was about as strong a Republican as I was. And we'd just simply go house to house. And if they didn't have a way to go, we'd haul them. And if they had a small baby she'd stay with that baby, if nothing else, and I'd take the lady

to vote and bring her right back. We'd do anything to get them to vote. That's the way we done it.

Q: Did you belong to any Young Republican organization at . . .

A: Oh yes. Yes, they had a Young Republican organization here in the county. And then they had a district Young Republican organization too, and I was head of that for a short time. I think it was for a year they elected me for. And that's when you really get started then you know. I went to . . .

Q: In what way?

A: Well, then we — in the district of course — then of course you go to the state meetings too, and you just keep going and of course if you're — if you's in the Young Republican organization you's invited to anything the Republicans had, because they were pushing young people to get in it and get involved. The regular precinct committeemen would have meetings and they would of course invite the Young Republicans and — and — well we were in on just about every kind of meeting they had. If they had candidates to come to the area you'd be one of the first ones invited.

One of my main things while I was head of this district, Young Republicans, was when Governor Stratton was governor and we had a big meeting one time at Anna in this district. And we had wrote him and one of the other young people knew him and we got an appointment with him. Senator Crisenberry was the one that put the final touches to get us the appointment. And we went up and Senator Crisenberry took us in and of course we were very nervous because we were real young, and had no experience of going in talking to the governor. And he was so kind to us and he just said he'd come down to our meeting, he'd be our guest speaker for us. We asked him and he accepted.

So we come back and we talked that up and we had . . . of course a lot of them was older people too at our meeting, we had it at the American Legion place in Anna. And we had they figured around one thousand people at that meeting. But I mean the young people really turned on, and went out and worked and begged everybody to come and we had a big crowd. And that was one of the highlights of my time as district governor.

But I really enjoyed it and it was something to get involved. You know young people have got so much energy, and it was so — it was such a challenge to me and to everybody that worked. We had quite a few young people in our group at that time and they just worked and worked and worked to get people there and make sure everything went fine. And he was just overwhelmed with the reception that he got. In fact we had it all lined up and me and the other officers in the Young Republican group we met him in Murphysboro and he rode to Anna with us, to the meeting, to make it a little more prestige for us, you know.

Q: So you got to talk with him a bit.

A: Oh yes, and we felt so big, the governor riding in the car with us, that we were just overwhelmed you know, by that kind of consideration. And that night, he really praised the young people, you know, for the work they'd done, and . . .

Q: What year was this?

A: I don't recall what year that was. It would — it would have been . . . I would think sometime . . . it would have had to of been in the late 1950's. Sometime in the — in the late . . .

Q: So it was during his second term then?

A: Yes it would have had to have been I'm sure his second term. Yes. But it would have been sometime in the 1950's. I'm sure of that.

Q: Do you remember any particular campaigns that you were involved with at that time?

A: Well when I was a kid growing up at Ava, you were either Republican or Democrat, there were no in between. It was always a close election. The Democrats always had the edge. And I worked in just about all of them. And the first Republican president to ever win, I wasn't even old enough to vote, was Dwight Eisenhower. I don't believe I was old enough to vote then, 1952 — yes I was too, that was my first time to cast a vote for a president that won. And even though we were strong Republicans everybody was good friends, in a small town. After the election, why, we were all back together but that night we went over to my brother — my older brother was married and lived at Vergennes, Illinois, and we went over to his house to get the election returns on the radio. And the high school principal and his wife came out. They invited several of their friends out. And that night of course after it was obvious — like midnight or one o'clock in the morning, somewhere around that time — that Eisenhower had won, boy, me and — me and one of them, we decided we's going to go over to Ava and have us some fun because they'd always sent me get-well cards and all those kind of pranks they would play. My brother's wife had some old wreaths from the cemetery and stuff. So we went down in the basement and we made a headmarker out of pasteboard and we put on there, "Here Lies the Remains of the Truman Gang." And we'd put the first names of a lot of our friends up at Ava that were Democrats. And we went to Ava and they had a vacant lot on Main Street at that time, it's where the Masonic Lodge is now. And we dug a grave, mounded up a mound of dirt and we drove a stob down and nailed this marker to it.

So, we had a lot of fun working the elections but that was some of the things we done all through the years. There never was an election that I didn't haul voters in and — and all those things. Then in 1956 was when I ran for coroner. I still had my investigator's job. They give me a leave of absence for a few months, I think three or four months, and that's whenever I ran for coroner in this county. And was elected.

Q: Why did you decide to run for coroner?

A: I knew you'd ask that but — and I really don't know, except I, on my investigators job, I'd seen a lot of accidents and stuff and some of my friends that I worked with said to me several times, "Why don't you run for coroner, that's a good job to start out on." And that's what I wound up doing. Then after I started running I figured I wouldn't get elected. But I did, and my investigator's job really helped me a lot too, all those friends I'd made, they were really loyal to me. A lot of them was Democrats and — I didn't pay no attention, when it come to helping people I never let their politics bother me. When the elections were over it was over as far as I was concerned, help everybody. And it really paid off for me then.

Q: How did you go about campaigning? What . . .

A: I went door-to-door.

Q: Oh you did?

A: Back in those days, in 1956, up in the summer I took off — I think it was three months leave of absence they give me — and I took off and just went door-to-door. All I done every day was campaign. I knocked on everybody's door in this county. And let me tell you that is one big chore. Especially a town like Carbondale. I'd mark my streets and I'd go down one side and up the other. Move down a block and do — just keep on.

Q: Did you run into any people who were pretty obstinate against you?

A: I only run into two people in the whole campaign that said anything obstinate at all and it wasn't real bad but it wasn't very courteous either. And one of them I just woke him up. And he said — oh, something about them "damn elections and politicians" and I said, "Well I'm sure sorry if I woke you up, and hope you'll forgive me for it," and he slammed the door and I don't know if he voted for me or not. Got dog bit a lot of times.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: Dogs would bite me when you walk up on the porches. Little old dogs would grab you by the pant leg and — but I'd knock on the door, and I'd thank them for answering the door and always telling them if they could see their way clear to help me I'd appreciate it and give them my card and I — if they wanted to talk then I'd answer any of their questions; if they didn't, I'd thank them and go on my way.

Q: Did you put out any literature . . .

A: Oh yes. Lots of literature. I put out lots of cards and I had a card made if they wasn't home to — that would hook on their doorknob. It was strictly a card that would tell them that I was sorry I missed them, and it had my picture on it and tell them a little bit about me, and hope they could see their way clear to help me in the election and — and it was real nice — and one of the newspaper men helped me fix it up that worked for the Southern Illinoisan at that time and was a good friend of mine. A guy by the name of Jack Brendage. He helped me make those up. It turned out very good for me too.

Q: Did your wife get involved with the campaigning?

A: Oh yes. She didn't do any going door-to-door, not in that campaign, but she did attend a lot of meetings for me. Like she'd go to the women's meetings with me and any meeting she could go to with me because she worked at that time.

Q: Oh I see.

A: But like of an evening she went to all of them with me. And helped me in that way.

Q: What was she doing at that time?

A: She was working — I believe at that time she was still working at the telephone company. She worked at the telephone company for the first few years we were married. And then she went to work in City National Bank here in Murphysboro. But I believe she was still working for the telephone company at that particular time. Oh no, she — she — and all her folks were Democrats, and they razzed me all the time, about running for office, but they were all for me. And the first time I ran he told his — he told my wife that evening, he said, "Well, Sis, I guess — I guess we voted the same way this time." And she said, "Well I hope so." Said, "Well we all voted Republican."

Q: Well. (chuckles)

A: Said, "That's the first time I ever voted straight Republican ticket." So I guess that they — I guess he kind of switched then.

Q: Well. Did you do any mailings?

A: Yes we did. Yes we fixed up a nice letter to — just that you could mail to anybody. Oh we sent out hundreds of letters to people. We would take their names out of phone books and stuff. Another thing we done too. We started in like about — we'd start in on Wednesday before the election on Tuesday and — that-a-way it was easy to call somebody on the phone and say, "Like to remind you next Tuesday is election day." And we had a

bunch of girls that would help us, and my wife, and we set up a little place where we had three or four phones. And we called everybody in the phone book. We'd divide up the phone book. Each girl take what pages. Now some would do it in their home but we liked for them to come and do it where we had set up. Because that-a-way they wouldn't put it off. We would call everybody. And we'd go over with them what we wanted them to say and we'd tell them regardless of what they said not to get angry and upset. "If they give you any kind of static just thank them and hang up." So we got a good reception from that. And we'd call everybody in the phone book, from "A" to "Z." And that is a big job too.

Q: Yes I can imagine.

A: But it paid off. We won in the end.

Q: Yes. Now was there anyone else beside Mr. Brendage that helped you?

A: He was the main one, now we had a lot of people helping, you know, but — like with — with my advertising that particular year, and most of my stuff he helped me with most of it. He helped write my ads too. He was very good at it, he'd been with the paper for years. And he liked me and wanted to see me win. I didn't even know what his politics were. He told me he'd help me and so I — I let him help me.

Q: How much did the campaign cost?

A: Well back that first campaign as far as money we didn't have much money. I don't imagine we spent over four or five hundred dollars in the whole ca — we just done it by legwork. We bought some book matches and some bumper stickers and a few placards to put on poles, and things like that. We just didn't have much money. And for a job like that it wasn't easy to get a donation, because there wasn't no way to do any favors outside of just — only people we got contribution from was just somebody good enough Republican that would give you twenty-five dollars and we had several that did. But it didn't amount to no lot of money.

Q: Then on election day I assume you were driving people to the polls?

A: Yes, me and my wife both worked election day in our precinct. And we hauled everybody we could get out to vote too. And of course I won pretty big that time.

Q: Who were you running against?

A: I was running against a guy by the name of Ralph Voorhees from here in Murphysboro. And he was an insurance man. And one fine gentleman. He had a big advantage over me to start with because he was — I was new in Murphysboro, and he knew everybody. But he didn't campaign as hard as I did, and he campaigned basically I think on politics you know. In other words trying to appeal strictly to the Democrats, which ticket he was on. For with me I never mentioned politics, I just campaigned to the people. And I didn't care who they were. When I went down the street knocking on doors, I didn't care if it was a Democrat committeeman's house, I'd stop and see him. They used to laugh at me, one of them especially in Carbondale, and he said, "You know I'm a Democrat committeeman." I said, "I sure do, but I wouldn't dare pass your house and not stop and say hi." He said, "Well you better not." And then we had quite a visit. And he told everybody about me stopping to see him you know. But I wasn't going to pass his house up, when I was in his block and I knew him. So it turned out to be real good for me.

Q: What kind of help did you get from the Republican organization?

A: Well they were strong for me. And of course the Republican precinct committeemen worked hard for me too, worked real hard. The county chairman was strong for me. They give me all the help they could.

Q: How soon election night did you know you had won?

A: Well we knew fairly early. Because the precincts where he had to run strong, if he was going to have a chance to win, he was losing. And so, I think by — I think — that's when they counted them by hand but I think by ten o'clock he'd already — he'd already congratulated me, and called me and I went up to the courthouse — he was — he was a fine man. Very nice about it and he and I were good friends. He's dead now but we were good friends as long as he lived, and still good friends with his brother. We didn't say nothing about each other at all, just campaigned. But he conceded real early in the evening, I know that.

Q: So then when you won that, you didn't go back to the inspector job, or what happened at that time?

A: I went back . . . they was going to let me keep it for a while to see if it was a conflict, see how it was going to work out. Well I didn't keep it very long until we decided that it wasn't going to be good for the secretary of state's office or me. And so I resigned and they gave it to another gentleman here in Murphysboro. It wasn't going to work out for me to keep it it was obvious. Because too many times I'd be gone in some other county and they'd have a bad accident and it was hard to get ahold of me. So I resigned and they had to give it to somebody else.

Q: So the coroner then was a full-time job for you?

A: No it wasn't, it was a — coroner's job, they didn't pay you no salary.

Q: Oh they didn't?

A: No, they paid you on a fee basis. So you couldn't make . . . a county like ours, you had about one hundred cases a year is about what you had then, and I'm sure it'd be more than that now. But you could only make — I think it was about twenty-five hundred dollars is about the most you could make. So I kept that for a while. And I went back to selling cars on part-time basis. My brother had a used car lot in Carbondale. Then when that term was up that's when Representative McDonald, who had been in for eighteen years, decided he wasn't going to run again. That's when they come after me to run for state representative, in 1960. And I ran and got elected for that.

Q: Who was this that came and suggested that you run?

A: Just different friends that I had. It wasn't the — the Republican party didn't, they never talked you into running. They'd — I mean the first thing I done was went and talked to them. Of course they always want to wait and see who all is going to want to run too. But then I had got elected coroner and had a pretty strong base here, and they told me if — my own county told me that if McDonald didn't run that they certainly would support me, you know. So I went and saw him and he told me he definitely wasn't going to run, if I wanted to run to announce, and that's what I done.

SESSION 2, TAPE 4, SIDE 2

Q: Regarding your coroner task, what kind of cases came up while you were coroner?

A: The first case I had was a murder case. We had lots of murders, not lots, but we had several the four years I was in. But the first one I had was a — four students lived together over at Carbondale in an apartment, and one of them had lost his girlfriend and the others got to teasing him about it, and they got into it and he shot one of them, and killed him. And that was my first experience. When they called me I immediately called the sheriff's office and went by and he and I went over together, because it was going to be a case where there was some criminal prosecution going to be involved and he called — I didn't even know what to do at that time, but he called the state's attorney and had him to come too. Told him that there had been a murder.

But we had all kind of cases the four years I was in. We had murders, we had suicides, and — of course a lot of them just routine cases where somebody'd been taking medicine for a heart condition but hadn't been to a doctor. The state had come out with the idea then, by that time, or the health department had recommended, if they hadn't been to a doctor within — I believe when I first went in it was seventy-two hours — that they should call the coroner, to make sure that there'd been no foul play, you know. It wasn't no law, it was just kind of their own rule and most of the hospitals, if somebody was brought in and they hadn't been to a doctor, you know, in the last day or two, they just automatically called the coroner to keep their ownself clear too.

And then we would get the family history on the patient and find — a lot of times we'd have an autopsy then too, you know to make sure that there'd been nothing done that was any foul play. Investigation work is all the coroner's job really is. Main thing is — what you want to determine is — that person hadn't been murdered, you know. And a lot of times some of those cases can look pretty good and still somebody maybe has given them something you know. But that's the main thing you're watching, you're on guard for, is to make sure somebody's loved one hasn't been murdered and . . .

Q: Did you uncover any murders or . . .

A: No we had — we had several cases that were murders but it was obvious from the beginning that it was, you know. And generally we got the people that — every one of them, there were none of them that went unsolved. You could get ahold of them but generally — most of them was a ruckus, just like those boys where it was a ruckus, they didn't run, they stayed there. A lot of times it's where — I had one case where a woman stabbed her boyfriend and all that stuff. Down at the colored tavern here in Murphysboro. We had several cases like that and then we had several suicides too.

Q: I assume that once you were convinced that it was murder then you kind of turned it over to the sheriff's office.

A: Right. What I'd do then was work with the sheriff. I always called the sheriff anytime I was called. Like an automobile accident, why, of course you'd call them and they'd send somebody out to the scene too to help get the traffic — and get to the wrecker. Either them or the — they'd either come or call the state police. But I always reported to the sheriff too anything that I'd find that was unusual. And then I'd bring him up-to-date on all the information I had too. It's just a case of working together is what it really was.

Q: Did you have an office in the courthouse?

A: Yes we had an office in the courthouse but now I didn't — I only had a part-time secretary. She was not in there but we had an office where we kept our records and she'd go up there and type up transcripts, or she could type them up at her home, a lot of times she'd type them at home too. And every inquest, or every coroner's case, they weren't all inquests, but a lot of them we didn't hold an inquest for, if it was obvious what had happened. And you had to type a transcript up for the county record and then a lot of time the insurance company people would want copies of the transcript and copies of the

death certificate and — see we wrote out the death certificates too, on any case that was a coroner's case. And she'd type those and I'd have to sign them. Like if we was going to hold an inquest we'd write out a death certificate and we'd put "inquest pending" so that the families could go ahead, if they had insurance involved, and start their procedures. The main thing the insurance company wants to know, in most cases, is that the person is dead. Of course they want to know the cause too but a lot of times that had nothing to do with them being liable for the claim you know.

Q: And you continued, up until you ran for representative, in the used car business then?

A: Yes I was selling cars part-time. Then in 1960 I ran for state representative and got elected. And . . .

Q: How was the campaign there different from the campaign for coroner?

A: The only difference was it was a lot bigger territory. We used the same tactics. I went to as many houses as I could. I made every business place in the district. Went in and — go in there and introduce myself and — and that's a big job, I'd take town by town. First thing I done was make the business places. And go in the fire stations, and police stations, and any place I could find somebody I'd stop and see them. See somebody out working in the field, I'd stop and introduce myself and try to give him a card and most of them was very receptive too, they really appreciated you stopping and saying hi to them.

Q: Did they bring up any issues or were there . . .

A: Very seldom.

Q: Is that right?

A: Everybody thinks it's the issues and it's more so today than it would have been back then but most of them it was strictly on personality. If they liked you, they would vote for you. In the meantime too I had quit the car business. (pause) I must have quit it in about the latter part of 1958 I guess, or 1959. I was still coroner when I quit and that's when I first started handling some mobile homes too, whenever I was running for state representative. I was in it on a very small scale though, very small scale.

Q: Where did you have the mobile homes?

A: Had a lot out on what is known as New Hills here at the edge of Murphysboro. Only displayed four or five homes. Of course state representative back in 1960 was only a part-time job too. You served six months and then you adjourned for a year and a half, unless the governor called you back to a special session. And of course then you only got $6,000 a year too. That's when I got started in the mobile home business. And after I got elected and — that's when — then I got a partner in the mobile home business, that was in 1960. And after I got elected he run the mobile home business until — when I'd be in Springfield, and then when I was home me and him run it together. And then, up in 1962, we moved it from Murphysboro to Carbondale, the sales lot. And his brother owned some ground over there right at the edge of Carbondale, and we moved it over to there. But he ran it when I wasn't there.

But even back then the first six months we were only in session on an average, to start with, two or three days a week. Now like April and May and June, the latter part of the session, of course then I was up there pretty well all week long. He'd run it and then after we'd adjourn of course then I was there and we run it together.

Q: Now, after you were elected how did you go about figuring out for sure you knew what to do when you got up to Springfield?

GALE WILLIAMS AND HELEN FALKENHEIM ON THEIR WEDDING DAY, 9 DECEMBER 1947.

"She grew up at Ava too. We just met there in the restaurants and stuff, that's how we got started."

AGE 20, STANDING BESIDE THE TRUCK USED ON THE MILK ROUTE WHICH THE FAMILY RAN FOR ELEVEN YEARS, 1942.

"We had the farm agoing, milking a lot of cows and we had a milk route."

PRIVATE GALE WILLIAMS, U.S. MARINE CORPS, 1945. BECAUSE HIS FATHER HAD HAD A STROKE, A 4-F AGRICULTURE-ESSENTIAL DRAFT RATING DELAYED MR. WILLIAMS' ENLISTMENT.

"The draft board kept shifting me between 4-F and 1-A until my father said,'let's just have a sale and have it over with.'"

IN UNIFORM AS A STATE LICENSE INSPECTOR, 1953.

"After Carpentier got elected, I put in an application. It was under a patronage system then but its not now."

A: Well, when I first got to Springfield and was swore in, a representative by the name of Noble Lee, who had been head of John Marshall Law School, he held — he volunteered, and he had done this I found out later for some time for beginners — he held some night schools, night classes we called them. And all it was was explaining it to us. He was very good at it, and he charged nothing for doing it, he done it strictly as free gratis to help beginners. And of course then other members too, you get acquainted with them and you just learn by trial and error to start with, basically. But Noble Lee was a big help to me. He was a fine man. And he knew the law and he knew the legislature and he'd hold these meetings of a night.

Q: Where did he hold them?

A: I think he held most of them over at the St. Nicholas Hotel, at a room they had there, is where I remember going the most. Now a lot of them, a lot of the new guys wouldn't go. Some of them had told them that it wouldn't do any good. They discouraged it. But I did, I went to every one of them. And I enjoyed it, because he explained to us how to introduce a bill, how to get a bill drafted and if you had a problem in your district and you want to correct the law he told us how to go to the Reference Bureau and tell them what our problem was. He said, "They'll draft the bill for you." He said, "You don't have nothing to worry about. Tell them what you want."

And of course then you get put on committees and it's a training program the first six months, really is. I mean and it's a big training pro — course you're eager to learn and you'll work at it harder than a member that's been there for a long time, because you're trying to make a good impression on your people back home and want to learn as fast as you can. But I went to everything — anything I could go to that would help me learn, I went to it.

And Paul Powell was Speaker my first session, who was from southern Illinois too. Even though he was a Democrat he was very helpful to other members. I went to him many a time. In fact he told me one day when I first got elected, he said, "Now any time I can help you come and let me know." Said, "I want to help you."

Q: Even though he was a Democrat.

A: Even though he was a Democrat. He was very helpful. If you had a bill that you wanted to sponsor he'd tell you who you should get on it as cosponsors with you, that were influential members and other members would respect, and would make it much easier for you.

Q: Can you think of an example of a bill that . . .

A: Well the bill that I can think of that he helped me with the most was in my second term. I always heard them talk about building Kinkaid Lake. Now Kent Keller talked about getting it done in the federal Congress for years when I was a kid. And that was one thing that I wanted to see done. Well I went to Paul Powell and he told me to — said, "The first thing you got to do is get a feasibility study made." He said, "They'll have to — it'll take appropriations." And he said, "You go down and tell the Reference Bureau."

Well Senator Crisenberry had retired in the meantime. And I talked to him and he came up here and helped me too. He's with the Chamber of Commerce here in Murphysboro at the time. So he actually went and got the bill drafted for me.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: Yes. Senator Crisenberry did. And he brought it back and gave it to me. And he said, "Now I've talked to Powell and to John Lewis," who was a leading member on the Republican

side. He said, "They'll both cosponsor with you." And he said, "You get them on there and you bypass committees." Because it was up in the early part of May. Said, "You ain't got time to go through all the committees with it." And he said, "You'll lose it."

So I went up and talked to Powell, he was Speaker, and he said, "You put my name on. You go back and tell Lewis you want his name on it." Lewis was one of the leading members on the Republican side. So I went back and John Lewis signed it, and Powell signed it. So then I went and talked to several members there and told them I wanted to bypass committee, which took unanimous consent, and had to get it over to the senate as quick as I could. So I got up and asked for unanimous consent and they granted it. So it put my bill automatically right up on the floor for the first reading.

And got it through and we got the study made and then the next session we got appropriations to start the lake and — had to go back every session for a while and . . .

Q: How much was that initial survey . . .

A: Initial survey I think was $75,000. We had to get that done though before they knew whether the ground out there would hold water. But that was a big achievement for me. Of course I had all the help in the world but still somebody had to carry the ball, you know. I was really proud of that. Of course we had a lot of other bills too that we sponsored but a lot of them we just cosponsored too, you know, with other members.

Q: On that, when you report in to Springfield there, I guess one of the first things you do is caucus to get organized for the . . .

A: Right.

Q: Do you remember what happened at that first caucus?

A: Oh yes I do. It was a hot one.

Q: Oh really?

A: Yes. The Republicans had elected control of the house, they had elected the majority of the members, by two votes I believe that year, yes I think we had ninety-one members. And they also knew that some of those Republicans were from Chicago where they might be able to be persuaded to vote for a Democrat Speaker. So they sent us letters. Bill Pollack was running for Speaker that year, a guy by the name of William Pollack from Chicago, on the Republican side. And Powell was running on the Democrat side. And they sent us letters to come in. We went in a day early, and we had our caucus that night and they got ten — it took ten ballots before Pollack even got the endorsement of the Republicans, you know this was the Republicans meeting separately from the Democrats. Each party was caucusing. And the Democrats caucused and decided — agreed to support Powell. And the Republicans finally by . . . we had ninety-one members I — as I recall, and we . . . for anybody to be put up for Speaker had to receive the majority of his own party vote that night at the caucus. And there was several running to start with. I don't remember who all of them were even, but I know Pollack finally got it, by one vote, in our caucus.

Well then the next day, the secretary of state of course had to operate the house until they elected a Speaker. And the word got out that they had a fellow by the name of August Ruf and a fellow by the name of Pete Miller, who is no longer in the legislature but he still is a lobbyist in Springfield, had been lined up to vote for Powell which was going to elect Powell Speaker. So then they called a meeting early the next morning. They phoned everybody . . .

Q: This is the Republicans . . .

A: This is the Republicans. And we had a meeting at the St. Nicholas Hotel early the next morning, and — St. Nicholas or the Leland, I forget which, but one of those big hotels — and they told us what was going to happen. So they decided — the secretary of state came over and met with us — they decided he'd call it, the meeting, the session, to order, and immediately Pollack made a motion to adjourn and he granted it and we adjourned for a week. Trying to round up these two Republicans. Because the Republicans, these two Republicans, stayed away from our caucus that night. That's the reason they suspicioned them. And they claimed they were sick and they were supposed to be in a hospital in Chicago. Well of course they wouldn't let nobody in to see them. And the next morning's papers showed — a reporter had got in, posed as something and got into the hospital, and got in this room where August Ruf was staying, and took his picture all sitting up in bed reading and all. Of course there wasn't nothing wrong with him. And come to find out they were on Daley's payroll in Chicago, in the sanitary district, and he was putting the pressure on them to support Powell. So they recessed for a week, immediately then.

But when we went back the following week they still couldn't persuade them. And the Democrats had, I think eighty-seven votes, eighty-seven members. And all they had to do was go in there and sit there and give them a quorum. And so then in the next morning when we went back up we had another meeting early that morning and they sent a representative over by the name of Sam Dale, he was in the legislature at that time, an old gentleman. And he had a son in the legislature too, both Republicans. Doc Dale, he's a dentist up at Champaign or somewhere up in that area. They sent him over to see if they were there, they didn't come to the caucus. And they were setting in there. But they knew it was going to give them a quorum, so then they sent the word for us to all get over there that they were going to have a quorum. And they elected Paul Powell Speaker too. And we had a Republican majority.

Q: So the defection on the part of these . . .

A: Yes. On the part of the Republicans. That was my first session. We had — it was quite a session for a beginner for we didn't know what was going on, you know, we didn't understand none of it really. But you learned real fast by all that going on, because everybody was telling you what was going on. And it was quite an experience.

Q: Yes sir.

SESSION 3, TAPE 5, SIDE 1

Q: I'd like to go back and pick up a couple of items we skipped over there. One, when you were coroner there evidently was a tornado that occurred in Jackson County here. Do you remember the circumstances of that and your sending for disaster help?

A: Yes, there was a tornado. That was in December the seventeenth or eighteenth of 1957. And there was — quite a bit of Murphysboro was hit. It was on the south side of Murphysboro. And there were ten people killed. And of course they brought in — they had already requested it before — I didn't have to do it, the sheriff's office and some of those other agencies did request emergency help and of course emergency help was sent in. I know the Red Cross came in. They set — because the power was out in Murphysboro, in most of Murphysboro at least for — I don't remember now how long. And of course after the tornado some of the places where it hit, the houses burnt, and we had some fire out in the south part of Murphysboro. Yes it was quite a — it was really bad, it was real bad.

I think there was about four or five members in one family was killed, the Butcher family. And they lived down on what is now Shoemaker Drive close to the Muddy River. It seemed to follow the river that time. It hit Gorham, a little bit of Gorham, came right up what is known as the Twentieth Street Road, and hit the south edge of Murphysboro, and it really done the damage and killed ten people all together, that's how many died.

Q: Did you have to take action then as coroner with those ten people?

A: Yes we did. Of course immediately I got a bunch of men to help and we had to carry — most of the bodies were strown out in fields and places like that. And one had burnt up in the house after it caught fire, as I remember, and — but we had plenty of help, state police came in and the sheriff's deputies, and all of those people helped get the bodies out and it — and there was some hurt but now I didn't have nothing to do with those because the ambulances took them right on to the hospital. But it was — it was a sad deal, especially the Butcher family, it was a family that I had known for a long time too. And it was his wife and three or four children. And they were — bodies was blown out in a field close to Muddy River. And we found them and we had to put on overshoes and stuff because it was — it come a tremendous rain too. And had to get out there in the mud and get those people out. But it was quite a deal, it really was.

Q: Was there any problem in getting the disaster area declared by the state?

A: No. Now I don't know whether they declared it a disaster — I think they did though, I think the governor did request it. I believe it was sometime maybe later. But — no, everybody worked good together. Their sheriff's department and they had some volunteers I think too from some other towns that came in and assisted too. I know at the courthouse that night, I think the power was knocked off at the courthouse and they put some big generators and everything to keep everything going. They had plenty of help though in a short time.

And it hit a little bit of Campbell Hill I believe too at that time, but nobody was killed. But I think it did do some damage to some buildings and things up there too. But the only place that there's anybody lost their life was Murphysboro.

Q: Was there a civil defense organization in Murphysboro?

A: Yes, and they came in immediately too. And I don't recall who was in charge of that. It seems to me like it was an exmilitary man here in Murphysboro. I'm not sure what his name was but I know that those people came in and the civil defense people. I recall seeing him and I don't — I didn't know what his name was but I did recognize him, but I knew he was from Murphysboro. And I think he worked for the federal government too in the forestry business at that time, this guy did.

But they were in and they — everybody was out working that night trying to make sure that we found everybody and — it blowed out some windows out of some business places downtown. The Ford garage, it just took all their front windows and just strowed them across the street. And just glass was everywhere, just absolutely everywhere.

Q: The other thing that I wanted to pick up a little more on was the Twenty-fifth District Young Republicans. How did you come to be governor of that district?

A: They had a meeting. I forget how many counties there was. There were several counties though. They had a meeting, the young people did, and you were nominated and elected by the members of the Young Republican organizations in the various counties.

Q: How did they come to choose you?

A: I guess because I was extremely active at that time. I had went to all their meetings and of course I was always putting my two cents worth in too. Like most young people, a lot of times talking when I should have been listening. But I was a strong worker for the Young Republicans and of course that's I'm sure why they'd choose me. You know, they wanted somebody that was noisy I guess. (chuckles)

Q: I see. What was involved with being governor?

A: Well what I done immediately was went to all the counties in my district to get young people organized. We'd go and meet with the regular Republican county chairman first. And try to get him to recommend some young people who had good backgrounds and were fine young people, and would be young people that would have some influence on others. And we were pretty successful. The county chairmen were very cooperative and they would recommend these young people that come from good families and had good backgrounds. We had a quite a large group going.

And that's whenever the — when we got them organized I think that's one reason that Governor Stratton — was so easy to get him to come down is because we had worked hard. And Senator Crisenberry of course was helpful too. We had no trouble at all of getting Governor Stratton to come down to our district meeting. And that give us a big boost. And of course young people was extremely enthused when that happened. Like I said earlier we had a tremendous crowd. It seemed to me like they estimated around one thousand people. We just had the building at Anna full, just full as it could be, people everywhere.

But we had a good organization at that time. The Young Republicans are not that active today. Of course the Young Democrats are not either. It's harder to . . . you don't have patronage like they used to and there's not a lot — you just got to be an enthused person and strong for your party to get people to work. But back then it was fairly easy to get them to work.

And we went into these different counties and got them organized and get them to have a meeting, invite other young people, and get them agoing. We'd encourage them to go to the state convention when they had it and when the regular Republican party had something we encouraged them to take an active part and a lot of them did.

A lot of them turned out to be officeholders in their counties too. I know the boy at Monroe county for example, he was active and he I think is still county clerk up there, and this has been several years ago. But a lot of those young people got active and then county chairmen and those people in the regular party organization would get them to run and a lot of them was pretty easy to elect, because they were fine young people.

Q: You mentioned that patronage may be a reason for a decline in the — how did it operate then?

A: Well back then like when your party got in power, if somebody needed a favor you could do it pretty easy. Like if they needed assistance in getting a job if there was an opening, why, you could get it, you could help them get it. You know by going through the regular organization. But today it's pretty much on civil service. And the political organization, they have some influence but nothing like they used to have. Back a few years ago if there was an opening in a job, the party in power, their organization, would name who's going to get that replacement. But in that — they try to do that yet today but it's not as successful as it used to be. It's really declined in getting people to work.

I think now though, I think this last election with President Reagan I think we saw a big change. I think there's people out working now strictly because they're dedicated to what they thinks best for the country too. I noticed last fall, in the fall of 1980, I know in my

own precinct we had a lot of people that had no axe to grind with anybody. They were just simply out working for what they thought was best. Which it may turn out to be a lot better system in the future than even what we had then. Because there's a lot of people that are concerned enough to go out and work. Used to, you had to pay about everybody to work too, except the Young Republicans. In the regular organization used to, on election day, you hired everybody, just about had to hire most people to haul voters and stuff. You'd have to pay them to get them to do it. That wasn't nothing big, you didn't pay them anything big but you'd have to pay them a little bit and buy their gas and stuff like that. Well, now, it seems to me like in my own precinct especially I don't think they pay anybody anymore and and I like that part. I like that part.

All the work I ever done I never would accept no pay from anybody. I just felt like it — that it was just — wasn't the thing for me to do to take pay. I enjoyed doing it and I used to just plan on election day working an election. A lot of Young Republicans I think felt that way. And I think they still do, the young people, if you can get them to work. I think if you can get young people enthused, and you got to have somebody that can enthuse them, talk to them and get them enthused, wanting to help, and point out reasons why you think they should, you know there's always issues. Young people have to have an issue. And I think if you got somebody that can talk to them and point out these things to them.

Take like today taxes is a big issue. And it's a big issue for young people because they're going to be paying most of that load. And I think if you had the right person out pushing in the various counties, I think you could still — I think it would be amazing the support they would find for people to go out and work.

Q: As the governor of the district did you have state duties with the state Young Republican organization?

A: Well, you had, yes. You did whenever it come time to electing a state chairman, and all that. Then they would automatically call the district governor — all — anybody that was going to run for state chairman would automatically call and naturally they'd try to get you committed to them. And that would get to be quite a seesaw battle by the time the convention got there. And a lot of young people, including myself in the beginning, you get yourself in hot water, because somebody comes along and they're real nice and you think, "Well, we're going to be for this young man or woman," and then a few days later here comes someone else. And by the time the convention got there you had been talked to by several in most cases. And each county had so many votes, like the chairman of your delegation could vote that number of votes. It would get to be quite a thing because everybody that was running for president of the state Young Republicans, he'd have a head count. He had a chart showing how many votes each county had. And naturally he was always trying to get somebody to bring that number of people, so they could vote them, and vote them for him. I've seen some pretty hot political battles with the Young Republicans. They would go after it hot and heavy. But when it was over, why, young people are, generally, are quick, like everybody else, quick to forget, and they'd get right back together. They'd have a big party generally after it was over but . . .

Q: In 1959 where was the convention held?

A: I don't remember . . . seems to me like it was in Springfield. I believe it was in Springfield, either Springfield or Peoria, and I'm not sure. Well I loved to go to those conventions because — I think it might have been even Peoria, I'm just not sure, now. But we'd round up a bunch of young people and get them to go and, boy, we were right in on it. Everybody was trying to lobby you and get you to agree to support their man. They thought your delegation was for someone else then they would try to talk to you, get you to change your mind. They'd try to meet with your group and they were — they'd go after it, young people would.

Q: Did any of them push you for state level . . .

A: No, no, they never. No, there's always somebody saying, "Why don't you run for this or that," you know but nobody really pushed anybody. Of course from down here it would be hard to — it would be hard to win the election. Because we don't have the population. Paul Powell did but they — he was a rarity. He was an exception. (chuckles) When he ran for secretary of state. But it'd be hard for a person from way down here to win I would think.

Q: When you reported in to the General Assembly in your first time there how did you go about deciding where you were going to sit in the chamber?

A: Well whenever we reported in of course you go into — you're swore in and then they have everybody to go back outside, and they read out everybody that's got like fourteen terms — they know what the longest term is anybody's got. And that's what they would start out with; like fourteen terms, he gets first choice. Thirteen terms, twelve terms, eleven terms, right on down until they get down to the freshmen. Then when they get down to the freshmen you just, whenever they call up the first termers you go in and take whatever's left. That was the way you picked it.

Q: Where did you find your seat to be then?

A: Mine was about three rows from the back. I learned real quick that — I always thought that those that had seniority would want to be up at the front but I found that wasn't true. A lot of those old-timers were sitting back in the back, that had all the seniority. And after that, after my first term, I done all I — I always stayed close to the back. I learned that you could see everything from the back. You could see who was talking, and if somebody requested permission to speak you were sitting back there where you could just — you knew what was going on. Didn't have to turn around and be looking and all those things. Take Charlie Clabaugh and some of those who had been in for a long time whenever I went there. Charlie sat in the very back row. And I asked him one day, I thought that was strange that he would, he said, "No, I like it back here." He said, "Back here you can see everything." So my next session then I managed to get back right close to — I wasn't very far from him, and I stayed back there the rest of terms there.

Q: Who were your seatmates that first term?

A: Well my first term my seatmate was Augie Ruf, the guy that Republicans had a lot of trouble with and of course I'd never heard of him or had never saw him before until that. But he wound up getting a seat right the side of me. And I found that he was a very likable person, but he was on the sanitary district's payroll in Chicago, he told me that. And of course they had pressured him to go along and vote for Powell. Now this was after this had all taken place. Because after that all'd taken place that's when we choose our seats and all that. And he wound up sitting right by me. And I thought — I was worried about it to start with, I was afraid the regular Republicans would be upset at me. Well I found out they knew there was nothing I could do about it, because he had a lot more seniority than I did. He could sit just about wherever he wanted to. But it bothered me at first, me being new, but he was a fine gentleman to me, just as nice as he could be. I got to know him quite well, setting there visiting with him for six months, you know every day. And he wasn't a bad person at all. Extremely nice as far as I was concerned. I didn't agree with what he done. But he was very nice to — very nice guy to sit by.

Q: Was there others then? Was he on your right or left . . .

A: Yes he was on my right and I was right next to the aisle.

Q: Oh I see.

A: I don't recall who sat on the other side of him in that row. We's about the third or fourth row down from the back, and I got a seat right on the aisle. Which I liked that very much because when people got up to go out to the restroom or something, why, you didn't have — be bothered with them, you know getting out and in.

Q: Oh I see.

A: Like if you sat over in the middle somewhere and they're going to get up and go out. No, I sat right next to the aisle my first session and that was just by luck that I got that. But after they called the first-termers you could take whatever wasn't taken. So that seat wasn't taken and I just thought, "Well that would be a good one for me." And I got it and I liked it very much. But then my next session, my second term, John Lewis picked that seat.

Q: Oh? Well.

A: So I didn't get it. (chuckles) Got down to the second termers but my seat was already gone by that time.

Q: But you were able to move back then?

A: Oh yes. I got back towards the back then. Yes.

Q: Do you recall — let's see, how long had Augie Ruf been in the chamber when you . . .

A: I believe when I went there he was on his third or fourth term.

Q: Did he have any particular guidance for you or was he useful in providing advice?

A: Yes. He was always — he was a guy you could talk to, and he'd tell you, and he was honest to me. He would say, "Now this is what, you know you do whatever you want to, but . . ." He would tell me — like if you wanted to get up and talk on a bill or something and he would explain all that to you. What you do, and how you do things, not to make anybody mad. And he also explained — they all, the old ones, explained to you quick about you're better off not to talk the first session. You're better off to be seen and not heard. Because the old-timers kind of frowned on that. So you done very little talking, or I did very little, because that was the last thing you wanted to do was offend somebody, and have them all upset at you. So you just tried to coast along and — and play with the team, you know.

But he was very nice about advising you about things to do and he was quick to grasp what a bill was if it came up for votes you know. And if you didn't have a chance to look at it or if you wasn't on a committee that heard it you wouldn't know very much about it, unless you had your Digest there where you could glance at it right quick, you know. Because some of bills, they — takes a good while before they'd have a final vote but some of them they didn't. If there wasn't any discussion on it hardly, why, you could be voting on something you didn't know what you's voting on really. And that's kind of bad, you know, because you could be — then you just vote with a majority hoping that they're voting right.

Q: I see. How did you go about getting information on subjects that weren't particularly known to you?

A: Well what I made a practice of doing, which I learnt fairly quickly, was — if it was . . . first of all we got a copy of every bill that was introduced put on our desk, every day we'd get copies of those bills, if they was new bills introduced. And if you read it and

then you wasn't sure about it or you thought you might want to talk to somebody about it, I would generally go — you soon learn who the reliable lobbyists are for the various organizations, and there were a lot of good ones. You'd find out who you — a good lobbyist would — you could go to him and he'd simply tell you what the bill done, if it pertained to his organization. And he'd tell you whether — a good lobbyist didn't try that hard to influence you. He naturally would point out their point of view and why they were for it or why they were against it. But he'd also — he'd tell you the whole story, both sides of it. And you soon learned that. Like on taxes, I used to go to the Taxpayers Federation a lot, a gentleman by the name of Maurice Scott, and he was the most knowledgeable man that I ever met about taxes. And everybody — I don't, to this day, don't know what his politics are.

Q: Is that right.

A: Because everybody went to him. Because he just simply knew tax legislation. And you could go to him, he'd tell you exactly what the bill done, and then if you'd say, "What position is your group going to take on it?" he'd tell you. And he didn't get upset at you if you didn't agree with him. He was just a fine gentleman. And I went to him many many many times. And he had a couple of young guys working with him on the last couple of terms I was there. I don't recall their names, but they were fine young men too. And you could go to them and they would sit down, if you wanted to sit down and talk for a minute or you could catch them out there just standing outside the chamber, they'd tell you right quick what the bill done. And that's — that was my way of trying to find out. Because you could find out real quick, without reading every word of it, from someone like — if it was somebody you could believe and trust.

And school legislation, you could go to school people, you know. There was always school people there and generally you, on school legislation, you generally had people from your own district too, that were studying those bills, particularly that pertained to education. And they'd tell you right quick too what the bill done, and why they were for it or against it you know. What it was going to do to them if it passed and why they were opposed or why they were for it. But I found that to be very good.

And some of the older guys had always told me, "You'll soon find — you find out who your good lobbyists are and go to them because most of them are reputable guys if they'd been around here very long." And said, "They can't afford to mislead you, because then they'll have the whole legislature mad at them."

Real estate, used to go — they had a lobbyist there that was a fine gentleman too, on laws pertaining to real estate agents and stuff like that you know.

Q: Who was that?

A: His name was Robert Cook. And he lived in Springfield. And he was a fine gentleman. I went to him many a times on legislation pertaining to real estate people, you know. Township, you go to the township organization, if it pertained to our township systems you know. I found that was a quick way to check into a bill. And a lot of times too you would call groups back in your district to see if they knew about a bill that was introduced you know. I done it many times. Like if it pertained to schools, call some of your school people and ask them if they knew about House Bill so-and-so, "It's been introduced and I don't know whether this bill is going to be helpful or not to our area." I'd send them a copy. I sent a many a person a copy of a bill back in my district and I'd just write a little note to, "Look this over and give me a call and tell me what you think about it." And they appreciated that. Because sometimes it would be introduced and they wouldn't even know it was in there yet. No I done that many a times. And bills that pertained to county government. I've sent copies of bills to county people you know, and ask them to take a look at it and give me a call, or write me a note you know.

It's a big job to try to read all the bills, it's next to impossible. Now I know everybody thinks that you can and you should. Well you should if you can, that's for sure, but when there would be sometimes four or five thousand bills in there in a session, it's just humanly impossible and you have to serve on committees too. And I was on the Appropriation Committee for about three — three of my five terms. And my goodness it — you work on that committee, many an evening you're in there until ten, eleven o'clock at night, hearing those appropriation bills. And it don't leave you much time. So you got to get help from somebody. So I would take a lot of bills and go talk to these lobbyists and people like that to find out what they thought about it, what the bill actually done. Because they'd tell you, even though you might not agree with their point of view, they'd still tell you what it done.

Q: The departments of the state government were kind of special interest groups as such. Were there any particular individuals on particular subjects you went to . . .

A: Yes. Yes I did. With education I used to — Ray Page when he was superintendent of public instruction he had a guy there by the name of I believe Tom Denny. And some gentlemen that worked for him, in his department. They were always over there when we were in session. But I found them to be really reputable guys, you know. They would also tell you whether they supported or was opposed to it and all that but they would also tell you what the bill actually done and that's what you wanted to know. Oh I went to a lot of those departments. Department of Transportation, if a bill was in pertaining to highway work or something you know. Get ahold of the director or his people and they'd always be around there when we were in session.

Now if you was on the committee to hear those type bills, why, of course then you'd know what the bill done time the committee hearing was over. But if you weren't on the committee that heard the bill the other members had to get it from those committee members. Or you had to just check into it on your own like talking to these directors and different people in these departments.

It's a lot of work to check on those bills, to what they really do. And you can really get hurt if you make a mistake on voting on one of them. Later you wished you hadn't of, and you've already voted. You find out there was some sneakers in there you know. And people back home don't know that. You know, they think you should have caught that. And you should but you're just human and it's easy to make a mistake too.

Q: Did you ever get stung by following the advice of a lobbyist?

A: No I don't recall it if I did. I mean you — a lot of bills are not popular either way you vote, you know. I can recall back when they had to raise the sales tax a time or two, while I was in, for education. It was either raise the sales tax or the districts back home was going to be raising real estate taxes on the local people. So, those are — any way you vote it's going to be unpopular. If you vote to raise taxes then you got to explain it or people won't understand why you did. You got to do a good selling job to keep from getting hurt. And if you vote against it then all of your school people are upset at you. And they're, of course, they're telling everybody that you're irresponsible. So those are decisions that are just tough to make. You know you have to make them, but you're going to get hurt some when you make those decisions.

SESSION 3, TAPE 5, SIDE 2

Q: Were there any particular other legislators that you turned to for guidance on particular subjects?

A: Well, on education I always talked to Charlie Clabaugh a lot. I respected him. And Charlie was a guy that you didn't — I didn't always agree with him but I did respect him,

because he was very knowledgeable about education and I went to him a lot on education. He was on the Education Committee and I was on it there for I think one term too.

I really didn't like the Education Committee. Because every school organization in the state of Illinois would come in there and they all had to talk, and teachers just historically don't know when to quit talking. And they just wear you out, you just set there and set there, you listen to the same thing over and over you know.

But I went to him and . . . there's different members there you could go to on different —— that were you know pretty well versed in certain subjects.

Q: What about judicial matters? Were there any . . .

A: Well generally there I — generally on judicial matters you'd go to some attorney friend of yours that was in the legislature then, you know had quite a bit of ex — now I went to Noble Lee quite a bit too on — because he was a lawyer and probably one of the most brilliant minds that was in that legislature, when it come to legal things. And I think a lot of them went to him. I know I respected his judgement and I think a lot of them did.

But that's the way most members I think do it. You know you don't really take their — you don't vote maybe the way they do, but you can go discuss it with them and then you had a good idea of what the people back in your district would want you to do, you know, once you knew exactly what the bill done.

Of course lawyers, they want everything passed so that everybody's got to get a lawyer. So maybe, with the background that I've got, I'd be opposed to that, naturally, because, my goodness, there's just so many things that you got to go to a lawyer for now that you just don't need a lawyer for. Typing a deed. Now you got to go to a lawyer to get a deed typed. Well my — anybody that can type could type a legal description. But they got it now to where you got to go to a lawyer to get it done. And of course just about everything you got to go to a lawyer on anymore, and of course they went through the legislature and got it fixed that way.

But I went to a lot of — lot of different members and would talk to members on the committee I was on too a lot of times. What they actually thought about a certain bill you know. "What's this going to really do to us?" you know. And I think all the members did.

You get very close to the other members in the course of a session. Even though you got — some are Democrats, some are Republicans, you still get — you get close and a lot of them you really respect and — on both sides, not always Republicans that you go to. I had a lot of good Democrat friends in the legislature. And me and two or three of them we went out to eat many an evening together after we'd get through. We got to be real good friends. We'd always kid each other about, "Well now tomorrow we're going to have to vote against each other on certain bills and the party was going to make us." (chuckles) And we'd get a big kick out of it you know. But a lot of times we knew too that even — we thought our leadership was wrong, you know, a lot of times, but we went along with it because we didn't want to be labeled as voting against our own party. But we used to laugh about a lot of it. How the leadership would argue and fuss around and we'd have to vote against each other, but that goes with it.

Q: Who were some of these Democrats that usually had . . .

A: Well one of the main ones that I got to be a real good friend to was Leland Kennedy from up at East St. Louis or Alton, in that area. And he and I both stayed at the Governor Hotel for a long time in Springfield. He and I got to be real good friends and we went

out to eat many a evening, me and him together. Ben Blades, now he was Republican. And Jim Washburn, he was a Republican. But Leland Kennedy and some of those boys and — I got to be real good friends with in the . . . I was a good friend with Jim Holloway too but I never — we weren't on the same committees there. I don't think we were ever on the same committee.

You got the closest with those you's on the committee with. Because you got out of session the same time. A lot of time the session would adjourn and then you'd go have a committee hearing. Well you might sit there until eight or nine o'clock. Well we'd get done, I'd say to Leland, "Let's — have you ate? Where are you going to eat at?" "Why, had no particular place." Well we'd go eat together you know. Of course we'd sit and visit then a long time. And we got to be real good friends.

Q: How much did you use the Legislative Council?

A: Used it quite a bit, I did. I really liked the Legislative Council, and I thought they done a tremendous service for the legislature. But I'd go to them many a time and — I can't think of that gentleman's name and he was so nice.

Q: Bill Day was it?

A: Yes, Bill Day, that's who it was, Bill Day. And he was absolutely one of the finest men you'd ever meet, you know, he was to me. Always had time to see you. And you could tell him what you were trying to find out, he'd write it down, and wouldn't be long until you'd get a report. They'd have it for you. They done a lot more service than — I was there a couple of terms before I think I really realized what all they could do for you. Because they could do a lot a things for a member of the legislature. You know about — do research, about different things you needed even in your own counties. I had them to do research one time on — estimate how many people there was over the age of sixty-five in Illinois. We had some legislation coming up to — I sponsored the first bill to give them the homestead exemption, and we patterned it after the state of Florida. And that's back — I got the first bill passed that was ever passed, and Kerner, Otto Kerner, was governor and he vetoed it. But I got it through the legislature to give senior citizens when they reached age sixty-five, they would get a five thousand dollar homestead exemption on their home where they lived, and they got — that's when we had personal property tax, and they got a thousand dollar exemption on their personal property tax. It was House Bill 240, if I remember right. We got it passed and then the governor vetoed it. He wasn't for it, thought it was going to knock them out of too much revenue. But that was going to help at that time, I believe their report showed, close to a million people in Illinois. I was really surprised at — what a large number we had that that was going to help and it was going to help them a lot, back then.

But I went to them several times and they done surveys for me. Some of the others I don't remember. One time I had them to do some work on how many people was drawing public aid and stuff too in Illinois. And how it was as far as the minorities and all, you know, trying to find out just who we were helping and not helping, and who these people really were. Well of course I soon learned there that we were — it was minorities that was getting the benefit mostly from that. And probably that was probably rightly the way it should have been, you know. But they done several — they done quite a bit of work for me.

Q: A lot of their analysis is of action that has been taken in other states. Do you recall any particular requests for that?

A: Yes. Yes. Yes they would take — a lot of times if we knew — just like on this homestead exemption, I had read somewhere where Florida had passed this. So I went to Mr. Day, and he immediately got — contacted them and got a copy of it. And then he redone it so hopefully it'd be constitutional in Illinois. But when I went to the Reference Bureau

then to get the bill drafted, and — I don't know whether that — I think that was before Loren Bobbitt was there — the gentle — the old gentleman prior to him, he told me then he said, "Now there will be some questions raised about whether this is constitutional or not." But he said, "The best way to find out is to pass it and then see what the court says about it." Well we passed it but then the governor vetoed it. So we don't know what the court would have said.

And the way the court changed their mind there later about income tax, the homestead exemptions and all it might have been constitutional. Because we were exempting — we were giving everybody the same exemption that was over sixty-five. See I first wanted to fix it to where it would — those that were under so much income, I believe less than — I forget how we had it worded. We was trying to help those that really needed it was the very beginning of it. Well they told me right off that would be unconstitutional, you'd have to make it as a class deal you know. You couldn't give one man that was sixty-five years old an exemption and not give it to another. But they didn't think that would be constitutional at all then, under the old Constitution. So that's what we come up with, and we passed it that way. And then the governor of course vetoed it.

But, no, I used the Legislative Council — on the last two or three terms I was in — of course you — the longer you're in the more you used them, the more you find out what they can do for you. And I think that, when a new member goes in, that's one thing should be explained to them a lot more than it is.

Q: Oh?

A: Yes. I don't think that was — I mean you're told about it but — I know I didn't realize the service that they could really do for you. They could have done for me right then same as they was doing when I was in there my third and fourth and fifth term you know. But anytime I wanted to know about something I'd go to them. And they'd — and it would be something you'd read that had been done in some states somewhere else in most cases. And they'd get a copy of it and they'd make the analysis on it and give you a report and it was really helpful. And everybody respected their reports too. You knew they were — you know, they weren't added or subtract — anything added to them or subtracted you know. You knew it was an honest report. And when you tell them you had a report from the Legislative Council, every member then respected that. That was really re — it was looked to just about like reading the Bible, you know. And I thought that was great too. It said a lot for Mr. Day too, and his group you know.

Q: Did you get to know any of the group under Bill Day?

A: Yes, but not their names but I — oh yes I knew them all when I'd go in there because I was in and out there all the time. And they were all fine people. And whatever the subject was he'd generally get you to somebody that was handling that particular thing you know. And of course then if you had a question you'd run to them you know.

Q: You'd just sit down with them and explain to them what . . .

A: Oh yes. Tell them what you wanted. What you were trying to do and they'd get the analysis for you. Oh yes they were real — they were really helpful. I really liked them people.

Q: How about timing? Were you able to get the information in a timely manner from the Council?

A: Yes. Yes. Sure would. It was unbelievable how quick they could find out so much information. I always commented I don't know how they could find it out as fast as they would. Of course I guess they'd made other checks maybe for other members and maybe

already had some of it, you know. But they were very good and very fast, depending on how much information they had to look up for you. But he'd give you a pretty good idea when you'd talk to him too of just how long it might take. They were very efficient.

I thought they was one of the best departments that they had up there to help the members of legislature. Because they — you could go to them and when you got a report from them it was in writing and you could use it in your hearings and all that stuff and on the floor of the house you know. Because other members would get up and ask you where you got all these statistics you know. And when you said the Legislative Council — they could go get a copy of it too, which they knew that. And they had access to go get a copy of it then if they had any questions unanswered about it you know. And it was really helpful.

Q: Did you ever have a feeling that perhaps it should be expanded?

A: Well, I'll tell you one thing it was the best money I think was spent in that — in the Statehouse to help the members. And any way they could expand it to give them better service it would be money well spent, I think that, I really do. Because it was so helpful. I can't think now of all the things I used to — I went to them for so many things. You know you get to thinking sometimes you were — and I used to tell Mr. Day, "I hope I'm not imposing on you, you know, because" — and of course he'd explain right off that's what they's there for. But still you hate to run in and out of there, you know, every week with a new problem, you know, wanting them to check on it for you. But if they got disgusted at members for running in there often they never showed it, and you got the same service all the way through. It was very courteous and they were very good.

Q: How about legislative interns? Did you ever have the services of an intern?

A: Yes. Now we didn't have much of that though. The last term we was there we had — of course they had went to the offices you know and give us an office. For the first — I was only there five terms and the first four terms of course we didn't even have an office. Our desk was our office, which was embarrassing when people come to see you, and wanted to know if they could come to your office. Well you had to explain to them at that point you didn't have an office, you had a desk and that was it. But the legislative interns were helpful though. They were very helpful.

Now the leadership, every session that I was there, they got — kept getting more. And we could go to them, like on the Republican side, and the Democrats had them on their side for their members. But the trouble was with those interns, unless you were in the leadership, they kept them interns pretty well busy and you couldn't use — the average member didn't have that much access to them, to use. Where the Council, anybody could go to the Council, and everybody got the same treatment, you know. Those legislative interns, now they're sharp young people, and they're very good, but there just wasn't enough of them. Now if they are going to increase that, then a legislator — it would be extremely helpful to have an intern. But I don't think they'll ever go to putting — giving an intern to every member of the legislature. They may, since they cut it down in size and be more efficient for them.

But my time there the Council was the best tool we had to use by far. Now we could go to the Speaker's office and talk to the interns that they had you know assigned to their office and the leader — all the leadership had them. We could go to any of them and get information about most anything. But the leadership kept those boys and girls so busy that it was hard to get much — you know. They'd do what they could but — they were very helpful. But I know they had some of them they were — well Jim Edgar, who's secretary of state now, I think used to be one.

Q: Yes.

A: And he was a fine young man and had a brilliant mind. But, my, they kept him — you know, I think he worked for I think Senator Arrington or somebody, one of those, but, boy, he — and that's how I knew him when they appointed him because he used to be there around the legislature. But, my, those kind of young men they kept them boys busy. You did — the average member didn't have — they didn't have time to help us. They could answer a question or something you know but that'd be all. But the Council, they'd do research for you. Now those interns would do it for whoever they were working for. But the Legislative Council, you go to them, it might take a few days but it wouldn't take long. They'd have you an answer. They'd have you an answer and they'd give you some statistics to back it up too. And . . .

Q: The Reference Bureau was normally the one to at least finally check all bills that were being submitted. How many bills were handed to you and then perhaps checked by Reference Bureau before submitting them?

A: Well I always had the Reference Bureau to draft my bills.

Q: You did.

A: Most members do. And even if I'd been an attorney, they like to look at every bill before it's introduced. To make sure that it's got the proper language and there's not going to be a — some of them — some of the lawyers in the beginning when I first went there they would try to introduce bills and they did introduce them, but then you had them going with amendments, all kind of amendments, correcting the language. They're just corrective amendments is all they are. Where if you'd go to the Reference Bureau in the beginning, they'd put it in proper form, and then you could introduce it and you wouldn't have all that to go through. And they got to where the last couple of sessions I was there they was trying to get everybody to not to introduce a bill without going through the Reference Bureau.

The Reference Bureau was very good. And they'd give you fast service. You could go to them like one week and then next week they'd have your bill ready for you in most cases. They were very good.

Q: And this was the same procedure? You'd go in and they'd assign a particular person to the subject and you'd sit down with them . . .

A: Right. Same thing. You could go in the Reference Bureau, and you'd sit down — now on the last few terms it was Loren Bobbitt was there then, and he was a fine person. You'd go down and sit down with Loren and tell him what you wanted, what you's trying to do. And he'd write it up and then he'd turn it over to somebody else there, and they might call you either before you left Springfield that week or they might even call you that weekend at home to make sure they understood exactly what you was trying to do, if they had any questions about it. But they generally would have it ready for you the next week. And if they didn't, two weeks at the most. But they were very good.

Q: Did you ever do any research over in the Illinois State Library on any . . .

A: No I never. I never — I never done that. It'd be nice if a person could but you'd have had to have the time is the trouble. That was one thing about going to the Council or those interns, they could do all that you know. Now in those interns, those interns had a lot of answers for you without doing — they'd already researched it for the leadership or somebody. Because they'd just done research on about every bill that was in there, some intern would. A lot of times you'd go to them and ask them questions about a certain bill and — and they already had the answer, they'd done researched it, and a lot of cases already wrote up a little report on it. Maybe you'd get a copy of that you know, what they point out about it. But now the last — the longer the legis — and I imagine it's even a lot better

now than it was then. They got a lot better about that each year I was there. About more interns, and everything to help members find out more information about those bills.

They introduced so many bills is the problem. They just — it just seemed like every year it was more bills. I think, on the last session I was there, I think it was around five thousand bills if I remember right that was introduced. Why you couldn't — if you didn't do nothing else but sit and read you couldn't read all them. Not in that period of time. So you got to rely on what other people tell you about it, you know, that reads it. And every organization's got their lobbyist there anymore. And you have to rely on them a lot. And hopefully they're — and they were — if they don't tell the truth they won't be there long. Most lobbyist are honest. You know a lot of people wouldn't — maybe not think so. They're going to try hard to get you to vote their way. You know they'll try to talk to you and like for you to look at it and support their point of view but they will tell you the truth about the bill.

Q: What about the number of bills? Do you see any way that the number of bills could be reduced?

A: Well they talked about it every session and I know everybody that introduces bills would like to see it reduced. I don't know hardly how they can. Because what do you do? You know if you say — say you were limited to introduce — every member could introduce five bills. And then here something pops up in your district that they need legislation to do something, and here you are, you got to — introduced your five bills, then you're in a spot. So I don't believe you'd ever get them to vote to limit how many you can introduce. It'd be nice if they could some way. Because the longer you're in the less bills you'll introduce too.

Q: Oh?

A: Because you soon learn that you're better off, in a session, to not make a nuisance of yourself with introducing a bill to do every little thing. You can't change the world in one session. And you try to introduce legislation that would, you know, that would be not too hard to pass and explain and — and new members are eager, I was too, you're eager to try to make a good name for yourself, you know. And especially back home. A lot of times you overdo it I think and you get a lot of the older members upset at you. Seems like you're doing all the talking on the floor and they soon get perturbed at people that are always asking for the floor and running off at the mouth about everything you know. You can't be an expert on everything.

Q: Do you think the committee system is as effective as it could be in reducing the number of bills that go on the floor?

A: Yes, I think they're doing their best I think to keep it down. They put a lot of them in subcommittees and stuff like that, in most cases that's just to get rid of it. Sometimes they're going to make a study, or they are on a study, but in most cases when a bill goes to the subcommittee that's — they used to call it the graveyard.

Q: Oh. (laughter)

A: They'd put them in there to — because it was just going to take up a lot of time and it wasn't going to go nowhere anyway. And so they'd put it in a subcommittee. And a subcommittee — and sometimes they would just — it would be a bill that does have some merit to it and they will study it for a while. A subcommittee will maybe hold some hearings even. And then later bring it back and report it out, you know. I think the committees want to get rid of a lot of bills, but the trouble is everybody that sponsors a bill is also a member of that legislature. And you don't want to get — you can't afford to make other

members upset at you. So a lot of times you pass bills out you know you shouldn't just to help the member. Now they may kill them on the floor but it still takes a lot of time.

Q: How would that help the member? Back home you mean?

A: Yes. That's right. He's sponsoring it for some special group back home or to do something and rather than to make him look bad, because all those people will be in there at the committee hearing, and you don't want to make him look bad, because he's helped you on a bill for maybe to do something in your district. So you'll go along with him on getting it out of committee at least, and reserve the right to vote against it on the floor if you don't like it. But that makes him look good. And you just can't get away from that because everybody's just human. And maybe he's just helped you get a bill out, so then you just — you're paying back a favor that's all.

Q: You mentioned office space a while ago, you starting out with your desk as your office. How did you organize your desk as your office?

A: Well that was bad. You just had — you had files, folders, galore in the drawers of your desk and of course you carried a satchel that was full of files every week. And of course the bills that they sent you, they stacked up on your desk. They put them in a — they had backs on them and with extension rods through them and every week they'd take it off and add more to it. It'd be so high you couldn't hardly see over it by the time the session was over.

Q: Who was they? Who did this?

A: The Reference Bureau I believe it was. They was boys that worked for the legislature, young boys, and they'd come around — and men too, some men, but a lot — they had a lot of young people doing it — would come around every week and add bills that had been introduced the week before as they were printed. See the bills that were introduced like one week, it would be the next week before they'd be printed and on your desk. So then they'd put them in your stack the way they were numbered you know. They had young people working for the house of representatives and for the senate that done that. They'd come around and put them in your book for you. You had a big book by time the session was over because you had all the senate bills in one book, and all the house bills in another book. You had two books on your desk. The senate got copies of every bill that was introduced in the house and the house got copies of every bill that was introduced in the senate too. Which was helpful but it's quite a job. Now then they've all got offices and it's a lot better than it was, that's for sure.

Q: Were these bill books the same as the Digest, or was the Digest a separate . . .

A: No the Digest is separate. You had that book on your desk too, and every week it got a little bigger. You know because the bills that's introduced like this week then next week they — you get a new Digest every week. With all the bills that was the week before plus the new bills that was introduced added to it. Every week you got a new Digest. And that Digest was extremely helpful too. Because if a bill popped up there on the — if they called the bill and you hadn't got a chance to talk to anybody about it, just hadn't even heard of it until that moment, you could always grab that Digest and turn to like House Bill 1400 and it give you a resume about it, you know, that you could glance at. At least give you some idea of what the bill done. And it was just always a brief in there about what the bill done, and it was extremely helpful too.

Q: Did you have any good luck objects on your desk?

A: No. No.

Q: Didn't keep any.

A: No, I never.

Q: Let's see now, how soon did you move into the Stratton Building then?

A: I think it was my last term I believe. I believe it was my last term is the only time I got to have an office over there. That was nice too. (laughs) It wasn't a very big office but it was — any office was nice. It was a room about twelve-by-twelve something like that.

Q: Understand at that time you shared a secretary then?

A: Yes. Three members had one secretary. And she sat — they had her desk out in front of our little twelve-by-twelve offices. And it worked out real good though, because one girl could take care of mailing stuff for three members pretty well. Yes, every three members had a girl.

Q: Who was your girl there? Do you recall?

A: No I don't, I don't remember what her name was. They hired her for us. But she was very efficient, and she was very good I know that but I don't recall what her name was.

Q: Now prior to that, when your office was your desk, you had to draw on a secretarial pool I understand.

A: Right. Well they had a secretarial pool up on I believe the sixth floor of the Capitol Building, and they would be about fifteen to twenty girls to take care of the Republican side, and about the same amount for the Democrat side. Each side would have the same amount. And . . .

SESSION 3, TAPE 6, SIDE 1

Q: And you get one of those girls then . . .

A: Yes you get one of those girls. The best thing to do was to get in with one of them girls. I always gave them a little tip, because if you didn't, with that many members, it was hard to get your work done, without bringing it home. I used to bring a lot of mine home anyway and for a long — the first couple of terms I was in, my wife would help answer a lot of mail on weekends. And then after I went and got in business where I had secretaries, then I'd bring it to them and they would answer it, they would help me answer it on weekends and stuff.

But the best thing I found in that secretary pool was those girls and they were all fine young women, all of them. I never had any bad experience with not one of them. And I mean I treated them nice and I don't mean maybe and I think most of the guys did. Because when you walked in, you know, they could awfully easily act busy if they didn't like you. So I found you got a lot more by being nice, and I never had any trouble getting my work done.

A time or two, I believe a couple of sessions, I had some girls, some young girls, wanting jobs from my district, and I talked to the Speaker and they hired a couple of them in that pool. And that made it easy for me, and they were fine young women, they were both from Chester, Illinois. And they were just out of high school. The lady that was in charge of that pool told me, when the session was over, them was two of the finest young women that she had ever hired.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: They come from good families. They wanted the experience. One of them had been to this secretarial school in St. Louis, it was a Mrs. somebody's school. It was a lady that was well known. I'd never heard of her, but I wasn't interested in secretarian either but she'd been through that school up there. The other girl had took it in school. And they were both very good.

Q: Do you remember their names?

A: One of them was Virginia Welgy, and the other one was Judy . . . can't think of her last name. And the Welgy girl has married and still lives in Chester. And after she came back, she worked for Judge Paul Nehrt, up there for a long time. And then I think later she had a family and I think's she's quit work. But — and the other girl married and I think moved out in Oklahoma somewhere, some other state. Her husband, I don't know what her husband done. But they were two fine young women. And they used to come see my wife and me, after I — even after they quit work every once in a while they'd come down. They really appreciated getting the experience.

And after I got them, then my mail was taken care of. They'd go get my mail for me of a morning. Of course they had me spoiled then. They'd go get my mail and bring it in there and cut it open and all I had to do was look at it and tell them what to do and they would answer my mail and have it back on my desk that day. They'd go get my mail and then I'd go buy them a cup of coffee. And then they'd go up and they'd answer mine and then they'd work for everybody else. They took care of me.

Q: Yes. Well good. (chuckles) And that lasted for what, one term?

A: One session.

Q: One session.

A: Yes.

Q: So you had to fight with everybody else for the rest of the sessions?

A: Yes I did. Yes, that one session though I had it made though. Because them two gals were dandies.

Q: What procedures did you use regarding the mail. Was there certain mail you threw away and certain you took seriously or . . .

A: Well, I always opened every letter I got. I just thought that if a person was concerned enough about something to write me than I should answer it. And a lot of mail we'd get would be somebody wanting a copy of a bill. Or somebody just wanting to point out something to us about some bill. And it didn't take a long letter to answer. But I answered all my mail. I'd answer it if I had to bring it home and me and my wife answer it on weekends.

Q: How about mass mailings that you might have received. How did you handle that sort of thing?

A: Well generally it would come from an organization. And if it did you'd generally write one letter to the organization, you know. Is the way I tried to do it. I tried not to ignore it though. I thought that was bad. A lot of times school organizations would encourage all their members to start a big letter writing campaign you know. Now the ones from my

district though I answered them personally. But I'd also generally write their organization too.

Q: I see.

A: So they wouldn't feel left out, you know.

Q: You mentioned that your wife and some secretarial help here in the office was available at home. Now let's see, when you started out you had no allowance for home expenses.

A: Oh no. None at all.

Q: I believe that did develop, didn't it? Wasn't some allowance . . .

A: Yes it did before I left. I think about my third term they started allowing . . . I think it was one thousand dollars. It wasn't very much and that was for office rent and of course I had my own office, I didn't charge — I couldn't charge no rent anyway but I wouldn't have anyway. But I used mine to pay a girl part-time. It didn't near pay her. I used the girl that I had in my business, and I just payed her part-time for doing my work and — and for stamps is what I done. Of course you couldn't have hired a girl for one thousand dollars a year, they'd laugh at you, even back then you know. But it was a help, it was a help. And now of course they've got it up now to where — I think it's around twenty thousand dollars.

Q: Yes it's quite a bit.

A: And just raised it. Well twenty-two thousand dollars. It was I think seventeen thousand, five hundred dollars and they just raised it I believe five thousand dollars. A member needs a secretary, and needs one bad, because there's so much correspondence to answer. I used everybody. I used the girls up there, I used my wife, and then after I got an office here in Carbondale for my rental business, then I only needed a part-time girl for that because it wasn't very big in it back for a long time, and I just had to hire a girl that was all. Because you got to answer your mail. You can't just disregard people's requests. So I just hired a girl and what little bit they paid and I paid the rest of it.

Your stamp bill would be terrific, even though stamps were cheap you still bought a lot of stamps. My goodness. I'd go in — I'd send her to the Post Office and buy two or three hundred stamps at a time you know. Because the more the — the longer you were in, the more mail you got too. People knew about you. And organizations knew about you. And the longer you were in, my, they just swamped you with mail, you know, whenever there's some issue up you know. Every bill's a burning issue with somebody, you know. And they're going to send you the mail. (chuckles)

Q: Did you have much communication by telephone?

A: Yes quite a bit. Yes a lot of people would call you. And a lot — that goes back to the longer you're in, the more calls you — because the more that feel like they know you or somebody's told them to call you. They would want to explain a bill to you on the phone. Of course they'd try to encourage you to be for it or against it. And of course that's a lot better now too because they've got the phone system a lot better for those members too I understand. I think now they've got it to where they have a phone at their desk.

Q: Oh you didn't have a phone?

A: No we didn't. And back then they'd have to — they had a bank of phones then they'd put in on the Republican side, and a bank on the Democrat side. They had an operator there. Then she would send — she had two people that stood — stayed there by her all day long, anytime we were in session. And they'd bring a note in 'cause you was wanted

on the phone, "Mr. Jones of Murphysboro wants to talk to you on the phone." Well if you could go out to the phone then you'd step out to the phone and talk to him. And if not you'd get their number and call them back the minute you recessed or something.

Q: I've heard that a lot of legislation is done in barrooms. Did you find that to be so while you were up there?

A: No not really. They always say that. I used to say that too before I went up there. With some guys they'll discuss the bills there. Everybody, I don't care where you go and there's other members, there's going to be — mostly kidding each other about, "I want you to support my bill tomorrow," and all that stuff. And it might influence some, you know. I wouldn't say it wouldn't, but it's — of course I'm not much of a bar guy. I don't mean I never go to bars but I'm not much of a drinker. I could take a drink or never take one. It had no hold on me at all and I wasn't around bars, not late at night — I'm not one to stay up late either. They always kidded me about ten o'clock news was about as late as I was going to stay out. I'm just one of those guys — I just can't stay out and work. I've got to — I got to get in.

But I know that when you got to a lot of places and the legislators pretty — a lot of them will go to the same place to eat you know. Southern Aire was a big place there. I went out there lots of times to eat and took a lot of people out there because — they always kidded me about — they had barbequed ribs out there and I loved them. And three or four of us guys that ate together most the time, if it was my turn to buy, they'd always kid me about, "Well we know where we're going. We're going to Southern Aire," because they had the barbequed ribs and I did love them.

Everybody was always discussing their bills though. Everywhere. I don't know that that had a lot of influence, it may have had some with some of them. But it certainly didn't with me, or with any of the people that I associated with I don't think at all. You know because — if you're associating with a group of guys like I was, unless your party took a stand agin it, why, if it wasn't going to hurt your people in your district, a lot of times you'd support it because of him. You know, he's a fine guy and he's just trying to do something to help somebody. But — oh, yes, I know they used to say that a lot of them bills were passed in — some of them may be, but I had no proof of it.

Q: Where did you stay up there?

A: I stayed at the Governor Hotel my first three terms. Jack Weiner owned it and he — of course after I stayed there the first term, I'm one of those guys don't like to change. They treated me nice, and it was an old hotel I know that, but he give us a good rate. A whole bunch of us stayed there. I stayed there, Jim Holloway stayed there, Leland Kennedy stayed there, and several of the Chicago legislators, some of the black legislators stayed there and they — I got to be real good friends of them and it helped me in a lot of ways to understand some of their problems a little better. Because we discussed a lot of things — you know just sit and visit of an evening. A lot of times after we'd been out and had a meal then we'd go in and get a cup of coffee in their restaurant. Sit there and visit until ten, eleven o'clock at night, you know. And you got real well acquainted that way.

But I stayed there my first three terms and then the last two terms I stayed at the Ramada Inn out as you go into Springfield. I liked — I liked the motel the best because it was a one — I always got a ground floor and you could drive right up where you could take your suitcase right in.

I'd have left the Governor Hotel sooner but Jack Weiner, I hated to leave on account of him. He was always wanting to know if everything was alright and if we needed anything. He just bent over backwards to keep everybody happy. Well I think a lot of members were like I was, they just hated to leave.

And the Ramada Inn give us a good rate too. At that time I think they charged us, I think they give us a rate of about ten dollars or eleven dollars a night. See we had to pay our own bills too back when I was in. Now then they get so much a day for expenses. We didn't get anything. The only thing we got for expenses was we got paid mileage for one trip a week from our home to the capital. But we had to pay our own motel bills and that's the reason you shopped around for rates too. Of course now they're getting about — they was getting thirty-six dollars a day and I think they just raised that up too, to forty-some dollars a day. And of course I imagine they're staying a little nicer places now probably. (chuckles)

Q: Wasn't the Governor Hotel a little close to the St. Nick Democratic headquarters?

A: Yes it was, right next door. Right next door. And, oh yes and everybody that stayed at the Governor would go to the St. Nick just about every night, you know. You'd always walk over to see who was there. But that was pretty much Democrat headquarters, the St. Nick was, at that time. And the Leland had the name being a Republican — pretty much attended by the Republicans but I never did stay there. I stayed there one night when I went up one time but I never stayed there while I was in session at all. I just liked it over at the Governor better.

I didn't want with a whole bunch, really. I liked that staying out — because if you get at the hotel where they're all staying then you got the drunks and everybody else there to contend with. And all the noise and the hollering that goes on. There at the Governor Hotel they had a little bar if you wanted a drink. They had a restaurant. But there wasn't — I don't imagine it was over fifteen of us stayed there, maybe twenty at the most. You could really enjoy yourself. You could sit there in the lobby and read the paper or you could have a cup of coffee or you could have a drink if you wanted a drink. But you go to the St. Nick it was always full of members of the legislature, lobbyists, you name it. There was always plenty of noise over there. And the Leland was about the same way too, the few times I went over there.

Q: What did you think of the number of legislators? Do you think this reduction to 118 is a good thing?

A: Yes I do. I know a lot of them would shoot me if they'd hear me say it. But I have to — I can't help but agree that it's a good thing. I think it will be good for the people of Illinois when they cut it down in size. With 177 members it's such a large group, and it's hard to handle, and they were so crowded in the General Assembly. This way they'll have more room. I think it's a good thing. I think the 118 can do every bit as good a job as 177 done.

The thing I wished they would have done is to cut the senate down to about thirty, took about twenty out of the senate. Because then it would have made it — it would really made it full-time jobs for everybody too. And I think they should be. And then they could pay them a decent salary and not let them do nothing else. Make them be full-time legislators if they're going to serve. And I think from the people's point of view it would be a lot better.

Q: You mentioned being a full-time legislator. Do you think that's a good thing, the annual sessions and . . .

A: Well I don't really think it's that good, but I think it's here to stay. I don't think there's any way you can stop it now. No the people would be better off if they was only a session every other year like there used to be, I really believe that. Because they just come in every year with such a rash of bills and they change everything a little bit. They'll change about every law on the books a little bit, they'll take out something or put in something. And about the time you get familiar with it then it's all changed again. But I think the

legislators — it is a full-time job now, there's no question about it. Some of them have got other businesses, have had, because of the pay, but now then they're getting the pay up to where I think that they might — well might go full-time anyway.

But no I think cutting the size down was probably a good thing really. And the senate is fairly large too, and I think they could cut it down a little bit too. And I don't think it'd abeen a thing wrong with it.

Q: What do you think of the popular initiative through which that was done? Do you think that's a good thing?

A: Well I think — no, I think that part was probably bad. The main reason that they passed that was because of the way they passed those legislative pay raises. Got the people all upset. And some of those organizations really took after them for it. They asked for it. I mean there's a right and a wrong way to do things and they done that in a — after an election. And I think they really got — they got the news media mad is what they done. And the news media really took after them. And they done that a time or too while I was in too. And it's just bad, it's just bad as it could be.

Now we knew, and I think the public knew, that they had to have a pay increase. But it should have been done in a regular session and then the public the next session, or the next election, if they wanted to vote you out for it they could. But then it least would have been on the right basis. Now they've set up a commission deal of some kind. And the members won't have to vote on it, it's going to keep them in the clear. It's kind of like Congress. That commission will recommend it now, then to keep it from going into effect you'd have to put a bill in . . .

Q: Oh I see.

A: . . . to stop it. Well you know it ain't going to be much — if they put a bill in it ain't going nowhere, that's for sure. Kind of like it is in the national Congress now. They put a bill in and of course — or the recommendation — and the only way you can keep it from going into effect is to pass a bill to prohibit it you know. And I don't think anybody'd be very popular who put that bill in. (chuckles)

Q: But you don't see any way that perhaps we can get away from annual sessions then and go back to the . . .

A: I don't believe we could now. They went into this thing, and they kept going — they eased into it and kept going a little farther into it every year and now I don't believe you could — I don't believe you could keep it from it. I really don't.

Q: Do you think that being a full-time legislator tends to isolate you from your constituency?

A: Yes it would. The same problem a congressman's got today, is getting back to his district to see his people and come back to things that he should come back to. Like there's always organi — there's group — Chamber of Commerce people and farm organizations and — and labor groups that are having big conventions and meetings back in your district and it's hard to get back to those when you're a full-time legislator, and it's hard for the public to understand that. Once they elect you then they don't see you for a while. And I know they used to say to me, "Where you been?" you know and, "You don't ever come around anymore." They forgot that they just give — helped give you a job that sent you away. Oh, that used to be the hardest thing in the world to explain, you know, that you have to be up there.

Now in the legislature it's different than — than Washington even. In Springfield they expect you there for every session, or a good excuse. And they can send the police out to

bring you in, if you're just goofing off. And I've seen some of the Speakers threaten to do that about some of the members too. And they have the power to do it, the Speaker does. But now in Washington they get away with it pretty easy up there but now in Springfield there's just very few members ever was absent. They was always there. The only time I can recall missing myself was when my mother passed away. Or maybe occasionally had to get excused to go to a funeral, somebody that was, you know, really close to the family. But you could get excused for things like that, you know, without any problem at all. But the Speaker expected you to be there. He had to have you, you know. And both sides. There's always some members that — I would say on an average you never had over two or three members missing a day. They just managed to be there.

Q: Speaking of missing, while you were there you were able to vote by proxy. What was your opinion of proxy voting?

A: I didn't like that. That was in committees.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes. You could vote by proxy in a committee. I think that was only the first term I was there, I think they changed that.

Q: Yes, it was done away with, I forget exactly when.

A: Yes. Yes, that was a bad situation, because what they — what they would do, a guy'd have a bill in a committee, he'd go around to a lot of the members on that committee that maybe didn't even like that bill but as a favor to him they'd give him a proxy for supporting that bill and they wouldn't even show up at the committee hearing. That's the way they would do it, or they'd go and answer a roll call so they'd have a quorum and then they'd skip out, but they'd give these proxies to the chairman of the committee and that's the way they passed the bill out. It was a bad situation. It got real bad. Bad enough they stopped it. It was a bad situation.

Q: Can you think of any bills that got out that way?

A: No I can't offhand but there were a lot of them got out that way. And the chairman, if he was for a bill, he'd always have proxies from everybody that couldn't be there, supporting his view, you know. And whenever he'd go to read the roll call then he'd — he'd read it — he'd take it of those that was there then he'd read the proxies. Well he had the proxies a lot of times in his coat pocket, pull them out you know. Of course that's how he got the bill out. It made it bad for the people. It was really bad.

Q: In regard to your philosophy of representation, which could range all the way from doing exactly what your constituency wanted you to do to making up your own mind as to what ought to be done, what was your philosophy of representation?

A: Well you definitely want to use your own judgement, that's what they elected you for. But you still — you can't go against the will of the people. Not in a democracy like we're in. If you do you're not going to survive. Now the thing — if you think a lot of the people are wrong about a bill that's when you want to create some meetings out in your district. And then the best — one thing I done at a lot of meetings was take copies of the bill with me. And give it to leaders in various communities that was — especially if it's a strong issue on both sides you know. And let the people know exactly what the bill does. I learned early that the best thing was to be honest, and not try to change any of it, just tell it like it really was. Because a lot of times when people find out really the facts about a bill they change their mind about it. Naturally you try to use your own judgement, because you know more about it than the average person out there in your district knows about it. But you also — you cannot go overwhelmingly — if an overwhelming majority

of the people are for something, it's hard to go against them and so sometimes you have to go along with some things that you're not really that sold on.

Q: Can you think of any particular issues that came up where that occurred?

A: No, not a particular issue but it occurred lots of times. Your mail would be overwhelmingly in favor of something because — and of course groups have got better organized too than they used to be. After you're in there a while, the various lobbyist groups have got a unique way of getting ahold of people in your districts and getting you flooded with letters and telegrams and phone calls you know, the whole gamut of trying to get support. And they'll get you plenty of phone calls, and plenty of letters sent to you too, if they're strong for something.

Sometimes it may not be in the taxpayer's best interest you know. It might — like — like especially school legislation. School people historically, regardless of whatever the amount of money you give them, it ain't enough. The next year they want that much more you know. And you — for education, but still the — you got to be able to pay for it, as you go along. And it's hard to satisfy everybody in that legislature. (chuckles)

Q: When you made attempts to come back and call meetings on particular subjects did you find a good response from the constituency?

A: Yes you would. Yes you would. Yes. And a lot of times you'd be invited to meetings where you knew you were going to be called on to talk and you could get yourself prepared to bring in some of these issues too you know. And the main thing — a lot of people, a lot of times, will come out before they really understand it, you know. And once they understand it, then it's — especially if it's farm groups and people like that, once they understand it, they'll generally take the right side. I found that. Because they're people that are concerned about education, they're concerned about roads, and concerned about taxes. And they're generally — they — the farm organizations and some of those — even — education is the worst one about wanting more money, of any group I know of. And I'm a strong supporter of education but, my goodness, you can't give everybody all they want. Like a teacher told me one time, he said, "Gale, if you shoveled us money with a — with a scoop shovel, the next year we'd want you to use two scoop shovels." (laughter) I always thought that was a pretty good statement. But most organizations are — and I mean they're pretty reasonable but they're just — they only see one side of it, that's more money. I think they've hurt themselves the last few years by some of their requests.

Q: Oh?

A: You know, just — just wanting so much money. My goodness, when you take a big chunk of the state budget goes for education and then you come back to the counties and about 70 percent of your real estate taxes go for education. There's a limit to how much can go for education. There's some things you just can't afford in life. But they seem to think we can afford it all. (laughter) Always got along with them and they always endorsed me but it was hard to agree with them on a lot of their requests you know.

SESSION 3, TAPE 6, SIDE 2

Q: In regard to committees, there was a move at one time to try to cut down on the number of committees that were used in the legislature. Do you recall that situation?

A: Yes. Yes they did. And I think they did cut it down some, in numbers, but I don't think they really served the purpose that they intended because — they cut down I think the number of committees as I remember — I forget what number they cut it down to but I

know they cut down the numbers. But then they turned around and appointed, in those committees, a lot of subcommittees. So it really didn't solve much as far — trying to save time is what they were trying to do — I know the Appropriation Committee that I was on was one of them. And then they appointed two or three subcommittees in the Appropriation Committee, and I know I even headed one of those. We would — of course we'd hear a bill and then we'd report it back to the regular committee, but then you went through the same thing, they'd still call in the same people and hear the same people that we already heard, and we already recommended to either pass it or not pass it. I don't think they really served the purpose that they intended to. They was trying to save time and all those things and expedite the process of the legislature but I don't think it really saved us any time at all.

Q: When we were talking a minute ago about the number of legislators, and the change that's been made there, the cutback, they also did away with the cumulative voting system when they cut the number. What do you think of the move that did away with cumulative voting?

A: Well I think it was probably the best thing to do. I know a lot of members, that got them elected. This way everybody will run one on one. And I think as far as the people — it was the hardest thing to explain that there was. Illinois was the only state that had it, in the whole country. And it was hard — so many people, like in a district like I'm in, we have quite a turnover because of the university, and people who come here from other areas of the country never heard of it. And it was constant — you was constantly explaining how that could give you three votes, give you a vote and a half. No I think to stop the confusion it was probably the — and you had Republicans out running against Republicans and Democrats against Democrats. Because the way the system was set up each party would nominate two. But only three's going to win in the general election. So it would get down to the point to where a lot of times in the general election, my goodness, it was just dog eat dog, everybody was trying to get — anything to keep from being the fourth man. It'd get pretty vicious some times even between two Democrats or two Republicans. And if you was in a district where it was predominately Republican well the two Democrats would be fighting each other. And if it was a district where it was Democrat then the two Republicans would be fighting each other. I think it's a lot better to do away with it really in the long run. I don't know which side's going to gain from it the most, but I doubt if there'll be any advantage for either side, when it all comes to a showdown. Now in Chicago it'll probably benefit the Democrats more, and I think some other areas it'll probably benefit the Republicans more. So I don't know how it would change the makeup of the legislature very much either way.

Q: Well the original intention apparently of cumulative voting was to keep from polarizing the state and . . .

A: Right.

Q: So it might tend to do that.

A: Yes that was the one big argument that was for it. And I think that was a good argument. It guaranteed minority representation, and when you look at it from that point of view it was a good thing. But since we was the only state that had it, it made us kind of stand out there. I think it's a good thing to have minority representation. I really do. And the thing that could happen, all the members of the legislature could be Democrats or could be Republican, you know. In a big landslide election. You take if this would have been here last year the way President Reagan swept the country and the state, we could have very well have had two-thirds or three-fourths of the legislature could have been Republican. All from one party. Enough to pass anything. I don't know, I don't think that would be good for the people if either party got a tremendous advantage in that legislature.

Q: Why is that?

A: Well they could pass things to — like redistricting and all the things they could do that would benefit their party which would actually hurt the other side, you know. And they'd do it too, you know, especially like redistricting right now. Can you imagine what kind of districts that say the Republicans would carve out for the Democrats if we had a big control of that legislature. Or vice versa you know. In the windup the people gets, maybe, bad representation.

Q: So if it's closer representation then between the parties then there's more compromise perhaps that . . .

Q: Yes. Yes there are. One thing they could have done, they could have cut the districts down and still kept the cumulative voting if they'd had wanted to. And I don't think anybody would have been against the cumulative voting really, that much. But they could have cut the number of the districts down right off, and still abolish the number they wanted to do away with if they'd have done it, and still kept the cumulative voting. The one good thing about cumulative voting is it is going to maintain minority representation. And that part I think is good. At least you're going to have a third of them, of one party or the other, where now it could be very lopsided.

Q: Well we'll know I guess.

A: Yes we'll soon know. (chuckles) Another year or two.

Q: Let's see, in regard to districts, there was an attempt to reapportion in 1963. And the Republicans actually passed a reapportionment bill which of course was vetoed by Kerner. What do you recall about the passage of that bill or the development of that legislation?

A: That bill — yes I remember the passage of it and all. They . . . the Republicans passed it, it was a Republican bill, and he vetoed it and, boy, they were — it was a hard job even passing it, because it — you got to remember that in reapportionment even though it was a Republican bill there was a lot of Republicans getting hurt in some of those districts. And some of the Democrats would have liked to have voted for it, but the party wouldn't let them. As I remember, we might have had a few Democratic votes but we didn't have many. It was strictly passed by the Republicans basically. Then Kerner vetoed it and of course then the commission — then it went to a commission and all that route.

Q: Let's see now the major contention that was involved was that Chicago was supposed to lose two districts to the rest of Cook County and then two districts were to be removed from southern Illinois down here and moved up I believe to Lake and Du Page Counties.

A: Up in those areas where there's more population, yes.

Q: Right.

A: Of course the thing that Kerner objected to was because Daley in Chicago didn't want to lose them two districts. That was I think their main — I don't know what they used when they talked but I think that was the real purpose behind it was to — they didn't want to lose those districts. Of course downstate was going to lose a couple of districts too but they was going to go up to those northern counties where the population was is what it amounted to. And it was going to make our districts a lot bigger is what it was going to do. But, no, Kerner vetoed that and a lot of people thought he would too when we passed it.

Q: Now when he vetoed that I understand that you went to court to see if the veto could be nullified in any way.

A: Yes, yes.

Q: How did you go about doing that?

A: Well in the first place I think the bill was constitutional. I know they got a judge to say that it wasn't. But I think it was all politics. Because I don't know how — I don't know what grounds they argued now, to say that the bill was unconstitutional, but that was their argument. And — no, the argument was — what we went to court over was that Kerner didn't have a right to veto it.

Q: Yes.

A: In the Constitution there was — and I don't really think he had the right to veto it but now of course the court ruled that he did. But I think that was — I think it was all politics. Because when you read the Constitution like it was then, that was the old Constitution, there's just — I don't know how anybody could have read that and interpreted it to give him the power to veto a legislative reapportionment matter. But he wouldn't sign it, so he vetoed it and that's what throwed it in the court. There was a lot of people wanted to go and wanted to join the action that we filed too. Even John Lewis talked about it. So then they decided to let our case go ahead and see what the court had to say. Well of course the court, the Supreme Court, at that time, they ruled that he had the right to veto it but they waited for some time as I recall to do it. And we know there was a lot of politics went on behind the scene. There were — I don't think there's any question but what there was. And why they decided to give him that authority I'll never know. But they didn't agree with us and we had to accept it.

Q: How did you come to think of doing that, of . . .

A: Well it was just on my own. I went to an attorney friend of mine here at home, Don Mitchell, and we got a copy of the Constitution and went over and over and over it and there's — and — I know he felt the same way I did. And there was no way that — if they decided on the merits of the case, not politics, I felt that there was no way that they could rule in his favor. And the district made me — district that I liked very much. It was a district that I'd had no trouble being reelected in. And so I just decided to take it to court. He said he'd represent me and so that's what we done. Nobody else was involved, nobody talked me into it, or nothing. And I just had deep feelings about it and . . .

Q: Were you disappointed when . . .

A: Oh yes. Sure was. And the longer it went the more we felt like we was going to lose it. If they would have decided early I think we would have been alright. But I'm sure there was a lot of maneuvers went on behind the scene and me being fairly new, this was my second term and you know they — I'm sure they used all the political pressure they could use on them judges too. So we lost the case.

Q: Where was the case heard?

A: In Springfield.

Q: It was?

A: Yes heard in Springfield.

Q: Did you attend any of the court proceedings?

A: Oh yes, I attended all of them.

Q: Oh you did?

A: Yes. I attended all of them. And we had to file briefs and all those things — the lawyer of course he took care of all that. A lot of briefs, a lot of things they filed, and of course I'm not a lawyer. And of course then they argued it before the Supreme Court. But the Constitution at that time — I don't have it anymore, I don't know what I even done with it — but to read the old Constitution, it was hard for me to ever understand how they could even justify asaying he had the authority 'cause no place it even mentioned giving him the authority to veto a legislative reapportionment matter. But of course they picked out words and they put them together and they justified what they done but to this day I never agree with it.

Q: Was it a unanimous decision on the part of the . . .

A: No I don't think it was. I forgot now what their — I think it was like five to two or something like that. No, it wasn't unanimous. No, some of them agreed with me.

Q: There was another constitutional question at that time. Governor Stratton back in 1953 had adjusted the Constitution, or caused it to be adjusted, to state that — that — I guess you would call it a line around Chicago, and then a line around Cook County and then the rest of downstate so there were three parts, and that you couldn't overlap districts across those particular lines. Do you recall anything about that coming up during that year?

A: Well yes it came up. Now see they gave Cook County so many districts. I believe in the fifty-nine districts I believe Cook County got twenty-nine of them, and downstate got thirty or vice versa. But I know they had this imaginary line I called it, where they wanted so many in the suburbs and they wanted so many in the city and then the rest went downstate. And that was argued all the time, you know, quite extensively really. And — now either Cook County as a whole either got thirty districts or twenty-nine I forgot which . . .

Q: It was thirty I believe, it was twenty-three in Chicago and seven was outside.

A: Thirty. Yes okay they got thirty districts and then the rest of the state got twenty-nine.- And . . .

Q: The question was, since Chicago had lost sufficient population and the suburbs had increased sufficiently so two should have been moved, and evidently the Chicago Democrats, instead of losing those twenty-three, wanted to overlap sufficiently into the . . .

A: Right.

Q: Do you recall that?

A: Yes, yes they did. They — they drew those lines and that's one thing they really didn't like about that map too, was because of those overlaps. But the population had moved out to those suburbs. And I imagine they're still doing that probably. Those suburbs have got to be extremely heavily populated. They could justify putting more out there. But of course Cook County, the Chicago people, didn't like that at all. And that was where the hangup was I think as far as getting them to accept it. The main part of it.

Q: Down here there were two, according to population, that should have moved up to Du Page and Lake County. And finally in that Republican bill that was passed only one was moved up. I believe it went to Du Page County if I remember correctly.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you know how they got around the moving two . . .

A: No I don't. I remember that there was a lot of arguing, a lot of talk about that too at that time. Now the downstate districts though, they did I think move to make them larger. I know my district was made a lot larger. They had to get it within seemed to me like 3 percent of a certain number of population in them. My district went like from six counties to, last couple of terms I was in, to ten counties. And it became extremely large too. And I think they — I don't know how they got away from the losing the two districts altogether. But I remember they was supposed to lose two downstate and they was supposed to lose two up there, supposed to move them out to other areas. And . . .

Q: That . . . let's see now in 1964 was the at-large election but you were not involved with the . . .

A: No I didn't run at-large — I run in the primary for the senate in 1964 and was defeated, and I didn't run at-large at all. That's when they had the big bedsheet ballot they called it. And, my goodness, that was terrible. (chuckles)

Q: In 1965 was when they actually did the redistricting I guess. One of the major things that came up that year concerned the senate. And the Supreme Court, I guess the United States, made a decision that it could not be on the basis of geography, it had to be on one man, one vote, the same as the house. Do you think that was a good move? Is that the way it ought to be?

A: Well, I honestly think it would probably have been better to have left the senate like it was. Instead of basing on population had it on geography, because in areas like we're in, for example, you've got so much territory. And somebody's got to represent those people. And of course their argument was it has to be done on population. You could argue either way, really, and put up a good argument you know. But they got the districts now, in areas like where I live, they're so large, from a geographic standpoint, it's hard for a member to service those areas. Keeps you running the whole time that you're in. You never have an evening to your — with your family hardly ever. There's just always something and it's such a distance to travel that it takes all evening if you's just going to a school program. It's ten or eleven o'clock when you get home of a night. So there's good arguments both ways but I would have liked to have seen them left the senate like it was, truthfully. They had small districts and they give the people easy access to the senator, but they didn't do that.

Q: No.

A: In the house of course they got those districts so large — now the house members may be better off under this new deal. Because the senate districts will pretty well stay the same, I think, from the geographic standpoint. Take like our district for example. Then it will be split in the middle as far as population is concerned. So they may not have — it may turn out to where they can — actually the people — may be better for the people under this new setup than it was the old.

Q: As far as the house is concerned.

A: As far as the house is concerned. But every senate district now will have two house members. That's what it will amount to.

Q: And each will have a district of his own, won't have to go the whole . . .

A: Right. Right. Each will have their own district. So I think that may be better as far as the people's concerned. I know it'll be better for the guy running, because my goodness he'll just have half that territory. (chuckles) My goodness, it'll be just like taking this

district now with I think about ten counties in it and cutting it in half you know. Be a lot easier physically to get around over it and visit with people and find out what their concerns really are.

Q: But you think the federal system is probably better then for the senate though.

A: Yes I do.

Q: Of course based on geography.

A: Yes, I do.

Q: I guess there's no way you can do that except to go back to the United States Supreme Court and ask them to reconsider it though.

A: Yes and I don't believe they'd ever do it. No I don't.

SESSION 4, TAPE 7, SIDE 1

Q: Well we'll talk a bit about judicial reform here. I guess most of the judicial reform to-do had gone on perhaps before you got there in 1961 but it was 1962 when the referendum was . . .

A: Right, I didn't really have that much to do with it.

Q: In making up your mind in 1961 when it was being decided to be put to referendum, did you have any particular lawyer friends or judge friends that you went to for advice on what you ought to think about . . .

A: Yes I did. In fact I talked to several lawyers at the time. Most of them of course strongly in favor of the judicial reform. I talked to Bill Ridgeway here in Murphysboro who's a very good attorney friend of mine. And he also had been state's attorney and may have been state's attorney at that particular time. And I talked to Bill South, another attorney, who is now a judge. And all my lawyer friends. Don Mitchell and — oh I could name a whole bunch of them that were very good friends of mine and they were very much in favor of it. Of course I supported their views.

Q: One of the things that was being done was to simplify the court structure by doing away with municipal courts and that sort of thing and combining everything to the circuit court. What did you think of that proceedure?

A: Well as a layman, of course a lot of those things that even can pertain to the judicial reform on — some of it I didn't really agree with in a lot of respect. The judges of course argued that it was going to streamline the courts and was going to make it a lot better for the people and even yet today I, if I had it to do over, doubt if I'd support very much of it.

It's just not — I don't think it's been that great. I think the trials are drawn out, and accident cases, it takes forever for people to have their case heard in court. I think the main thing it's done is perpetuate judges, once they're put into office today, they're just on a pension for the rest of their lives is about what it boils down to. And the cost of it, the cost of the court system is just — it's going to be prohibitive if they keep on. Raising judges' salaries and the judges' pension. I know here in our own local area the cost of the court system is a tremendous burden on the taxpayers. I think it's served the purpose for lawyers but I don't think for the public that it's really served that great a purpose.

I know at the time everybody thought it was bad, the JP [Justice of the Peace] system and some of that needed to be overhauled but we have to remember that the JP system back then, on your traffic fines and things, they weren't paid a salary. They weren't paid in comparison to like judges are paid today, so you didn't have as good a system. That probably could have been overhauled a little bit and been a lot cheaper. And actually you don't need a judge — of course now you can go into the courthouse and pay your fine if you want to plead guilty and go on your way but back in those days you could have your case heard real quick too. If you got a traffic ticket and you thought the cop was wrong — and now I think most people feel like they just as well plead guilty, whether they are or not. And of course they go in and they pay a fine and go on but it's got to the point it really hurts the public, it hurts your driving record, and it causes your insurance to go a lot higher. And the overall cost today is tremendous to the public.

Q: So you'd be in favor of some decentralization from the circuit court then?

A: Yes I would. Especially in the — like traffic violations and those kind of things. I know from talking to a lot of people, they just feel they got no defense. I know some cases not long ago where a cop give a girl a ticket for — said she run a red light, and it was caution when she was in the intersection. And he had finally admitted it was but he went ahead and give her a ticket. Well she finally went down and plead guilty and paid a thirty-five dollar fine when just no way she could have been guilty but the expense involved of going to court, she just wouldn't do it. And it's so unfair to a lot of the driving public I think in those kind of cases.

Q: Especially the minor cases.

A: Right, right.

Q: You were asked in 1961 to vote on whether there should be centralized administration with the Supreme Court over the court system in Illinois. Do you recall anything about that at all?

A: No I don't. I just don't.

Q: How about — I think you've indicated something on this, the big question over whether judges should be elected or should they be appointed?

A: Well I'm a strong believer that they should be elected. I just can't believe that it's in the best interest of the public for anyone to be put in office and made an untouchable. And that's about what it boils down to in our court system today. Now not all the judges should be voted out but the public can judge. And I think every four years they should become under the scrutiny of the general public, and let the public decide whether they should be retained or not. The way it is today, they run on their record they call it and you have nobody else to vote for, you either vote for or against, and it's hard to get rid of one once he gets in there regardless of whether he's good or bad.

Historically the lawyers are going to back a judge. They just are not going to go out — unless he — he'd have to be awfully bad, if they went out and really opposed him in a general election. I would love to see the Constitution amended to where they'd have to run every four years. I think then they'd have to answer to the general public. I think the public would — I think they would at least be given some consideration, and the way it is now the lawyers get together and there's very little the public's got to say about it. And I think it's bad for anybody to be appointed and not have to be elected in a democracy like we're in.

Q: Be made accountable . . .

A: Right, I think they should have to be made accountable. Maybe give them a six-year term, but eventually they should have to be made accountable to — and answer to the public, and let them decide whether they want to maintain that person in office.

Q: Now of course that was considerably at variance with the Bar Association position which was generally supported by the Republicans. Did you feel any pressure because you were not . . .

A: Well yes. You feel pressure if your party is supporting something that you don't feel that you can go along with but that really wouldn't bother me that much. If I was in today I'd certainly favor judges having to run to be elected, just the same as I would have to, or anyone else. If you do a good job they can keep you, I think they would know. And I think anybody today holding an office of a judge or member of the legislature or those — I'd be strongly against them being appointed.

Q: Let's see, in 1965 Abner Mikva sponsored a revision of the Juvenile Court Act that had not been revised for some sixty-five years as I understand it. Do you recall anything about that at all?

A: No, I really don't. I remember him doing that but I don't really recall what the . . . and I don't even remember whether it passed or not.

Q: Yes it did go through and updated the Juvenile Code. Apparently there was quite a bit of controversy on it, confessions for example was one of the areas that were discussed considerably. There was a raise of the minimum statutory age at that time also. But you don't remember getting involved particularly with . . .

A: No I never. Most of us that weren't lawyers, we probably just relied on our lawyer friends and went along with it.

Q: Okay, well, moving on to transportation. Let's see, in 1961 you served on the Motor Vehicles and Traffic Regulation Committee. How did you come to serve on that committee that year, do you recall?

A: Well, after you're sworn in of course then leadership is elected by both parties, then you're given a list of what you would prefer to serve on, and that was one of them that I had asked to be on. I thought maybe I could serve some purpose there, being from a rural part of Illinois and downstate Illinois where highways was so important to our survival. And I asked for that and I got that committee.

Q: Were there any particular things that you thought ought to be done when you were thinking about getting on . . .

A: Well, the only thing I was hopeful of was, at the time, was that, of course, that I could help get you know more road work done down here than what — everyone down here always feels like we're shortchanged on that, and I'm sure people in other areas of the state feel the same way, but naturally down here we feel like we've been shortchanged, a lot of times when maybe we even haven't, on getting our share of the road funds. And of course so many of our roads down here are narrow — of course a lot of them's been widened now but a lot of them were narrow. I was hopeful I could get a lot more done than I was able to do you know. Course when you're a freshman and up there you automatically think you're going to get everything done but you soon learn that it's a slow process. (chuckles)

Q: Was there any particular reason why you didn't continue with that committee?

A: No I think the main reason was the next session as I remember there was some other committees I wanted on, and I had to give up something to get on some of those as I

remember. I think one of them may have been the Agriculture Committee, I think I served on that.

Q: Yes.

A: And I served on — I don't know whether it was the next session I got on Appropriations or not, but I soon got on Appropriations I know. But I know I was on Agriculture and I may have been on Conservation too. I was on some others that I wanted on pretty bad. And I think one of them was Education too on account of the university. I got on that committee too.

Q: Let's see we could look at some of the areas of — for example one of the things of concern here was the traffic flow between Missouri and Illinois and there was considerable work toward getting some bridges south of the Jefferson Barracks Bridge. One of the them for example would connect the Waterloo area with Crystal City. Do you recall that particular attempt?

A: Yes. Yes I do. That was a bridge that — I believe that bill was sponsored I believe by Senator Gilbert.

Q: Yes it was.

A: And — yes everybody was of course interested from southern Illinois and was concerned, and tried hard to get that through and I — as I recall I believe that bill passed . . .

Q: Yes it did.

A: . . . and the governor vetoed it.

Q: Yes it passed three years straight as a matter of fact and it was . . .

A: And just simply could not get the governor to go along with building that bridge. But I think it — I still think it would be an important thing if the state could — if they had the finances and could do it. Because it would let the traffic cross before it got into the heavy metropolitan areas, and I think it would probably be real useful if that bridge was even built yet today. But they never could get the administration to go along with that. Yes I recall it very well, yes.

Q: Senator Blackwell, Earl Blackwell, was the Missouri senator who was involved. Did you meet him?

A: No. I never met him, but — yes, he was the one sponsoring it over in Missouri. I think Senator Gilbert met him. I think some of those met with him and all. I think it was even passed over there.

Q: Yes it was.

A: But I never did meet him, at all.

Q: How about the bridge south of that from Kellog over to Ste. Genevieve, that was passed in 1961 and was vetoed also.

A: Yes, I don't remember too much about that particular deal. I do remember it but I don't remember the details on it.

Q: There was something involved with a railroad with that bridge I believe.

A: Yes. Yes there was and that was up at Ste. Genevieve I believe. Up in that area. But I don't remember the details on that.

Q: How about the expansion of the bridge out to the Kaskaskia Island, from Missouri actually it was, St. Marys area there in Missouri.

A: I don't recall too much on that either. I know there was — I think it was after a flood or something I believe whenever this came up.

Q: Yes when a flood would come along it would isolate them there.

A: Yes. It just isolated those people on that island. Holloway may have handled that, I'm not sure who handled . . .

Q: Yes that was one of his . . .

A: Yes I think he probably did. But I don't recall the details that much on — that was whenever I was really new up there.

Q: Let's see, in 1961 there was I guess one of several attempts made to get a road up to the top of Bald Knob Cross.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember that situation?

A: Yes I do. I sponsored one of them.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: I got a bill through one time to — maybe in 1961 too — to build an oil and chip road up there, and the governor vetoed it. I forget how much it was for. I don't remember the amount but I know we had some engineers to give us a approximate cost of it. And we got it through and then Governor Kerner vetoed it. And then prior to that, I think Clyde Choate had got a bill through for as much as I think $225,000 one time when Stratton was governor, and that was vetoed. They never could — none of us could ever get a governor to sign the bills. I think that bill was passed — I think Choate got one through a time or two, and I got one through, may have got two through, I know I got one through. I know I had Wayman Presley and a lot of people that had really worked on the Bald Knob thing come up and — but we could not persuade the governor to sign it. He just said we didn't have the money.

Q: I understand Mr. Presley was a leader in the Bald Knob Cross itself.

A: Yes he was.

Q: Getting the cross up there.

A: Yes he was. They — he sponsored — they sponsored all kinds of programs to raise money to build that cross and he was the leader of it.

Q: Were there any particular highways that you were pretty much involved in in attempting to get improvements in the area?

A: Well of course I was involved in just about all of them. But the one I wanted to get help on the worst I never did get nothing done.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

Q: Concerning road projects that you were involved with.

A: Well we were in — naturally we were involved in just about all the roads down here in trying to get them resurfaced or something. Route 127 was the one that we all used to talk about the most and they're just now in the last couple or three years getting something done on it, so we weren't too effective on getting road work. (chuckles) But we did — you know we were involved in getting a lot of the roads resurfaced and widened and all those things naturally. But Route 127, the one that most of us down in this area traveled, was so bad and seemed like we could never get nothing done to it. But the state's now redoing it and so — but we weren't too effective on it. (chuckles)

Q: Were there those that you were effective on? Like Route 13, were you able to . . .

A: Yes, we were always meeting with the Highway Department concerning like Route 13 and — and what was Route — Route 4 now through — up through Ava, and those areas, over around Chester, that was all in our district down here, mine and Holloway's and Gilbert's, and we were always meeting constantly almost, seemed like, with the Highway Department trying to get things done on these roads. There for a long time Route 3 was heavily traveled by big trucks coming from Missouri and going to St. Louis. Of course after the interstates went in that traffic switched. But Route 3 used to be so bad, you know, the trucks would — just kept in terrible condition. But that soon — it was improved when they finished some of the interstates over in Missouri.

Q: How about the interstate situation here in southern Illinois? Did you get involved in trying to route any of that?

A: No. No that was all pretty well handled before I went in.

Q: How about 1965 when the question of billboards came up, the state was going to have to meet the federal requirements and all that. Do you remember that action?

A: Yes. Yes that had lots of talk on it. I supported it. I don't know whether it was the right thing. I think the main thing that was behind it was probably the news media. Because they were strongly opposed to the billboards, you know, because everybody buys a lot of ads and I think the newspapers would rather sell those ads than let the billboard people sell them.

Q: I see.

A: But when you . . . (telephone uncradled beeper starts beeping)

(taping stopped to recradle telephone, then resumed)

A: That other one will probably start too in a minute.

Q: Okay. (chuckles)

A: But no the billboard — I supported the billboard thing. I'm not all that sold — it'd be nice if they'd clear off the highways, you know if they'd really get them back and I guess maybe they will someday, but when you drive up and down these highways today you — I don't miss any of them. Seems like there's still just about as many there as there was before. I know between Murphysboro and Carbondale, my goodness, there's — there's billboards all along the road. And it don't look to me like that we done — we done enough or something. But maybe they'll get it cleaned up. I think the highway would look a lot nicer that's for sure.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

A: They beep after they're off so long.

Q: Yes. So you got not involved deeply then in the billboard — Senator Gilbert for example held it up for a while because he wanted to delay the implementation so the people could adjust and that sort of thing.

A: No I didn't get deeply involved in it. He was involved in it and see — and Representative McCormick was involved in it pretty heavy I think too. But I didn't get that involved in it.

Q: Let's see, in 1967 the statewide Toll Highway Authority was established. Were you involved with the establishment of that?

A: I supported it as I recall but I wasn't really that much involved in it.

Q: Was there any indication that there might be toll highways put in southern Illinois?

A: Oh yes, yes, I was thinking of another one. Yes I was involved in that one. Yes that is one where the . . . yes they were — there was supposed to be a road go from — from south — from southern Illinois to St. Louis if that's — if my memory serves me right. And I think that's the one that — was Governor Ogilvie in then?

Q: I don't recall sir, I'm not sure.

A: I forgot who the governor was. I know when Ogilvie was governor we were all involved in it then. They were setting up — in fact if he'd been reelected we'd have had a four-lane highway from Harrisburg to St. Louis. They had already done some surveying and they'd already had the hearings on where the right-of-way was going to go. And in fact it was supposed to come right through about where we're located right now. And they'd already had the public hearings on it and everything, and it was going up close to Sparta, and on up through there, a four-lane highway to St. Louis. And they were going to sell bonds as I remember. And southern Illinois thought we really had a chance to get that road. And then when Governor Walker got elected, why, he was just — he was just very much opposed to spending money for roads, and just stopped the whole project.

Q: I'll be darned.

A: And they'd even went as far — they'd surveyed where they were coming around Carbondale. That's where our mobile home park's located, they were going to come right just north of it a little ways. They'd already marked the highway, the blacktop road, there where they's going to go through and everything. And one of the neighbors over there close to the airport had already been contacted about buying his property for the road to come through. They hadn't actually bought any land I don't believe, but they had done a lot of surveying, and they only had two areas I think yet to hold public hearings. Then they could come in and start with the buying and building of the right-of-way.

Q: Do you recall any of the attempts at all to get Governor Walker to . . .

A: No that was after — when he got in, I went out, and I don't know what was done then but prior to that we met constantly, all the members of the legislature, with the highway people. We had several meetings here at Carbondale. And the newspaper people and leading citizens you know, Chamber of Commerce people and all them, would meet with us. And tried to keep everything on track. And I think everyone, even John Gardner from the paper and all, I think they were convinced at that time that we were going to get it. But after

Governor Ogilvie went out it just simply died, right there. That was the last of it. And I haven't — you don't even hear it mentioned since then.

And they had a public hearing here at Carruthers Junior High on this right-of-way going through here. I think that there was only about two areas left for them to even hold public hearings, it was that far along.

And of course Governor Ogilvie was pushing hard for that airport up by East St. Louis too you know, out from Columbia, and Waterloo, Illinois. They were pushing hard for that. They wanted the airport and this highway was going too — one thing was helping push this highway was because it looked like then they was going to build that airport.

Q: Oh I see, and this would lead right by it.

A: This would lead right by it, yes. And another thing it definitely was going to open up southern Illinois to St. Louis, you know people that might build factories and things like that, because we have four lanes to Chicago and four lanes to Nashville, Tennessee, and all down through there. But we don't have a real good highway going to St. Louis, and this would have been a tremendous help for our area. And I think we would have it if Governor Ogilvie had been reelected. I really do.

Q: It was a real blow then . . .

A: Yes it was.

Q: . . . watching the Democrats take over again then when Governor Walker came in.

A: Yes. Yes, it sure was.

Q: Well let's see, during the late 1960's it seemed that there was being a lot of concentration on interstate highways, as opposed to the secondary and arterial roads. Did you have that feeling that the . . .

A: Yes there — there was.

Q: It was out of balance?

A: Yes. Yes, and there was a lot of feeling going to the interstates, there's no question about it. And I think maybe — I don't really mean that hurt us on our getting our road because Governor Ogilvie was committed to build this four-lane road. Because to get the program through to where they could sell the bonds to do it at all he had to have a lot of support from downstate members of the legislature. And he pretty well — he set it up what areas were going to get the roads, and of course he had to get the support, you know. He had really set it up I thought very fairly all throughout Illinois. I don't believe there's anybody in Illinois would have felt slighted from what they were planning on doing with the road system. And we would have had a road system. I don't believe another state in the country would have had one like we'd of had. It was really a good one. It was going to cost a lot of money, but they could have done it and I think it would have worked.

Q: Did you have occasion to speak personally with Governor Ogilvie concerning . . .

A: Oh yes, yes I did — several of us did, you know. Senator Gilbert and myself, Holloway, all of us. And he was always very receptive to downstate members of the legislature. He was easy to get to, easy to talk to, and he was very sympathetic to our road programs. He was very sympathetic to them. Of course I thought he was a fine gentleman myself, you know, and I'd like to see him governor again. I'm sure the roads wouldn't be in the condition they're in today if he was governor.

Q: In 1965 an Illinois Highways Study Commission was set up and William Grindle was made chairman of it. Do you remember anything about the functioning of that commission?

A: No I remember him being the head of it and it being set up and I know they held hearings. And in fact I think it held some in Carbondale even. I think they held them in most areas of the state too. But they made a lot of recommendations but I don't really recall what they all were.

Q: One of them was to reclassify highways. I gathered to make some of the state highways county highways so that the county would be responsible.

A: Yes they tried that some I think too, but I know the public was very much opposed to that. You know I think they talked about it in this area some too, about turning back — some of the counties wanted to turn back some roads to the townships too, and all of those things and the townships don't have the money. They're in the same boat the counties were in, the counties were short of funds too.

The thing that I was always in favor of — which a lot of members never wanted to raise the gas tax but I always supported the gas tax increases if it was going to be divided up for the townships and the counties and those things, to fix roads, because townships don't get the money to fix the roads, and they don't have really a way to get sufficient amount of funds either. And I know when I was highway commissioner back years ago, we just didn't get any money.

And I could always defend my vote for increasing road tax. And I would yet today, because to me a good highway system is the backbone of our whole economy. Really. Without it we'd be — I don't know what we'd do. And I think that's where the legislature's making a mistake right now in not supporting tax increases to keep our highways in good shape. One of these days somebody's going to have to face up to it. And the roads are going to be in a bad shape. They're getting that way now. And I'm sure with inflation and all like it is that they're short on money. And they raised the gas anyway, you just as well have put three or four cents a gallon on it and fix our roads. I've told every member of the legislature that I've talked to that I wished they would get a bill in and everybody support it and keep our roads in good shape. Because it's so important.

SESSION 4, TAPE 7, SIDE 2

Q: Well did you think during the 1960's there say that they were raising the motor fuel tax at a sufficient rate?

A: They raised it and I supported it. I never did think they raised it enough to do the job. Because historically, and I guess it'll always be that way in a system of government like we have, you can't raise it enough to do the job like it should be done. So then they have to come back and piecemeal and get a little bit more and a little bit more but they — everybody — nobody wants to raise taxes. I don't want to either. But the highway system is just — means so much to everybody. And even yet today, I'd like to see the four-lane highway built yet today to St. Louis, and hopefully that someday we'll get it. And if it means raising gas tax I'd be in favor of it. Because it's our survival. You take people getting to work, it's so important to everybody.

Q: How about the diversion from the MFT [Motor Fuel Tax] fund? That was attempted several times during your — what did you think of those?

A: I was never in favor of that. No I wouldn't want to see that happen. Because if you did, then sooner or later going to be somebody come along, some governor that is strong

for relief and public aid and all these things, and they're going to be using our highway funds to do all those things. And I say if they want to give that away they got to face up to it and raise the money. I wouldn't want to take it from our road system.

Q: In 1962 that occurred at a special session for public aid, Governor Kerner wanted to divert funds. Do you remember that specifically?

A: Yes, yes I do but he — I don't — as I recall it didn't pass.

Q: It didn't pass, no.

A: And then I think it was tried — I think it was tried again.

Q: In 1963 for schools. And it failed also. As a matter of fact in 1965 again there was — Governor Kerner wanted a three cent increase, one cent for the MFT and two cents for schools, and that failed also. Do you remember any of the particular maneuvering that went on? Any . . .

A: Now as I remember John Lewis, and — and I don't recall about Paul Powell, but I know John Lewis was a very prominent member of the legislature back — and he was always one of the leading spokesmen against diverting that motor fuel tax money. And I know I talked to John many times and — John was a tight guy. He was a lot like Paul Powell in a way, you could go to him and he'd give you an honest answer about a program and just what it was going to do to my area, and even though you might differ with him in the end result, but he'd tell you the true story about it. But he was always very much opposed to diverting that motor fuel tax fund, and he always pointed out what it would do in a area in — like mine where we needed it so badly you know. And I don't think anybody from southern Illinois ever supported it as I recall.

Q: Well then you weren't particularly in agreement then when MFT funds were diverted to Chicago for the CTA [Chicago Transit Authority] support.

A: Never would I be in agreement for that. (chuckles) No.

Q: Let's see now there was — in 1969 a $2 billion bond issue went out. That was Governor Ogilvie's . . .

A: Ogilvie's right, right.

Q: . . . program. Now that was invalidated because it had not called for a referendum. The Supreme Court knocked it down in 1970. Do you recall that?

A: Yes I do. I'd forgot about that part of it though. But I recall what a hard time they had of getting that through too, in the very beginning. After it was knocked down in the court I think they come back later though and passed something that did satisfy the court. And that was the program I was talking about a while ago about getting the roads in southern Illinois. We definitely was going to get our road then if Ogilvie would have stayed in, I'm sure of that.

Q: If he hadn't had people not burning their leaves on it, huh?

A: Right. (laughter) Right.

Q: Yes sir. Let's see, you mentioned the airport a while ago, this bi-state airport, did you get involved in that development . . .

A: Well yes, I supported it, because it was a program that Ogilvie was strong for. And I thought it was going to go through too. There was a lot of resentment from people up

in that area, and I really — it made it bad, but I think the good far outweighed the bad about it you know.

Q: What was the resentment, the nature of the resentment?

A: Well the farmers just didn't want to give up that ground . . .

Q: Oh?

A: . . . for that airport. And it really was going to be built where there is prime farmland, that part was really bad about it. I thought it would pass and I thought it would be built but then they just kept on until it was stalled and now I don't think it'll ever — it'll be a long time before it'll be built anyway.

Q: Putting an awful lot of money into Lambert now to build it up in St. Louis.

A: Right, right, yes.

Q: How about other airports during the 1960's, development such as SIU's airport over here . . .

A: Oh yes. All of us down here supported that. Of course that means a lot to this whole area, and with the university there I think it's important to have a nice airport really. And they train a lot of young people to fly out there. They have a pretty active training program out there, they sure do. I've met a lot of young people out there and I've flown with a lot of them and they really have trained some fine young pilots out there too. They have a good program out there, real good one. And that school I think has increased about every year since it's been there too.

Q: Oh?

A: Yes. It's a good program, real good.

Q: Do you fly yourself?

A: I used to.

Q: Oh you did?

A: I don't anymore. But now when I go somewhere I generally get one of those pilots out there to take me. The one that's been flying me is an instructor out there, real fine young man. I've had several of those young people to take me and the ones that I've had to take me have really been just — just wonderful you know, been very good. And I think that says a lot for the school too.

Q: Yes, it would. How about other airports in the area, in the district, or throughout southern Illinois? Were you involved in the development?

A: Not really. Now the Williamson County Airport, of course we naturally all of us always supported any program they had but most of theirs were not involving the members of the legislature. Like SIU's were, you know. That was important to the university and of course if it's important to them it was important to us, you know. Because the university means so much to this area. A lot of young people gets to go to get a college degree that just wouldn't — come from families that wouldn't be able to send them from this area. And it's meant so much to this area I think.

Q: Did you ever have much occasion to use the state aircraft?

A: I never used a state aircraft.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: No. I never wanted to do that. I was with that like I was with lobbyists buying peoples' dinners and stuff. I never let a lobbyist buy me anything. Not that — and I had a lot of good friends that were lobbyists. I only recall one time ever riding on a state-owned aircraft, and that was the university and they were taking some people to something up north and they invited me to go along and I went. I don't even recall really what I went to, but I went to something. But I just felt like the public would think I was taking advantage of me being representative and flying for nothing and I'd rather pay my own way.

Q: I see.

A: And I always felt that way about lobbyists. One lobbyist one time bought my lunch and I didn't know it until I got up to pay, and he's a good friend of mine and is yet today, and I thanked him the next day but I — I never said anything — but I never let a lobbyist buy me a meal or something. I just think it leaves a bad impression. It's not really — it's nothing wrong with it if it's in the right, you know, in the right context but I'd rather buy my own. And then . . .

Q: Not have the possibility of being misunderstood.

A: Right. And like I say so many of those lobbyists were such fine people, you know. And really good to go to I mean — some of them may not have been but the ones I knew were fine gentleman and some fine ladies that were lobbyists for them. I enjoyed visiting with them and, you know, seeking out their counsel on a lot of things too. But I didn't want them to buying me nothing. You know I just — I didn't want that bothering me.

Q: Yes.

A: They used to always want to buy me something. You know they just — there wasn't anybody trying to bribe me but they wanted to show I think some appreciation you know. But I wouldn't go for it. I just never did do it. I'd been out with them a lot of times and bought myself. I'd rather do my own buying.

Q: In 1961 there was a bill went in to establish a state motel up at O'Hare Airport. Do you recall that?

A: Yes I do.

Q: What was your opinion of that?

A: Well I don't think I supported that. I can't believe I did. I don't really remember, but I do remember it coming up. It's kind of like SIU wanting to get in the motel business one time too.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: And even as much as I think of SIU and as much loyalty as I feel towards them, I did not support them being in the motel business. I think they were just getting into something that they shouldn't be into. They didn't get to build it either, and I know they were perturbed at me for a while over that but I just in clear conscience could not do that.

Q: Was this out at their airport?

A: No they were going to build it there on campus somewhere. And they — and they — they misrepresented it to some of the members too. I'm sure they did others, they did

me. They came to me and told me they wanted to build twenty-five rooms, motel. While we were debating it in Springfield it come out in the paper they was going to build 200 rooms. Big article came out in the Southern Illinoisan. So we not only — we just didn't support it. I didn't and I don't think anyone else did from down here either. I just felt like they — if they got into that then the other universities would want to get into it too. The first thing you know, in the towns where these universities were, be no financial advantage at all to the business community and as much as it means to our area, business people, you do put up with a lot too, you know. It's not all good but the good far outweighs the bad.

Q: Yes sir. Let's see, there were a number of regulations that came out during the 1960's. One of them, in 1963 they passed the requirement that all cars should have seat belts by 1965. Do you recall that . . .

A: Yes I do. And I was opposed to it. (chuckles)

Q: Oh you were?

A: Yes. I never — I just — I've always felt — they not only brought that up, they brought that up and — and I don't think it ever did pass — and they wanted to have cars inspected. The people that were pushing that were the auto supply people you know basically, that's who contacted me all the time in support of it. And I feel this way, that if anybody buys a car and he wants seat belts, he can get them, and he can put them in there. And if he wants to tie himself in there that's fine. But I just — I never felt like forcing people to pay for something they never — they probably would never use. My cars got them in it and I've never used seat belts in a car in my life.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: And I don't want tied in there. It just bothers me. And they brought up about having cars inspected too. And I was opposed to that.

Q: That occurred in 1967 and it failed.

A: Yes it did and I killed that bill. In Appropriation Committee, when they come in there for the appropriation, we got it right there. The thing of it was they came in and they brought insurance people in to testify for it, and in questioning them I asked them what percentage of accidents had been caused from something being faulty about the automobile. They had no records at all. None at all. No — no — they couldn't tell you if it was 2 percent, 1 percent or what. Of course I was very much opposed to it, it's — the main reason, it's just like truck inspections. They're a farce because you go in and you pay two dollars or five dollars to get your truck inspected, no way anybody can inspect that vehicle, really inspect it, for no five dollars or six dollars today. You take it in and you run it through and you step on the brake and see if your brake lights are working and — and nobody's going to drive a car without brakes anyway. But I was opposed to it and we killed it. Same with the seat belts. I just wasn't in favor of it at all.

Q: As I understand the appropriation was to allow the state police to have inspections on the highways . . .

A: Right. Right. Right.

Q: Let's see, in 1963 there was an attempt made to increase the speed limit from 70 to 80, I guess this would have been on the main highways. Do you recall that?

A: Yes I do and I can't think of that boy's name that sponsored it, he's from up around Peoria somewhere, not from Peoria but close by there.

Q: I don't — I don't know . . .

A: And, yes I think I voted for that. And I wouldn't vote for it to be that high today but I'd certainly vote for — increase it from fifty-five. I think that's — to me it's just ridiculous to build four-lane highways and then cut the speed limit.

Q: Not be able to use them.

A: Why yes. And I would think that something reasonable — like sixty-five I don't think would be unreasonable at all with the kind of equipment we got in our cars today. But back then they were wanting to raise it — it didn't pass and as I remember it got beat pretty bad but I think a bunch of us did vote for it from downstate.

Q: I understand this person was a car enthusiast of some sort.

A: He was, he was. I can't remember his name but he was a car enthusiast and — but that wasn't the reason that — why it was voted for. A lot of us just felt like the speed limit — I think it was sixty-five then, I believe.

Q: Well, I believe it was seventy at that time.

A: Maybe seventy, yes, on the — on the — especially on the interstates. But it got beat badly. (laughter)

Q: Let's see, in 1967 there was a motorcycle safety law put into effect.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you recall that?

A: Yes I think I do. I think Senator Arrington sponsored that over in the senate.

Q: I don't know.

A: And I think I supp — that was to making them wear helmets and stuff I think.

Q: Yes — well it established a licensing system in the first place you see . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . and gave a minimum age of eighteen for . . .

A: Yes I think I supported that. Then later they came back I think and took off the requirement about the helmets.

Q: I'm not sure how that went but . . .

A: I'm not either now but I know it to start with — yes I think I supported that program because — and I think the helmet thing was probably a good thing, but I know a lot of people didn't like it because they felt like they's being made to do something they didn't want to do. I guess kind of like I was about the seat belts but . . . (chuckles)

Q: Yes sir. A new motor vehicle law came out in 1967 also — revision I guess of the — do you recall anything about that . . .

A: Not too — I remember it, I remember it but I don't remember any of the details about it.

Q: Let's see here. (sorts through cards) Got so many cards here, can't keep them straight.

A: (laughs)

Q: Let's see, if we could move on to conservation. In 1963 you were on the Waterways, Conservation, Fish and Game Committee. Do you recall any particular activity in that year, that would have been your second session I guess wouldn't it?

A: Nothing in particular I don't. Now I know that committee of course it has a lot of things to do with our lakes down here and all you know, is one reason I think that — that the cons — I think that the conservation people had asked me if I'd like to be on it as I remember. A lot of them and I told them I wouldn't mind at all. And I know — take like Lake Murphysboro and some of these lakes down here, the conservation people have a lot to do with those. But you know — well it wasn't for any big — particularly the only — the thing that I really pushed back then was getting Kinkaid Lake started.

Q: Yes I believe we discussed that earlier.

A: And that was one reason I wanted on there, that was for my personal reason that I wanted on there was to try to help push that on through, you know. But like our local lakes and we have a lot of them too, quite a few, and that was the only reason that I really was wanting on the — wanted on there.

Q: Let's see you served in 1964 on the Horseshoe Lake Area Commission. What was the function of that commission?

A: I recall that. I don't really recall what we were — what they form — what we formed that commission for. It was — I know there was a lot of controversy there at times about the fishing and all down at Horseshoe Lake, and the bird part of it you know. But I don't really remember too much about that.

Q: What type of controversy would arise?

A: Well it was over the fish you know, taking out the game fish and all those things. There was always people on the Conservation Department trying to — whoever got the right to take out the game fish wasn't handled right and all those things you know. But I don't . . .

Q: This had to do with the hunting season, fishing season and that sort of thing?

A: Yes, yes, yes right. And I don't really recall anything that we really done to change it, is what I don't recall. I remember it but I don't really remember what the details were.

Q: I see. How about the Mississippi Scenic Parkway? Did you get involved in any way with that?

A: No. No I never.

Q: Did you have any pet restoration projects like, oh, Fort Massac was rebuilt and the Shawneetown Bank was rebuilt. Did you have any particular . . .

A: No, I supported those but I — that was — Shawneetown Bank thing was Choate's deal. And I kind of believe that — my — he might have been on that Massac State Park too. If it wasn't, it might have been McCormick's, might have been Representative McCormick's main project but the Shawnee thing I think was Representative Choate's, I think was the sponsor of that program.

Q: You had no particular historical sites or anything that . . .

A: No the only one that I tried to get the state to take over was the — the old courthouse at Thebes.

Q: Oh?

A: And I think — I forgot what year that was that I done that. I want — I tried to get the state to take that over. I'm not sure, they may have done that since then, I'm not sure. But I had been down there and some of the historical society people wanted it. And then another one that I was helpful in and I think Choate finally sponsored it, he and I I think sponsored it together, was the Kornthal Church just below — just below Jonesboro. And we did get the state to take that over. That's an old historical church site there, and we did get them to take that over, and made a historical thing of — the historical society was really pushing to help get that done and also they wanted to get that done to take over the old courthouse at Thebes. But I don't recall, I don't believe — if we got it passed, it was vetoed, and we may have — we may have got it passed one time too. But I'd even — I've been down there — of course been down there several times. But that was an old historical building there. They have restored it I'm pretty sure but I'm not — I don't know whether it's been the state doing it.

Q: I see.

A: But I haven't been down there since they got it — since they've done that either. Well it — I took my wife down and — where they used to keep the slaves and all those things down in the basement there you know. It's really an old historical building. Not very big building either, wouldn't have cost much to have redone it you know back then, of course now it would cost money.

Q: How about the Pierre Menard Home for example or Fort Gage or any of that, Fort de Chartres . . .

A: Well that was all done before I got in.

Q: I see.

A: Of course naturally we supported their appropriations you know to maintain them and all those things. But that was all set up long before I came on the scene.

Q: During your tenure was there any necessity to push for improvements, like Kinkaid Lake and Lake Murphysboro and that sort of thing, for camping and that sort of thing . . .

A: Well, we were — the main thing we pushed for back then when I was in and took an active part in was getting some decent roads around Lake Murphysboro. People in Murphysboro were you know not upset but they were constantly — the roads weren't very good that went around the lake. Some of the campsites — and of course they've improved them, they've continued to improve those ever since too. But the roads got to where they were just about impassable around the lake. And I was very active in getting that straightened up at that particular time, I don't recall what year it was. But a bunch of people in Murphysboro were really concerned that people were going to quit using the lake, because of the road problem. When it come a rain it washed out big places. But the state come in and did come in and correct those. And they've continued to improve it too every since really.

Q: When something like that came up did you work with the Department of Conservation or was there legislative action?

A: Well at that particular — I worked with the Department of Conservation is who I worked with then and also the Division of Waterways. John Guillou was the head of that

at that time, and he was very good to work with. And he's the one I worked with on getting — helping get Kinkaid Lake going too. He's the one that prepared my bill for me and everything. And . . .

Q: Who was that, I'm sorry?

A: John Guillou. He was the head of the Division of Waterways. And he was a fine gentleman too. He came over and testified for my bill and got the governor to — helped get the governor to go along with signing it and to get the survey made, feasibility study and all that you know. And was very helpful, extremely helpful.

One of the smartest guys I've ever met about the water — I believe he knows more about the waterways in this state than any other one man living. I really do. He helped me on several occasions in my district, like Cache River needed to be cleaned out down by Ullin. Every time there was a flood, why, it would back up and flood a lot of people that shouldn't have been flooded and all it needed was just a minor amount of work done. And he prepared the bill for me and helped me get it through, and relieved those farmers down there from a lot of flooding, you know. He was very helpful and he knew — I don't believe you could mention a stream in this state he didn't know about. I haven't seen him for many years but I thought he was a fine gentleman.

Q: Did you have other river-type projects that came up from time . . .

A: That was the main one, the Cache River. Of course the lakes here was about the main ones that I was involved with.

Q: How about the Kaskaskia River project? Did you get involved with that very much?

A: Not too much, no. Kaskaskia River project, over there on the island especially, Holloway pretty well handled that — he was already established when I come along. Of course I always went along with whatever he wanted, you know, in way of helping those areas but he's the one that handled the bill for those areas over there.

Q: How about the port authority? Did you get involved with that . . .

A: No I didn't.

Q: Started out as Egypt Port Authority I think.

A: No I wasn't.

Q: Do you recall the veto of the cigarette tax increase in 1963 that . . .

A: Let's see, Senator Kerr sponsored that I think, or somebody.

Q: I'm not sure who — who sponsored it.

A: I remember that but I don't really remember the details.

Q: It was to go to recreation, parks and that sort of thing.

A: Right. Yes I think Senator Gordon Kerr sponsored that, from Brookport. Yes I recall it and everybody I think supported it except the governor.

Q: Yes. (laughter)

A: He vetoed it. I forget, it was going to put I forget how much tax on a package of cigarettes. I thought it was a good idea, I really did. It was going to go to, you know,

to helping in those areas and I think it would have been good, but the governor just would not go along with it. And he had the last say. (laughter)

Q: Yes sir. One of the big things that's come up in conservation has been the strip mining . . .

A: Oh yes.

Q: James Holloway was chairman of the Strip Mining Study Commission and in the year that the bill that resulted from that commission was introduced you introduced a bill. How did it come that there were two bills at the same time on the same subject?

A: Well, a lot of those members that were on that commission I felt like at the time, and I don't say that he was, but we felt like they were strongly influenced by the strip mine companies. And I didn't feel like their bill was going to serve the public like it should be. I've always been strongly in favor of — not putting a burden on the strip mine companies, but while they got the equipment there and all is to level that land back. So it could be put back in use, at least conservation, it could be put back to some kind of use. Now the strip mine law today is pretty good I think. And I don't remember what happened back then. I don't think either bill got through. I don't think mine did or his either.

Q: Yes his did.

A: Did his get through?

Q: Yes.

A: Oh yes, yes it was watered down, yes. But his bill didn't actually do much. But they did get it through. It's hard to get a bill through when a commission recommends one, they'll nearly always take their bill over anybody else's. But his bill wasn't the answer.

Now come along then later and we passed a strong strip mining bill. Jim Nowlan was the chief sponsor. And there was me, and Representative McCormick, and Masters I believe's his name was, from up by Galesburg, all were in on the bill, and we were all cosponsors with him. Jim Nowlan was the guy who took the lead, that's when Ogilvie was governor. And that's when we passed the strong strip mining bill.

A lot of people — a lot — the news media too, they wanted to label that you were against the strip mines. Well that wasn't the case at all, everybody down here was for the strip mines, you know, it means so much to us. But I'd just like to see the land put back so eventually it could be used again. I had at the time how many thousands of acres that had been stripped in each county in Illinois and my own county was like five thousand acres had already been stripped, and some of the counties much more than that. And it really meant something to the tax base too. Because once they give that land up there's no taxes much to come from it you know.

SESSION 4, TAPE 8, SIDE 1

Q: What was it that your bill required . . .

A: My bill required them to put it back within a certain percentage contour of what it was before, and that's what they really objected to, and they had to do like they're doing now, lay back the topsoil when they stripped it and then put the topsoil back on it. And of course they come in and they were just strongly opposed to my bill, and I mean — in committee some of my best friends even voted against me. (chuckles)

Q: Oh is that right.

A: Oh they had really pressured everybody. And we — the day that they killed it in committee the strip mine interests were all there and, my goodness, they had put the pressure on just about everybody they could put it on except me. Of course I was fairly new yet and I didn't realize what all they were doing until they had it all done. And I seen my bill was gone, even the chairman of the committee voted against me. (laughs) And he was a very good friend of mine. But I never did mention — I never said nothing to him, I thought that was his privilege. But I couldn't believe it when he voted against me too. (laughter)

Q: Who was that?

A: Ben Blades. He's dead now. He was very good — fine man and a very good friend of mine.

Q: Do you recall any — now this was on strip mining at that time, did it have any implications for the deep mining? I notice now that they — they . . .

A: No, I think mine was . . .

Q: . . . come under the same purview.

A: Yes I think mine all pertained to strip mining.

Q: Did you ever get involved with considering the same type thing for deep mining?

A: No, I never, that didn't come up at that time.

Q: Let's see, in regard to the antipollution business, in 1961 there was a pollution control board to be put in the Department of Health, and it was vetoed at that time. Do you recall that step?

A: No I don't.

Q: Let's see, in 1967 there were two major programs established, one by the Republicans, it was the Klein bill it was known as . . .

A: Yes, yes.

Q: . . . for $750 million. The other was a $1 billion Democratic bill, I guess Redmond bill. And these two kind of fought it out during that session. Do you recall anything . . .

A: I remember them fighting it out because everybody was involved with it. The Klein bill I think is the one that I supported, that was Carl Klein. And he was a member from Chicago as I recall. I don't know how the results turned out now.

Q: Well the $1 billion program, the Democratic program, won out that year.

A: Went through. Right. And I may have supported it on the last after his failed, I don't remember. But I know he really worked to get — try to get his program passed. He even I think visited all the legislators at home and all that stuff.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: Yes he worked at it, he really worked at it. He done his homework but he just couldn't get it done.

Q: This is the program which included the Lake Michigan dumping problem from the steel mills and that sort of thing up there.

A: Right. Right. That's what . . .

Q: Remember anything about that . . .

A: No only just listening to them.

Q: Yes. Of course a lot of that was supposed to go to parks and recreation also.

A: Yes. They done that to try to get the bill through I think.

Q: Yes. Well of course it got through and then — it was for a bond issue that was defeated in referendum so it didn't go anyplace, at that time.

In 1970 the Environmental Protection Act was put into effect. Do you recall anything surrounding the enactment of that?

A: There was lots of — there was lots of conversations surrounding that.

Q: Yes sir. (laughter)

A: Yes, that was — I wound up I think voting for it but I didn't like it. I'm for, you know, preserving the environment and all those things but, my, they just went out then just like Gestapos. Went up and down the road. They got a guy up here at Dowell they saw burning an old car out in the field and arrested him and it wound up fining him and I don't know what all. And that was the thing that I feared most of all about it and I told Governor Ogilvie that one day.

And they liked to not have passed it. They only passed that bill by I think one or two votes and mine was one of them. And I didn't vote for it for a long time. I just didn't believe in — they can — the thing I didn't like about it is they can go out here and arrest you, and write you a ticket, and you don't go to court, you go before one of their own hearing officers.

Q: Oh the EPA [Environment Protection Agency] itself.

A: Right. You got — why, it's, to me, it's really bad, and it is yet today. They slowed down on some of it. They got a lot of bad publicity and when their appropriation bill come up we really took them to task in the Appropriation Committee too about — in fact I brought up this case to the guy. And of course he tried to defend it but the facts were there you know. I know the guy that they arrested. He runs a junkyard up there, Cobin Junkyard and all. And, my, this thing was news. Instead of warning him they just went out and — and give him a ticket and made him come in down here in the courthouse and — and the hearing was before one of their own people. My, no way for him to have any recourse. And I think he did finally take them to court and I don't know what did — I don't really remember what happened now, but it was — boy, their — some of their doings was bad. For a long time.

And the way they're doing some of these towns even yet today. You know, they come around taking mobile home park people — which I have mobile home parks — they come along and try to make people change something that they'd already approved of — the Department of Public Health had already approved you know. Well my goodness — they didn't bother me. In fact our park we had built a sand filter deal and all that already and they say, still say yet today, that it's one of the best. We've never had a complaint on it.

But a lot of the people, you know and they — what gets me was there for so many years, why, they had the old outhouse in the rural area. Well then they put in septic tanks, that wasn't good enough. They built mobile home parks, they put in these, oh, cesspools you know, or lagoons, whatever you want to call them. And then they wanted you to go to three-stage deal. Well a lot of people went to a three-stage deal, then that ain't good enough. Now it's a sand-filter deal you know. And all those things cost people a lot of money.

And they would stand up and tell us in the legislature, the people that was for all that, that they was trying to help working people, well it was hurting working people. They can't afford those things. It's alright to make things as, you know, as good as you can for everybody but there is a limit to what people can afford to do. But they passed it and I didn't like it a bit. I finally voted for it just to — the governor just put so much pressure on. And I still think they got too much authority. I don't think they ought to be allowed to take people in and, if they take them in, it ought to go before a judge not one of their own people. You know, you should have some recourse. But I think it's still that way, yet today.

Q: And of course this is the act that caused Ogilvie to have all the problem with the burning of leaves.

A: Oh that's true.

Q: Let's see, in 1969 there was a ban on DDT [dichloro-diphenyl-trichloro-ethane] in the Lake Michigan watershed. Was there ever consideration on DDT at that time here, as early as 1969?

A: I don't remember. There was a lot of talk in some of those committees — I know in one of them, Conservation, I was on — about ways of spraying to kill weeds and stuff with that. And I don't recall what the results were though. And that might have been one of them too. Probably was.

Q: How about the business of air pollution controls on the plants around here and that sort of thing from smoke on the chimneys and high-sulphur coal and that problem. Did you run into that very much?

A: Only just hearing people talk is all. I never did think that the high-sulphur coal was that big a problem in this area. I know they still talk about it, and talk about it yet today but — I can recall back a few years ago when everybody used coal. I don't recall anybody ever dying from breathing coal smoke. Now I think they've overdone all that. I don't think the sulphur coal is that bad at all. I'd like to see them take off those restrictions so the people could burn Illinois coal here. It means so much to our area you know.

Q: Yes. . Was there discussion about development of coal while you were in the legislature, do you recall?

A: No I don't recall it.

Q: I guess Governor Walker had the first program . . .

A: I think so.

Q: . . . major program in that direction.

A: Yes. I think he did.

Q: Let's see, in 1963 there was a bill passed which required the registration and licensing, inspection and control of radiation sources. Do you recall that, for nuclear devices and that sort of thing?

A: I remember it but I don't remember that much about it. I know there was something in on it, yes.

Q: They also established the Legislative Commission on Atomic Energy at that time.

A: Anytime anything come up in the legislature if they — one way to put it off was to always establish a commission.

Q: I see.

A: And they'd appoint some guys to study it for a year or two you know. And that's what we call the slow kill a lot of times. (laughter)

Q: Let's see, 1967, concerning nuclear development, the . . . this was in relation to open-housing legislation, I believe Senator Partee was pushing it at that time. The Weston nuclear plant site was up to be paid for and the federal government said they wouldn't do it unless Illinois passed the open-housing legislation. And I guess the legislature decided to disregard that and go ahead and put out the $30 million necessary for it. Do you recall that?

A: Not too much. I remember it because I know — Cecil Partee, I knew him real well, and I think he handled all that. And . . .

Q: Well between he and Corneal Davis.

A: Yes he and Corneal Davis. But I don't recall what they really done in the final analysis on it. They argued about it a lot I know that. Corneal made a few speeches. (chuckles) He can make them.

Q: Yes sir. Do you recall any particular thought given to having nuclear reaction plants in southern Illinois?

A: No. That never was brought up that much. I never heard any — really anything for or against it, really.

Q: But you know of no sites that were thought about or . . .

A: No. No, I don't. No sir.

Q: Let's see in regard to economic development of the area, I understand in 1961 you put in a bill to have — in bidding for state work I guess it was — that there would be 10 percent over the out-of-state bidders.

A: Right. They'd have 10 percent leeway. What was happening was — like a lot of people were bidding — the people that called me to put it in was Bunny Bread Company at Anna.

Q: Oh?

A: Jack Lewis was a good friend of mine, and he was losing a lot of business to the university on bread, and there was other things then we found out later that they would bid and the out-of-state firms would come in and just underbid them just a little bit, and would get the bid. And I felt like that the Illinois people should have some consideration. And I put it in at that time I think to give them a 10 percent break and I think maybe we amended it down to 5 percent. If we didn't, I put one in . . .

Q: Yes it was vetoed in 1961 and then it went to 5 percent in 1963.

A: Yes. Right. Yes it — the governor — we passed it and the governor vetoed it. Now the university I don't think was in favor of it at the time as I recall, but that was one of the reasons that we put — is the reason that I put the bill in. They kept coming to me — and he for one, and I kind of valued his judgement — citing me so many times that they had lost the bid order just by a few dollars you know, and — instead of the university favoring these people here locally they were giving it to out-of-state firms. And I thought that — truthfully I thought it was terrible that the university would do it, because here they set down there employing all Illinois people and Illinois people paying the tax load, I just felt they ought to be given a consideration. And I was going to put a bill in that would protect him. To where they'd have to underbid him quite a bit to get it, you know. That was the purpose of it.

Q: Let's see, also in 1963 you put in a bill to have the purchase of Illinois products by state institutions and that was killed. What happened to that bill?

A: Yes. I don't remember now. I know I put it in and I — I don't know whether we got it passed or not.

Q: I don't — not in that year anyway . . .

A: Maybe it didn't, it may not have passed. What we were trying to do was get it to where Illinois people would have some edge over people from other states coming in and selling to state institutions, is what it boiled down to.

Q: Let's see, were you involved in any way with the Southwestern Illinois Planning Commission?

A: No. Not to amount — no I wasn't.

Q: I guess that was a counterpart of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission . . .

A: I think it was.

Q: . . . Chicago and in that area up there.

A: Yes. I think it was.

Q: How about that development of the Kaskaskia River. Did you get involved at all with the development of the Kaskaskia River?

A: No.

Q: Involved with any of the attempts to bring in industry to . . .

A: No, not really I wasn't.

Q: Let's see the Illinois Industrial Development Authority was formed in 1961 by Governor Kerner, and then it was declared unconstitutional in 1962, mainly because the state credit could not be put behind private agencies. Do you remember that particular situation?

A: I remember it but I didn't — I didn't do much on that either.

Q: Then — of course it was approved later in 1969 and then on there was appropriations for it.

A: Right.

Q: Do you know of any activity on the part of the Illinois Industrial Development Authority here in southern Illinois?

A: I don't recall any. (chuckles)

Q: Evidently it didn't cause too much reaction.

A: No. Right.

Q: How about the Board of Business and Economic Development. That was created in 1961, did that . . .

A: Yes I remember that. I don't really know what — I don't remember too much they done either.

Q: It became the Department of Business and Industry later.

A: Right. Right, and they worked at it, they worked at trying to get industry in — and maybe they done more than I realize. I never was really that close to them. I know who some of the people were that were on it from down here. I know Bobby Joe Hale from Herrin was on it, when Ogilvie was in one time and . . . they really worked trying to get, you know, to get industries to come here and locate I know that. And maybe they were successful and some of that came too, I just don't know.

Q: Did you get involved in any with the development of . . .

A: Not really that much, no.

Q: How about development of tourism other than Kinkaid Lake and that sort of thing?

A: Well naturally we all supported it. Always somebody had something in trying to attract tourism. One time they had Southern Illinois Day, Bob Beckmeyer headed that up, he wasn't a member of the legislature but he headed it up. We got all the members, as many as we could, from up north to come down and spend a day in southern Illinois. And quite a few came. And I think they were pretty — I think they were favorably impressed too. Of course everybody treated them real nice you know and we wanted to get them down here and see what our area was like and show them what was down here in the way of tourism and stuff you know. All those things, to promote these lakes and everything that we could do, I think all that was helpful you know.

Q: You had the northern legislators down here. Did they reciprocate and you went north?

A: No I don't believe they ever did.

Q: Oh is that right?

A: No. But we had a lot of those from the north down here. In fact I think they stayed a couple of days as I remember, that's been a good while ago now. But Bob Beckmeyer from Nashville, Illinois, who's — he's dead now — but he was promoting tourism too. And he was involved in that. He's the one that spearheaded it to have a big Southern Illinois Day. Get a bunch of them down here and a lot of them really responded too. They really came down and — they kidded us for a long time about our lakes and everything down here you know. I think they were really impressed.

Q: Well I guess they should have been, shouldn't they?

A: Yes. (laughter) That's right.

Q: How about involvement with public utilities, railroads and aviation, that committee — that is, the regulation of those. Did you get involved in any way with that?

A: Not really, no.

Q: There was a rather big fight down in this area, throughout the state of course but it happened here with James Holloway, concerning the encroachment of private power companies into the . . . did you get involved in that?

A: Right. Not too much. When I first went up there, why, Holloway was involved very much. And, in fact I thought it — thought it was going to hurt him a lot more than it did. Him being an employee of the REA [Rural Electrification Administration]. And then you know working for them and being in the legislature too. But they finally got together, the public utilities and them, and worked out their differences and to my knowledge have got along pretty well ever since.

But they really were fighting about the first term I went to Springfield. And Holloway was really involved because he worked for them and he sponsored their legislation. And they were taking him over the coals about it you know. But they got it worked out I think.

Q: How about 1963 with — when railroad featherbedding came up, they wanted to legislate for full crews on all the trains. Do you recall that?

A: I recall it, yes. (chuckles) I don't remember whatever happened to it. I know — yes I recall them having legislation in and some of it — I forget who sponsored it. Seemed to me like Don Moore might have been one of them, from up north, I'm not sure.

Q: I don't know who sponsored it.

A: I just can't remember, but I know it was sponsored.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

A: But I don't recall whatever happened to that. I remember it — oh they had it up and I learned more about railroads right then than I had previously known, because in the committees and all — and they had it on there they had to have a full crew I think and even something about two men in the caboose or something. I don't recall now but it was — it got to be quite a thing around there. But I never really got that involved in it.

Q: How did you make up your mind how you were going to vote on it?

A: I don't even remember how I voted. At the time I thought — I kind of thought the guys were wrong in what they were trying to do to the railroads. I don't think I supported all that regulation they were trying to put on there. I think as I recall somebody had got upset at the railroad about something and they were trying to come back at them a little bit I think. But I just don't remember what the details were.

Q: Well let's see, we've been talking about legislative activity. I wonder if we could shift now a little bit to what you were doing here at home while you were in the legislature, your private business as it were.

A: Yes. Well what I was doing when I got elected to the legislature — of course I was coroner of Jackson County at that time and then — of course my time was — my time was up then, I was finishing being coroner. And then while I was in the legislature I also went — that's when I went into mobile home business. In . . . well actually I was in the mobile home business when I got elected too, I was coroner and in the mobile home business. And I stayed in the mobile home business to the — almost the entire time. I

didn't get out of that until 1970, when I had a partner and he got sick and of course I couldn't be there and we — I sold out to him and he sold out to his brother, in 1970. Then . . . of course then I wasn't doing anything, only in the rental business — I also had an apartment in rental business in Carbondale, which I had during this time too. And then I stayed in that and of course 1972 was when I was defeated and then later I stayed in my rental business of course and in 1975 went back to mobile home business.

Q: I noticed in 1962 the Illinois Mobile Home Association named you Man of the Year for 1961. Why did they do that?

A: That was a — when I first went to the legislature they had so many restrictions on the movement of mobile homes. And I had gone to the Highway Department and talked to them time and again about fixing so we could get permits a lot easier without it costing so much to move one. They had the regulation at that time — they give you a permit to move one over . . . to my knowledge any road in the state. I don't know of anybody that was ever turned down for a permit to move one, but they would make you get a trip permit for every one of them.

And you had to — you couldn't call in and get it, you had to wire in, Western Union. And you'd send a telegram in and then they'd wire it back to you. And they'd quote you the whole statute when they wired it back. It made those permits cost about twenty-five, thirty dollars, every time to get one.

And I went to them because all the surrounding states had gone to either an annual permit for moving mobile homes or a quarterly permit. So I went to them and tried to talk them into giving us a quarterly permit. Charge us so much and we'd pay for it and — well they wouldn't do it so finally I put a bill in which would force them to. And got the bill passed. And then Governor Kerner's assistant called me one day and said the governor wanted to talk to me.

(taping stopped for telephone conversation, then resumed)

Q: Let's see, so you were attempting to ease the . . .

A: Yes I — and I got this bill through that would force them to give us an annual permit for the movement of mobile homes at that time. So the governor's assistant, Bill Chamberlain, who was his legislative aide, called me and said they wanted to meet with me and if the governor couldn't meet with me he wanted to and go over it with me. So I went up and met with him and he said the governor was going to have to veto it because it was going to hurt them on getting federal funds if he signed it. But what he wanted to do was to find out exactly what we wanted and see if he couldn't get the Highway Department to go along with it without the bill. And he said, "The governor wants to help you." And so I told him what we were wanting. He said, "Well I'm going to call them right now, and send you over and you tell them and we're going to see that they do it." And that's what we done.

So the Mobile Home Association then, when they had their annual meeting, they made me Man of the Year for that. Because it was quite a favor to people in the mobile home business.

Even then for a long time it was terrible about trying to get permits though, you know. It did change it a lot and of course today it's really good, they've got a good system. They've got one of the best systems now I guess of any state in the country, for a person who wants to move their mobile home, on getting a permit to move it. It wasn't a question of whether they was going to give you the permit or not, they'd get you the permit, they wouldn't deny you the permit, but it cost so much in getting them. And back then that was quite expensive you know. But Governor Kerner did go along with us there. And was really helpful.

Q: Did you talk with Kerner himself?

A: No, talked — he — he wasn't there when I got there and I talked to Chamberlain is who I talked to. And he handled it.

Q: Did you find Chamberlain easy to talk to?

A: Yes very easy. He was a fine gentleman to me. He said, "Now after you go over you call me. I want to make sure that it's followed through," and he did. I called him and told him what I went over with them and he said, "I'll go over it with them and we'll see that it's done."

Q: Did you have occasion to talk with him on other matters?

A: Oh yes, lots of times, yes. He was a fine man and he was a man that was easy to talk to. A lot of times on the governor's program he would come back and ask me if I could support it. A lot of times I could, you know. But he was a, I thought, a wonderful person, I really did. He was so easy to talk to. And I think he really liked me as a person too. He and I both I think really, you know, respected each other. He'd come back, and lot of times, asking, "Will you be able to give us a vote on this or that," and he'd also tell me who he thought was going to be in opposition to it, you know. He was very honest, and I appreciated it you know. Well I really liked him. I think most the members did on both sides. Really respected him.

Q: Where was he from?

A: He was from Springfield.

Q: Oh?

A: I believe he was from Springfield. He's dead now. He got appointed judge then. And later died. His father was a newspaperman for many years. And I met his father but I didn't know him that well. He died, he was an elderly man when I went up there. But everybody respected his father too. But Bill Chamberlain was very highly respected, by Republican and Democrats both.

Q: I understand some of those people in the governor's office from time to time made it difficult to get to the governor . . .

A: They sure did. (laughs) They were a lot of them that way. But he wasn't that way. If he liked you he was about as accommodating as anybody — and me being a Republican and him a Democrat — you could call him and just sit down and talk. You could go in and talk to him if you wanted to about something that you were interested in. He done me a lot of favors you know. Some of our people that when they took over that — some of the Republicans that some of the Democrats were trying to fire I persuaded him into leaving some of them alone, you know. He was very good to me. He was very good to me and I'm sure he was to a lot of others, because I don't think there was anyone there that didn't respect him. You know, whatever he told you — if he couldn't do it you got an answer that you respected, you know.

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