

FBL 15

Interviewee: Jacob C. Belin

Interviewer: Samuel Proctor

Date: August 13, 1992

P: [This is Sam Proctor, and I am in Jacob C.] Belin's office here in Port St. Joe, [Florida]. I am doing an interview with Mr. Belin this morning [August 13, 1992]. I am going to ask him questions about himself, about his personal life and his professional life. We are recording this interview for the University of Florida's Oral History Program. Mr. Belin, I want you to tell me, first of all, where we are. Identify this building here in Port St. Joe.

B: We are at the offices of the Apalachicola Northern Railroad Company and the St. Joe Paper Company at the head of Main Street here in Port St. Joe. The Apalachicola Northern Railroad Company is a subsidiary of the St. Joe Paper Company, and we share common offices here in this building.

P: I notice you have a middle name, Jacob C. Belin. What is that middle name?

B: The C is for Chapman. I was named after the doctor who delivered me on October 28, 1914. That was nearly seventy-eight years ago. I laughed about that. Of course, I do not remember the incident, but the doctor was from Alabama. He came across the P. [Perdido] River, came across the Alabama-Florida line and delivered me over in Walton County, DeFuniak Springs, in 1914. I could just as well have been an Alabamian as I am a Floridian.

P: How did it happen that your family was living in DeFuniak Springs?

B: My father was in the naval stores business.

P: Who was he? Give me his name.

B: My father was William Jacob Belin. I have done a great deal of genealogical research on the Belins. We are French Huguenots. The Belins came to the United States shortly after King Louis [XIV] revoked the Edict of Nantes [in 1685]. We were French Protestants. We were given refuge in England, where we were their denizens. Denization is equivalent of citizenship. I think my people were given all privileges except they could not carry on commerce with Spain or France. They left England and came to this country in the late 1600s and settled in South Carolina in a parish called St. Denis Parish. St. Denis was the patron saint of France. My people came up there. They spoke French when they came here, although they spoke fluent English, too, having spent years in England.

My father was born in Georgetown, and he came to Florida about the turn of the century. He was associated, as I said, with the naval stores industry. South

Carolina and North Carolina were the seat of naval stores. North Carolinians were called tar heels after turpentine naval stores. My father was seeking longleaf pine for the naval stores venture, and because of the rich forest in Georgia, Alabama, and western Florida, he settled in Holmes and Walton counties, where he was there engaged in the naval stores business until 1917.

P: And he met and married your mother in Florida?

B: My mother was from Andalusia, Alabama. Andalusia is not far from DeFuniak Springs.

P: What was her name?

B: Addie Leonard.

P: And they met where?

B: In Andalusia. He traveled through Andalusia. He had places over in Alabama, and some in Mississippi, too, and he would come down to Andalusia, where he met my mother. She was a great deal younger than my father. My father was thirty-eight years old when he married my mother; she was eighteen. That was not unusual in those days. He married only once. My father died in 1953 at the age of eighty-two, and my mother died in 1968; she was eighty-four, I believe. [If Addie Leonard Belin was twenty years younger than her husband, she cannot have been older than seventy-seven when she died.] My father was born right at the close of the Civil War. His father and his Uncle Jacob, my Great-uncle Jacob, fought through the Tennessee campaign – Nashville, Murphreesboro, Franklin, Atlanta, all the way in – and stacked arms before General Sherman in Durham in 1865. Yes, my mother was an Alabamian.

P: So that is how you happened to be born in DeFuniak Springs.

B: Yes, sir.

P: Did you live a long time in DeFuniak?

B: No, not long. I was born in 1914, and we left there in 1917.

P: And you went [where]?

B: To Avon Park, Florida.

P: What brought you to Avon Park?

B: Naval stores. My father acquired timbers there in what was then De Soto County.

It was between Avon Park, Wauchula, and Zolfo Springs. You know the area.

P: Oh, yes.

B: De Soto County was subsequently divided into [De Soto,] Hardee, and Highlands counties. Wauchula [is] the county seat of Hardee, [and] Sebring [is] the county seat of Highlands. But the family resided where we children went to school in Avon Park, where my father had the place out near Wauchula and Zolfo Springs.

P: Now, when you say he had "a place," was it a turpentine camp?

B: Yes, a big turpentine camp, one of the biggest, I guess, in the history of naval stores.

P: Where did they ship out of? Tampa?

B: No, they shipped out of Wauchula, Lakeland, and Avon Park.

P: Of course, the shipments that went by boat mainly went out of Jacksonville.

B: I believe it went out of Savannah. Waycross seemed to be the marketing center, but shipments principally went out of Savannah, and, believe it or not, a great deal of it was exported from Pensacola.

P: Is this [shipping] out of Savannah because the [Atlantic] Coast Line railroad was running out of that Avon Park area?

B: That is right. The Coast Line, and I believe the Seaboard [Air Line Railroad] was running out of there, too.

P: The Coast Line was Mr. [Henry B.] Plant's old operation.

B: Right.

P: So how long did you live in Avon Park?

B: Seven years. I went to grade school in Avon Park. I came here in 1924.

P: When you say "here," you are talking about Port St. Joe?

B: Indeed, yes, Port St. Joe.

P: What brought you all back here?

B: Naval stores. Turpentine.

P: Boy, you followed that turpentine route!

B: Did we ever! My father had three big places here. This area was rich in pine. We moved here from Avon Park in 1924 when my father was engaged, again, in the naval stores operation here in Calhoun County. Subsequently the county was divided, in 1925, and we are now in Gulf County.

P: What about your brothers and sisters?

B: I had four sisters, one yet living, and one brother. He is here. He retired from St. Joe Paper Company. He was with the container division of St. Joe Paper Company for well over forty years. He and I together have a tenure of just about a hundred years.

P: Your father did well in the turpentine business?

B: Yes, as did all naval stores operators back in those days. It was a lucrative business. Those turpentine operators were barons. They lived well. My mother and we children would go out to the places where my father had his office and had his businesses in the summertime for the three months we were out of school to be close to my father, and we had all the servants we wanted. I had boys to rake the yard for me. My mother had maids and cooks by the dozens. All she had to do was send somebody down to the place where my father had all of these employees – we called them hands back in those days – and the daughter or the wife of one of the hands would come up and work and cut wood for the fireplaces, cut wood for the stove, do all the yard work, all the housekeeping, all of the cooking, laundry and everything. All of the menial chores were done by just [these servants]. We lived well. [We] never felt any hardship. Not even during the Great Depression did it affect us.

Naval stores operators fared extremely well up until, I suppose, the wages and hours law came in and until the pulp paper operation came in. [The Fair Labor Standards Act, which set the standards for wages and hours, was passed in 1938.] Here the pulp mill at St. Joe Paper Company produces daily from its sulfate cook operation more spirits of turpentine in one hour than the old naval stores operator through the distillation process could manufacture in a day. We call it sulfate turpentine here. It is made from extracting spirits of turpentine from the resins and the rich pine that we used for pulp wood instead of being made through the distillation process that the old naval stores operators did.

Too, quite frankly, employees were given commissary checks. We had our own currency chips, and all of the people who worked in the naval stores operations [were paid in this script], as were the sawmill [employees]. The tender was good

only at the company commissary. There was no wages and hours law. All of the pay was based on piecework, [by] how many barrels of naval stores turpentine gum [were produced]. We paid by the barrel to dip it. They were paid by the number of trees they would chip. Everything was done on piecework.

P: So the harder they worked, the more they made.

B: Yes, but when the wages and hours law came in with all of the reporting and bookkeeping and all of this, I think that probably a number of the naval stores operators had been guilty of peonage. Franklin Roosevelt straightened that out.

P: So it changed the whole world, as far as those operators were concerned.

B: Right. There was a person in Savannah who later was associated with Georgia Southern, Dr. Charles Hertey, who did a great deal of research in naval stores and in pulp and paper-making. He knew the pine tree. He knew how to extract the resins from it, how to distill and cook the resins from the trees, and how to get the maximum yield from the distillation process. Dr. Hertey had a laboratory there in Savannah and I believe over at Georgia Southern [College in Statesboro], a beautiful little Georgia town not far from Savannah. He designed and patented cups that went on the trees to catch the gum that flowed from them from the chipping process [and] the tins that are the gutters that allowed the gum to flow into the cups. He patented and designed the hack for the chipping and all of the instruments and implements that were used in the naval stores operations. Let me digress to say this to you here. Mr. [Alfred I.] duPont worked with Dr. Hertey a great deal. It was Mr. duPont's idea when he came to Florida and when he and Mr. [Ed] Ball acquired the properties here in northwest Florida. He acquired timberlands with the thought in mind of manufacturing or making newsprint from Southern pine. He and Dr. Hertey worked on that. You know, of course, Mr. duPont's background: He was a scientist.

P: Yes.

B: You know his experience in [gun]powder. I think in Dr. Hertey's laboratory they did make some newsprint from Southern pine, and I am told that one of the Atlanta publishers, one of the Atlanta papers, ran an edition for the experiment. They used the newsprint made in Dr. Hertey's laboratory on an experimental basis, and it was later, as I just related, run over one of the presses there in one of the Atlanta papers. It consumed too much ink. We found, too, that it was extremely expensive to extract the resins from pulp. Too, newsprint from Canada and from Scandinavian countries was coming into the United States very cheap. Newsprint and pulp for the manufactured newsprint from hemlock and the soft woods of those countries was excellent grade.

After further experimenting and studying the economy of the manufacture of newsprint from Southern pine, Mr. duPont and Dr. Hertey determined it was not economically feasible at the time because they could not compete with the imports coming in from Scandinavia and from Canada, so they gave up the idea, and we went into the manufacture of Kraft paperboard instead, which we are now manufacturing here at Port St. Joe. But you know now the history of newsprint.

In the past three decades, newsprint from Southern pine [has been] made throughout the southeastern part of the United States. [It is an] excellent grade, excellent quality of newsprint. We are no longer dependent upon imports from the Scandinavian countries or from Canada. By the way, in Scandinavia, the growing cycle of softwood is 90 to 100 years, whereas here in Florida and in the Southeast, it is more nearly 20 to 22 years. Of course, we are improving on that through forest genetics and that sort of thing. But I have digressed here. My background is, as I have just related, [that] I did come to Port St. Joe in 1924.

P: What were you interested in, growing up? I know you studied history and journalism when you went to college, but what about in your growing-up years, before you got there?

B: I grew up during one of the most exciting periods in American history. As a youth coming along during the Roaring 1920s, [I had a] mind that was searching, thinking, reading. Just think what happened during the 1920s, going back to the era of Calvin Coolidge. He was an exciting person, although historians say he was dull. But he was a great president in my time. There was Charles Lindbergh. Look what happened. He flew the Atlantic. Radio. Motion pictures. All that came in during the formative stages of my life. Babe Ruth. Gertrude Ederle. Bobby Jones. Al Capone. Of course, later you had [John] Dillinger and all that. Look at the records. Look what happened. [Look at] the great development that took place in this country [in] the mid-1920s even through the Great Depression.

P: But you are a young man. Are you conscious of all these changes, this big revolution that was going on?

B: Oh, yes. In that era, Doctor, a small-town boy would go to the train to get the newspaper, to get *Collier's* magazine, to get the *Saturday Evening Post*, and he would hold his ear to the radio in the evening to listen . . .

P: The little crystal set.

B: The old crystal set, to listen to the entertainment and the news. We had, I think, KDK [in] Pittsburgh, WWL [in] Cincinnati, a station way out on the West coast, the Pacific coast, New York, and I believe there was a power station in Shreveport, Louisiana.

P: There was.

B: That was good, clean entertainment, and you got information.

P: You are projecting yourself, as you look back on it, as a young man with a very inquiring mind, with a great appetite for knowledge.

B: Right. And for travel. As a youngster, not only I, but my high school classmates [as well] were interested in politics. We kept up with everything – the political conventions, the elections. We wondered. And let me tell you, going back, Sidney Catts [Florida governor, 1917-1921] was from DeFuniak Springs.

P: Yes.

B: He was an interesting character. I knew Governor Catts, [though] not while he was governor. He ran for the United States Senate, I believe, in 1928, the same [year] when John Martin, I believe, was elected governor.

P: He ran [for governor] in 1924 [against John Martin]. He ran for governor again in 1928.

B: I guess [he ran again against] John Martin, did he not?

P: Against [Doyle E.] Carlton in 1928.

B: That is right. [He ran] against Carlton in 1928. You know we had first and second choice votes.

P: Right.

B: We did not go back [for a second primary. There was no] first and second primary.

P: You did not have a run-off, then, not until 1932. [Actually, first and second primaries began in 1928.]

B: I guess Dave Sholtz was the first one elected under that system.

P: Right. [Actually, Doyle E. Carlton was the first governor elected under the primary system, in 1928.]

B: But Catts was the first one elected, I believe, with the second-choice vote.

- P: You say you knew Catts?
- B: Yes. Oh, he came here in election year.
- P: Catts was elected governor in 1916 on that second-choice ballot, also, against Mr. [William V.] Knott.
- B: That is right. I read quite a bit of history [about Mr. Catts]. There is an interesting one out on him that was written by the professor of history at . . .
- P: He is now at Auburn [University in Auburn, Alabama], Wayne Flynt.
- B: Is that it? He was at Samford University [in Birmingham, Alabama].
- P: He was at Samford when he wrote it, but he is now a professor of history at Auburn.
- B: *The Cracker Messiah: Governor Sydney J. Catts of Florida*].
- P: Right. Wayne is a good friend of mine.
- B: Is he? Well, it was a great volume.
- P: Oh, yes. He did an earlier volume, by the way, on Senator Duncan Fletcher.
- B: I think I read about that in the *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Anyway, [Catts was] an interesting character. I did not know him when he was governor, but when he would come around during election year, he was a flamboyant guy and colorful. It was the day before you had the speaking aids; you did not have the microphones and the public address system. You did it with pure lung power. You were taught back then, and I was taught in school, [what] we called elocution. It was public speaking, to get up and [speak before a crowd]. We were taught, as was Fuller Warren [Florida governor, 1949-1953], to put those gestures in there, to get up. As a matter of fact, we were taught to be showmen more than public speakers. But that was what you had to do in those days, and when these guys came around, they would put on a show.

And during that era, too, while we youngsters were trying to seek knowledge, there was a great thing, [with] headquarters in DeFuniak Springs. Do you remember the old Chautauqua, the lecturers and entertainers who would come around? Of course, there would be a Scotsman with kilts, and he would do a jig and play the bagpipe. There was always somebody who played the old handsaw, the musical saw. Have you ever seen that done?

P: Yes, sir.

B: And, of course, there was that lecturer. My mother would buy tickets for us children for the entire week. We had to sit through that lecture. If one had been to old Persia then and had come over, he was going to lecture about being in Persia. He thought he had been to the end of the world, and he would come over and talk about the social and political aspects of Persia, and how he would eat lamb and goat. He did not eat lamb or goat. But those things there [were simply wonderful]. There were people that had traveled abroad, and they would come home with great knowledge. And it was very interesting. We took advantage of that. I have been to Chautauqua many, many times, and would like to do it again.

P: Were you a reader?

B: Oh, yes. I borrowed books [and] read books. I read magazines. I read the old *Grit*; I guess it is still being published.

P: What about your family? Was it a close-knit family?

B: Yes, very close-knit.

P: Was it a religious family?

B: Yes. Having a French Protestant background, or Calvinist background, we were and still are Baptist. We went to church [and] went to Sunday school. Back in those days there were these evangelists who traveled. They would have three sermons a day – in the morning before breakfast, at 3:00 in the afternoon, and one at night. The little merchants in the town closed the store in the afternoon or closed early in the evening so everybody could go to revival. Dr. Bob Jones used to come around. I have heard him preach a number of times. He was dynamic. He was quite a promoter, too. Bob Jones College was in Panama City at first. It went under, and he went to Cleveland, Tennessee. Now it is in Greenville, South Carolina, if I recall. But you had those people. Sidney Catts was one, you know.

P: Yes.

B: They would come around, and they were dynamic people. They were referred to as "exhortists" back in those days by some people. Yes, we were a closely-knit family [that was] brought up in the church. There was never any doubt about it.

P: What did you do for fun growing up? Were you a sports person?

B: Well, you see, I was here before Mr. duPont and Mr. Ball ever came here. I fished and hunted . . .

P: You really did not even know who they were as you were growing up.

B: No, they were not even around. I fished and hunted on about every acre of land they got. We had high school baseball and basketball. We played games against **Mary** ____ DeFuniak Springs. Back in those days we did not have class 1A, class 2A, and 3A. We would get in a tournament. I played in the basketball tournament against Pensacola High. We were eliminated by the big schools. We did not have [the talent to compete against them]. We hired coaches. Of course, the coaches taught. Sometimes the coach would be the principal. But there was talent in the young boy athletes. Track meets. We had boys who could run. They were extremely fast. Decathlon. Shotput. Javelin. Discus. We had all of that, and [we] participated. Quite a number of Major League baseball players came out of this area. They would come down, and we looked upon them with a great deal of awe and respect.

During summers we would have baseball leagues, and we would employ the baseball players from the University of Florida. They would come over, four or five of them, in Blountstown. We used to do that in Avon Park. They would come down and play baseball for Port St. Joe, Avon Park, and Blountstown maybe for twenty dollars a week or something like that. It was not against any athletic code or anything then, and we would do that. And it was exciting competition between towns. People would turn out. Later we had teams in the mills, like St. Joe Paper Company would play International Paper Company. It was fascinating.

P: What made you decide to go to George Washington University [in Washington, DC] to school, rather than to a Florida college or one in Alabama?

B: Well, I knew [Florida] Governor [Millard] Caldwell [1945-1949]. I have always admired Millard Caldwell. He was a Tennessean, and there was something about Millard Caldwell that reminded me a great deal of [Andrew] Jackson and of Lincoln. Millard Caldwell was a two-fisted, straight, tall, slender man. He was tough. He had his way. He was an excellent congressman [Florida, 1929-1931, U.S., 1933-1941] and a good governor and a good [Florida] Supreme Court justice [1962-1969]. He was the congressman from my district. He beat **Tom Yon**. I knew [James E.] Hodges, who was head of the state Democratic executive committee.

P: That is **Joe** Hodges from Lake City.

B: Yes. [Florida Senator] Sam Teague, do you remember him? He was from Apalachicola. Nathan Mayo [secretary of agriculture]. **Elgin** Bayless. He is dead now. He was in consolidating naval stores and moved to Sebring. He worked

here. He was in Port St. Joe when I came in 1924. I knew all of those people. I was interested in politics. We kids in the summer would go to Tallahassee and watch the legislature in session every other year. Attachés got six dollars a day. The Speaker of the House and President of the Senate [each] got six dollars. We would go over and observe those things. We had that interest. Well, I was interested in politics and was later mayor of the city. I was on the state Democratic executive committee for a number of years.

But I got Sam Teague [and] Nathan Mayo, and I had an uncle in Milton who was a state senator. You know, that is where Millard Caldwell came from.

P: Who was your uncle?

B: His name was Elijah Lundy. He was an oil and gas distributor. We called him Elij [with a long /]. I said, I am going to Washington for school. I got on the bus, and I went up to Chipley first to see Olin Shivers, who was my state senator. Do you remember Colonel Shivers?

P: No.

B: I think his son is on the appellate court here. I said, get a hold of Mr. Caldwell and tell him I want to come up there. Well, Mayo went up from the state Democratic executive committee – Sam Teague, Nathan Mayo, and all of them. I went up to see Caldwell. He said, I am expecting the boy. He said, come on in when [I got there]. [And he said,] you have to help yourself. Find out what you want, and I am going to push you. I said, two things: I want to go to school, and I want employment. He said, I understand.

P: But why the decision to go way far away from home?

B: I could get employment there in the government and go to evening school, night school, [or] take classes Saturday afternoon.

P: But you did not really need that kind of support. Your father could have afforded it.

B: I did not need it, but it was exciting. I had a lot of friends in Washington there at Georgetown [University], George Washington University, and some at Catholic [University of America].

P: So the allure of the big city and [the fact that] it was the center of politics is what drew you there rather than to Gainesville.

B: That is exactly right.

P: You never considered going to the University of Florida?

B: Not seriously.

P: And your family had no objection to your going way off?

B: Not at all.

P: So you go up there what year as a freshman?

B: 1935.

P: And you moved right into the program at George Washington?

B: Yes. I took like nine semester hours. I did not graduate.

P: I know. What did you major in?

B: I aspired to be a journalist. I wanted to write. I still would like it, [but] I got despondent. There was a chap who came out of school just ahead of me at George Washington. [His name was] Bob **Constadune**, and I knew him. I used to go to the National Press Club and see Haywood **Brun**.

P: All of those people did right well by themselves.

B: But do you know how much they made, the [writers for] NEA Service, Associated Press, United Press? There was a chap from Gainesville on that up there who was with the *Gainesville Sun*. I do not recall whether his name was Dillon Graham or Graham Dillon. He was making \$35 a week. Ernie **Pyle** was there working. I think he made \$35 or \$40 a week. They did not make any money. They were great writers, but not the journalists that you have today.

I used to read _____ **Rice** and Ring Lardner, the short story author. [Ring] was a sportswriter for the *Chicago Tribune*, I believe. He was from Niles, Michigan. He wrote a lot of short stories, [such as] "Haircut", "Golden Honeymoon", "Alibi Ike." His son wrote later and was practically an avowed Communist. He had a way with words, like [James] Thurber. In three or four pages, he could [use his words to describe something] just like [he was] painting a portrait [or] painting a landscape. He could just depict things.

P: What kind of work did you do in Washington?

B: I worked in Mr. Caldwell's office.

P: So you went up and got a job first of all as one of the aides in Caldwell's office.

B: [I was a] part-time aide. Let me tell you about that. There were two and a half full-time employees, the secretary and I guess his administrative assistant and me. I mailed out farm bulletins, infant care pamphlets, and I would help with the mail. The mail would come in, and a lot of it would be written on yellow pad in pencil, [which is] very difficult to read and make out. [We] did not know who signed it. I would have to go in and try to work at that. It may have come from a county commissioner, [and] we could not read the name. I had to do that research.

Two full-time employees and I worked for Mr. Caldwell. I was up there last year to see a Congressman, [and] he assigned five aides to me, and we got nothing done. Mr. Caldwell and [Congressman] Bob Sikes [from Florida] could get on the phone and turn mountains. They were not afraid of a bureaucrat. They would get on there and say, you do this and do that.

[Let me tell you] a little story. Mr. Caldwell called me in and said, I am going to help you. I want you to get out of here now and find some openings for me to put you into. Do you want to go to school? I said yes. He said, now, you tell me you are about broke. Well, I was not. He said, do not come out of my office and step into a taxicab. Get a weekly streetcar pass. An express bus was \$1.25 to go all over the District of Columbia. He said, watch your money, and come back and report to me. I said, I will. I was working part-time there, too.

I had to go over to Jim Farley's office. He was Postmaster General [1932-1940]. It had cabinet rank then. [There] I met the first statistician I ever met in my life. As a matter of fact, there were not any such persons as statisticians. He had a fellow in his office in his department named Emil Hurja who was a statistician. Hurja had a record of Franklin Roosevelt's votes in every ward and every precinct in the United States. You went there to get a certification. If your area, your ward, your precinct went heavy for Frank, you got a buff card. If it was fairly heavy you got a blue card. If it was weak, you got a white card. I had a buff card. I did not need it because Mr. Caldwell was behind me.

I went back and said, Chief (that is what I called him), I am certified now. He said, did you find any spots you want to get into? I said, you are going to work me to death, Mr. Caldwell. I said, I have to work in your office to help you here with farm buildings and infant care pamphlets and all this stuff. But, I said, there is a position over at the U.S. copyright office I would like to have. Can you push me? He looked and said, why, yes. He pressed a buzzer, and Miss Kate **McDye**, his secretary, came in. He said, Miss Kate, who is in charge of employment over in U.S. copyright? She said, Mr. Caldwell, I do not know right now, but I will find out

and report to you in a few minutes. Fifteen minutes [later] she came back and said, William Voorhis. He said, I am on a committee with [Horace J.] Voorhis of California. We are on several committees together. He is the ranking Congressman from California. Find out if that is his brother. It was his brother. He said, get me Mr. Voorhis over at the Congressional Library on the phone. He called, and Voorhis came to the phone. He said, Mr. Voorhis, I am Millard Caldwell, the Congressman from the Third Congressional District of Florida. (I believe it was the third back in those days. I do not recall.) I have a boy in my office. His name is Jacob Belin, [and] he wants employment over there, and you have a position open. My patrons list is not filled in your department. I am sending Belin over to you right now. I hope you will see him. Will you, Mr. Voorhis? I went over, and Voorhis met me on the step and took me back for a short interview.

Then I went back and reported to Mr. Caldwell. He said, how did you make out, Belin? I said, I think I am in. He said, you are in. If you do not hear definite by the morning, come to my office. I went home that night and stayed at the fraternity house. I had a telegram from Voorhis of the Congressional Library to start work over there the next week. I went over to the U.S. copyright office, which was then housed in the Congressional Library. I did work for Mr. Caldwell, too.

P: So you had two jobs.

B: Yes.

P: How much did the copyright job pay you?

B: That was one department that paid in cash. We worked Saturday mornings then in government, believe it or not. Under the civil service rating, it was like \$1,660, \$1,800, \$2,100. I got up to \$1,840 or \$1,860, something like that. That was as high as I got.

P: And how much did Caldwell pay you?

B: Oh, it was a pittance. I did a lot of things for Mr. Caldwell. He was a great congressman.

P: Were you there when his son was killed?

B: No, after that. That was a tragedy. That is the reason he did not come back. It was hard.

P: Where did you live?

B: I lived on Connecticut Avenue, right out at Rock Creek, at Calvert and Connecticut, near the zoological garden.

P: Were you in a fraternity?

B: Yes.

P: What was it?

B: Kappa Alpha. Your associate is a Kappa Alpha.

P: What made you join that? Southern?

B: Yes. Robert E. Lee was our spiritual founder, you know.

P: I know.

B: I had a lot of friends that were Kappa Alphas. We had a great bunch, and all of the fellows did well. I enjoyed myself.

P: And you could celebrate Robert E. Lee's birthday every year.

B: I do.

P: Now, did you have much of a social life in Washington as a KA?

B: Yes.

P: They are hell-raisers, the KAs.

B: Well, the younger ones, yes. Washington is a phony city. It is made up of people who are seeking recognition. All you had to have, if you could afford it [and] I could not, was a tuxedo, which you could have tailored for \$37.50 and patent leather shoes for \$3 and a black tie.

P: And you were a single guy. You were in.

B: I think the women far outnumbered men then, and it was easy to get an invitation to the White House. Everybody at one time or another got over there. If you worked for a congressman or a senator, you had invitations going, and I belonged to this thing called the Florida State Society. That was most interesting. I did a lot of things for Mr. Caldwell. His constituents would come up there, [and] he would have them for dinner [and] have them visit his office. He would entertain them at night for dinner. A lot of his constituents from his congressional district had daughters in finishing schools, [like] **Goucher**, Martha Webster, and

those schools across the Potomac over in Virginia and over in Maryland. I was a gigolo. Mr. Caldwell would say, all right, so-and-so has a daughter here, and you have a tuxedo. We are going out for dinner. I would do that, and it was a pleasant way to meet a lot of people.

[I especially remember] one of our social meetings out at the old Kennedy Warren Hotel, past the zoological gardens, toward Chevy Chase on Connecticut [Avenue]. [It is] beautiful out that way, in northwest Washington. We gave a reception for Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell jointly with [our] new Senator [Claude] Pepper. I had told Mr. Caldwell, as I related earlier to you, that I was watching my money and I was not going to do anything foolish, that I was saving my pennies because I wanted to go to school, and I needed that job. Well, I went out, and I was on the kind of committee to receive the Congressman and Mrs. Caldwell and the Senator and Mrs. Pepper. I was standing there in line to receive them. It was snowing. I had on tie and tail. Here comes the Congressman and Mrs. Caldwell. He looked at me, and I said, Mrs. Caldwell, may I take your coat? Chief, let me have yours. He said, I can handle my own coat. I do not want to impose on you, Mr. Belin. I said, what is the matter, Chief? He said, look over here. He said, I thought you told me you were kind of broke. I said, wait a minute, Chief. This thing is in your honor. I am not coming up here from your district to pay you this great honor wearing overalls. I put it on just for you and Mrs. Caldwell. He said, do not give me that stuff. I want to know, who is the congressman from our district? Is it me or you? I think it is going to be hard to tell, Jake. We laughed about that.

He had a great sense of humor. I would get in the car with him, [and] we would go to the War Department. That was long before we had a Defense Department. He would go over to get some of his constituents' sons into West Point. He would go over to the Navy to get [them] into the naval academy.

He was a great congressman. He worked and did things and was a pusher [and] a hard worker. He would tell you no. He was loyal to his friends, but he believed in the spoil system: to the victor goes the spoils. If you did not vote for him, you did not get anything, but if you supported him, he would look out for you.

P: The world was yours.

B: The world was yours.

P: Was that also true of Claude Pepper in the 1930s?

B: Yes, it was true with Claude, even when he was in the House of Representatives here in Florida, before he went to the United States Senate.

P: You did not know him as well as you knew Millard Caldwell.

B: No, I did not, but I knew Pepper real well. I knew him when he was practicing law in Perry. He was always interested in politics. I admired Pepper, although he was extremely liberal. Incidentally, he was a KA [Kappa Alpha]. He was a great orator. He was fast on his feet, Doctor. He could make one of the finest, best extemporaneous talks you have ever heard. Claude had a great mind. [He was] Harvard-trained, I believe. He taught school at the University of Arkansas. He pretty much brought himself up by his bootstraps. He had a good mind. [He was] a great disciple of [Franklin D.] Roosevelt. Roosevelt had a great influence on him. Claude was ambitious and tied onto Roosevelt's . . .

P: He tied himself to Roosevelt's star.

B: He did. Paul Robeson hurt him. You know he made a trip to Russia. Stalin hurt him.

P: He hurt himself a lot. Now, you left George Washington [University] before you graduated.

B: Right.

P: When did you leave?

B: 1938.

P: Why?

B: Well, my father was aging. He was almost fifty years old when I was born. His health was failing, and I was concerned. I had heard about St. Joe Paper Company coming in, and I came down to check with my father and mother. It was concern. I came down and saw what was taking place here and became interested. I interviewed and went back to Washington and resigned and came back down here and took a position with St. Joe Paper Company.

P: So you were not unhappy with what you were doing in Washington. This seemed a more exciting thing for you to do.

B: Right.

P: Your father was not dying or anything.

B: No. The naval stores industry had played out, [and] he was retired. His vision was poor, [and he was] failing in health a little bit, but he was not dying.

P: So you came back, and you joined the St. Joe paper mill.

B: Right.

P: In what job?

B: I went into the laboratory as an assistant chemist. That is a little bit misleading and something of a misnomer. I was in charge of all physical tests in the quality program of all the paperboard that was manufactured.

P: What did that mean? What did you do?

B: I hired several chaps who worked for me who were chemists or who had studied physics to test the strength of the paperboard – the tension strength, the tear strength, the puncture strength, and all of the physical tests that had to do with stack ability, because you could stack a paper box.

P: So your job came after the paper was manufactured, not during the process of manufacture.

B: Right.

P: Because there were people, I guess, within the laboratories where the paper was being manufactured to test the chemical components.

B: Oh, yes, they did that in the cook and that sort of thing.

P: But that was not your job.

B: Right.

P: How much did you get paid?

B: I believe the minimum wage then was \$0.40 an hour.

P: And you worked forty hours a week.

B: Yes. [There was] overtime, of course. I do not recall now whether you got premium pay for over forty hours or not then, but forty hours a week was the minimum.

P: You are still a single man?

B: I did not marry until 1940. I was a single man.

- P: So when you came back in 1938, you came back as a single man. You get a job with the St. Joe paper mill, and you are working in this testing program.
- B: Right.
- P: Why did you not go into [military] service, or did you?
- B: No, I did not. Working with the physical tests and with war breaking out, I was placed in charge of coordinating production and shipments with the Lend-Lease program.
- P: Oh, I see.
- B: I worked with **Donald Neps'** office in Washington on production scheduling [and] coordinating shipments to meet convoys. We were exporting to England before the outbreak of the war under the Lend-Lease program.
- P: So you really begin to hold an important position in St. Joe because of the labor shortage, even though you came in as somewhat of a novice in 1938.
- B: Right. Things were quite different then, Doctor. There was not much regimentation in 1938 and 1940. Industry was not regimented as it is today. You did not come in as a specialist, a chemical engineer. You did not come in as an electrical engineer.
- P: You did everything?
- B: You did everything, and what you wanted to take on you were recognized for and compensated for, and you went up the ladder, just so long as you did not step on somebody else's toes.
- P: Were the duPonts already [involved with] the St. Joe paper mill?
- B: The St. Joe Paper Company was then jointly owned: 50 percent duPont and 50 percent Mead Corporation.
- P: Because Mr. duPont dies in 1935, but I guess he had already begun investing in this area.
- B: Oh, yes. Mr. Ball came over and bought up vast timberland under a purchase agreement.
- P: Was Ball duPont's representative, his agent, even before duPont died?

B: Oh, yes.

P: Long before that?

B: It goes back to the 1920s.

P: I see.

B: Of course, you know they were brothers-in-law.

P: Oh, yes, I know. Mrs. duPont was [Ed Ball's] sister.

B: Mr. duPont had implicit faith and trust in Mr. Ball. Mr. Ball was a tiger. [He was a] tenacious person. [He was] honorable. [He] worked [and] went after things. I was closely associated with him for forty years.

P: I want to get back and talk to you in a minute about Mr. Ball because he plays such an important role in your life and also in the St. Joe paper mill, but I want to get a couple of personal things out of the way on you. First of all, I want to ask you about your marriage. That comes in 1940, you said. Whom did you marry?

B: I married Myrle Fillingim.

P: Where was she from?

B: She was from Liberty County, a place called Hosford.

P: And she, then, was a Floridian?

B: She was born in Liberty County, graduated from Florida State College for Women [in Tallahassee, now Florida State University] and the School of Commerce, and she was here working for a subsidiary of St. Joe Paper Company. I think it was St. Joseph Land and Development Company. She was a secretary doing shorthand and bookkeeping and accounting work and that sort of thing.

P: Was she also a teacher?

B: Yes. She taught school in Walton County, DeFuniak Springs. Let me tell you this as an aside. She tutored Sidney Catts' daughters. I think one of the daughters that she tutored after the old governor died may be yet living in Jacksonville. I do not know that the Catts were destitute, but they were in a hard way. The daughters were not trained for anything, and my wife taught at least one of them shorthand, typing, and that sort of thing so she could get employment.

P: Their brother was a lawyer down in West Palm Beach, Sidney J. Catts, Jr.

B: Right.

P: Now, your wife taught in DeFuniak Springs, and she taught commercial subjects. How did you and she meet?

B: We were both employees of the company here at Port St. Joe. She came to Port St. Joe on the insistence of [G.] Pierce Wood. Did you ever know Pierce Wood?

P: No.

B: He was Speaker of the [Florida] House [1939-1940]. He was from Gadsden County, and he, too, was in the naval stores business. My father knew Pierce Wood. He came here and managed the St. Joseph Land and Development Company. He was over the woodlands, over the railroad, and over some of the other subsidiaries. He brought her down to work in his office. She was not his secretary, but she was secretary to the auditor. That is the reason she came here.

P: So you two were married when in 1940?

B: On Thanksgiving Day, 1940.

P: How many children do you have?

B: Two sons.

P: Give me their names.

B: Jacob C., Jr., and Stephen A. Belin.

P: Where does Jacob live?

B: Jacob lives in Palos Verdes, California. It is a suburb of Los Angeles. He is there engaged in the petroleum business. He owns a refinery in Bakersfield, about a 70,000- or 80,000-barrel-a-day refinery.

P: So he is doing well there?

B: His office is in Long Beach, and he is doing well there in his refinery.

P: He is married?

B: He is married and has a son, **Phillip**.

P: So that is one grandchild.

B: My younger son, Stephen, is in Valrico. That is a suburb of Tampa. He is there employed by Circle K, a convenience store group. He is involved in choosing sites for outlets for stores. He is involved in the environmental problems and works with the different state departments in putting in [gas] tanks and going through all of the permitting, and he spends some time in Boston where Circle K has some relationship with petroleum distribution. He is doing quite well.

P: He is married?

B: He is married and has two sons.

P: So you have three grandsons to carry on the Belin name.

B: Yes. I am fortunate. My boys are well-trained and well-educated. My older son got a degree in applied mathematics from North Carolina State University, and he went to Georgia Tech to do his graduate work in business. My younger son went to prep school, Woodruff Academy, in Atlanta and finished at the University of West Florida, Pensacola, on business.

P: I am glad to find you have at least one Florida graduate. But not a Gator yet.

B: Not yet.

P: Well, we are holding out hope for those three grandchildren.

B: Right. Well, my oldest grandson, Phillip in Los Angeles, goes to private school out there. He is just dead-set on going to Duke. He was up in North Carolina just recently and had an appointment to meet Coach K [Mike Krzyzewski]. He is interested in basketball, and he wants to go to Duke. I am trying to encourage him to go to Stanford. He has been on the Stanford campus lots of times. I do not know whether he is interested in getting into the school of business at Stanford, but they have a great school of business there, as you well know. My other grandson is quite young. I will [guess that] they will probably not wind up being Gators. Mrs. Belin has gotten to be such a Seminole now.

P: That you are afraid to say "Gator" in her presence.

B: Yes [laughter].

P: She is a great, strong supporter?

B: Oh, yes, she is a strong Seminole supporter and, let me tell you, an extremely strong Bobby Bowden supporter.

P: Well, that is all right. We are not going to hold it against her. I am sure otherwise she is a very respectable lady. I mean, every weak point cannot be held against a person.

B: Right. Well, you have an outstanding coach at Florida [Steve Spurrier].

P: And we have a good academic program at Florida, too.

B: Florida is a great school.

P: Right. You have been on our campus?

B: Yes. I have not been there recently.

P: We will change that situation for you. Now, let us get back to your business career. During the war years, you are very active in the St. Joe paper mill, and, as I understand it, it is part of this export business that you were working with?

B: The Lend-Lease program, which was Roosevelt's grandbaby.

P: That was in 1940.

B: We gave England fifty old destroyers, as you recall, and he put in the Lend-Lease program. We were virtually in the war, even though it was undeclared. I was coordinating production manufacturing schedules and shipments with Lend-Lease. We were shipping under the Lend-Lease program thousands and thousands of tons of our output, which was pulp, which was shipped to England.

P: And then to Russia. Were you involved in the shipments, also, to the east, to Russia?

B: Just to England. I was coordinating shipments [from] Savannah, Galveston, New Orleans, Mobile, wherever I was told to get it there in a hurry. I worked with the railroads to get it there.

P: They needed it.

B: Right. We convoyed it.

P: And tried to elude those German U-boats in the Atlantic.

B: Right. As a result of that, I volunteered, and my company would go before draft boards for deferments. I was not called because of the position I was filling with the Lend-Lease.

P: All right. The war comes to an end, now, and you are still obviously with St. Joe Paper, but you are beginning to move up the ladder a little bit. Then what happened?

B: Well, in 1940 – let me keep some continuity in this thing – the duPont interests bought out the Mead interests. We were 50/50 owners. Mead is a big paper maker. They owned the Brunswick Pulp and Paper Company in Brunswick, Georgia, and Chillicothe, Ohio. They have long been in the paper business. We bought out the Mead interests. We did not have any experience in the manufacture of Kraft paperboard, and Mead did, so we went in a 50/50 venture. In May of 1940 we took over Mead 40 percent.

Then after the war we started moving, integrating. Instead of selling our product, we started consuming it in our wholly integrated plants, the corrugated box plants. We started building and buying corrugated box plants. Kraft paperboard came along in the early 1930s. It replaced wooden boxes in the form of corrugated shipping containers. **Cookridge** business went out. Paper boxes took over barrels. After the war I went into sales and into sales promotion. I started marketing our output, corrugated boxes and Kraft paperboard.

P: This took you all over the U.S.?

B: It took me all over the universe. What we were doing is finding new uses for corrugated boxes to replace wooden. The entire citrus industry used wire-bound boxes to package its fruit, the old standard nail boxes to package its grapefruit, oranges, and that sort of thing. You recall that. California, M.O.D., Sunkist – there were only about five or six big producers out there – were shipping all of their citrus in wooden boxes. What we wanted to do was convert them to corrugated boxes.

P: And you were able to.

B: [We were] able to: One, working with the railroads to put in refrigerated cars, [and two,] working with the Institute of Paper Chemistry in Appleton, Wisconsin, on _____ inhibitors that would keep down blue mold, _____ rot, any kind of decay in citrus. [We] made boxes with holes in them so you would get ventilation. The thing that helped us was refrigerated cars. We had to go into Falls Church, Virginia, and work with the laboratory over there to get the Bureau of Pharmacology of Pure Food and Drug to approve these chemicals we would put in the boxes to keep down mold and shrinkage.

We converted first the California citrus crop because there were not as many varieties of citrus in California as we had in Florida. The acid content of the orange was not as great. It did not pose the problem of packaging that Florida citrus did. There were nearly 600 different citrus growers with nearly 600 different box plants that made their own boxes or purchased their own wooden boxes here in Florida. They had their own production lines. We had to go in and show them the advantage of going to paperboard boxes. [We showed them] the economics of putting in production lines to package quicker [and], with less labor, the advantages of marketing, displaying it at Kroger's, A & P, that sort of stuff, the advantages of handling the boxes with equipment. We had the half box [and] the four-fifths bushel box. The old wire-bound was one-half bushel. We cut down on the size of the box. [We showed them] the eye appeal, the ease in handling, the economics in packaging. We converted them.

Then I went down to the banana tropics [and] worked with United Fruit [and] Standard Fruit. The spoilage on their bananas coming out of the tropics, the banana republics, was as high as 60 percent. They had their own refrigerated vessels. They would bring the bananas to this country, ship them to Detroit, Cleveland, [to] the ripening rooms. Spoilage increased. We went down there to work with them to show them how to package in corrugated boxes [and] cut down on the spoilage, and we did. We had problems, of course. The railroads down there are not all standard gauge. That gave us a problem. And the plantations are way out in the tropics. We put in pre-cooling houses to pre-cool the bananas before they went to the vessel, before they were put on rail cars to go to the port.

We started shipping in hands. Instead of shipping from the stalk we cut off like five bananas – you know how they are – and brought them to market. [That] cut down on the spoilage tremendously [and] saved them a lot of money. Now all of the bananas are packaged in corrugated boxes.

Another big outlet was the distillers. Bourbon, scotch, and all that was shipped in wooden boxes. That is virtually 100 percent now in corrugated [containers]. Some scotch, I think, is shipped in wood. But chemical companies were using wooden barrels to ship some of their products. There were liners we could put in there in plastics. We did that.

Additionally, in the form of another box, we started making bleached paperboard and converted the dairy industry to put milk in paper containers. They are still doing it at the expense of glass and, to some extent, at the expense of plastic. We have virtually converted the whole industries now to corrugated, and the [cardboard] industry has boomed. It has grown tremendously. We are still doing it.

P: At this point in the interview, Mr. Belin, I want you to go back and give me some of the history of the St. Joe paper mill, which has played such a fundamental part in your life and in the history of this community and, in fact, the state.

B: Well, earlier I stated to you that as a youth I spent a great number of my years here before the duPont interest came over. My father was in the naval stores, and he owned and had naval stores operations on a lot of the land that the paper company presently owns.

P: The naval stores industry and lumbering and fishing were the three mainstays of this community before the paper mill?

B: Right, and the surrounding community. They [also] made grade A Tupelo honey.

P: Those were the mainstays of the economy.

B: That is right.

P: Okay. Your father, then, you are saying, owned a lot or controlled a lot of the land.

B: Right. And he of course subsequently wound up in the ownership of St. Joe Paper Company. Mr. [Ed] Ball, Mr. duPont's agent, had been coming through this country since maybe the late 1920s or early 1930s acquiring properties with the thought in mind of putting in a paper mill. Back then they had newsprint in mind.

P: Have you any idea what brought the paper mill interest to Ball? Of course, they were earlier involved just in banking.

B: Yes. Mr. duPont came to Florida with a lot of cash. He had liquid assets to invest. He had great faith in the development of Florida, as did his brother-in-law, Edward Ball. Ball was a trader; he was a real horse trader. He liked to go out and negotiate, particularly for real estate, and with cash. During the period of the Great Depression, if you went out and offered cash, you could buy an awful lot quick.

P: And cheap.

B: And cheap. Cash spoke. And that is what he did. He came through and negotiated. He was given irrevocable power of attorney from Mr. duPont.

P: And, of course, this state went into a depression after the collapse of the boom even before the rest of the country.

B: Right.

P: So real estate prices, I guess, began to be depressed in 1928-1929.

B: The first thing we did was open it up over here. Ball came over and promoted the Gulfcoast Highway (that is U.S. 98). He got the county commissioners of all the coastal counties together and promoted the highway. Mr. duPont bought the bonds for the bridges so he could put in the bridges. The state was broke. One of the great governors we had here, the governor who put Florida on the go, was John Martin [1925-1929]. He had vision.

P: Certainly as far as highway construction was concerned.

B: Ball promoted the highway system and got it put in stage by stage. Bridges, as I said, were a problem. Mr. duPont said, well, I will buy the bonds to fund them. And he did. He put a toll on them, a \$0.10 toll. So he opened it up for transportation.

Then he came along later and bought these assets that I just alluded to – timberlands, telephone company, railroad company – all cheap, to promote the area. They came in, Mr. Ball and Mr. duPont, and encouraged International Paper Company to put a paper mill in Panama City. It was the first Kraft mill in Florida. It came in 1931.

P: You think, then, [that] he bought the land because he was a real estate acquirer, and then said what were going to do with all of this? That is where he conceived the idea of converting the timber into paper. And paper was just beginning to move in the United States?

B: [The] Kraft and type paper we were making then, and making now, [was] just in its infancy. We came along in the early stages of the Kraft paperboard industry.

P: So he hit it at the right moment in history.

B: He sure did.

P: Up until that time where [were] we getting our paper from? Canada?

B: Papers were made from waste. We were getting all the newsprint from Canada and the newsprint pulp from Scandinavian countries. We were making paper in small mills in the Carolinas and in the Midwest. The corrugating member – that is the fluting material you see in a corrugated box – was made from wheat straw, principally.

P: I remember they talked about rags being a basis for conversion into paper.

B: Right. Office waste. In the Carolinas they used the chestnut tree.

P: Was it Dr. Hertey, then, that saw the potential of using pine timber?

B: Yes.

P: So he was the great pioneer there.

B: He was a great pioneer.

P: And duPont and Hertey worked together, and that is what brought duPont into this operation. You say there was a paper mill in Panama City?

B: It came in 1931. We encouraged it to come in. We went to Washington to the **Pie Counter** and helped the International Paper Company bring it in. We had a lot of land. See, we sold the paper mill in Panama City a lot of timber.

P: Now, this is before you even know what is going on. You are not a party to all of this.

B: Right. I was not a party to it. I was aware of some goings-on.

P: Well, you are a young man, really. You are almost just out of your teens, in a way.

B: Right.

P: You are not even in college yet when the Panama City [mill opened].

B: I graduated from high school in 1932.

P: Yes. And you say this started in Panama City in 1931. Then how did it get over into this territory?

B: The timberlands. See, we owned the timberlands long before we put the pulp paper mill in.

P: By the middle or the end of the 1930s, how much land do you think the duPont interests had in this area?

B: We did several things here to promote that. First, we bought this railroad.

P: Tell me about that.

B: This railroad runs straight through the Apalachicola National Forest. To get anything in and out of the national forest – he has it all on railroad – Mr. Ball sold 151,000 acres of timberland to start the Apalachicola National Forest.

P: He sold that to the feds?

B: My recollection is, in talking to Ball, he negotiated with the late **Harold Litches**. I believe the Department of Interior had jurisdiction over the national forests instead of the Department of Agriculture. We sold him 151,000 acres of timberland to put with what they had. Now it is 600,000 acres of timberland, and our railroad runs through the center of it. [We shipped our] pulpwood through the national forest right on our railroad siding right into the mill. [It was] cheap transportation.

P: Now, what is the history of the railroad?

B: We bought the railroad from some St. Louis investors, from Colonel Perkins [whom] I alluded to.

P: What was Perkins' first name?

B: I do not recall.

P: But this is a St. Louis operation that comes to Florida and builds a railroad.

B: And the telephone company and acquired timberlands.

P: Where was the telephone company?

B: Here.

P: So it was the Port St. Joe Telephone Company?

B: St. Joe Telephone and Telegraph Company.

P: What was the name of the railroad?

B: Apalachicola Northern Railroad.

P: Do you have a beginning date on the railroad?

B: 1905. I do not know the [beginning date of the] telephone company.

P: This was a group of St. Louis investors?

B: Right.

P: And they were the ones who sold out to Mr. Ball?

B: That is right.

P: And Ball needed the railroad in order to move the pulpwood?

B: Into the operation.

P: And the telephone company just kind of came along with it?

B: Yes.

P: He did not need a telephone company.

B: We have built the telephone company now. We have acquired three other companies, and we are now big in the cellular phone business. That is coming fast.

P: As soon as they reduce the cost of operation I am getting one. The telephone does not cost very much anymore.

B: We are encouraged about the long-term outlook for our communication company.

P: Now, let me go back to the railroad. It never carried anything but freight?

B: It had passengers.

P: It did?

B: Yes. It ran three to five passenger trains a day.

P: And it ran from where to where?

B: They called it then Old River Junction, which is now the Chattahoochee. It connected there with the L & N, which was the Chipley Railroad I am talking about, and then the Seaboard Coast Line coming up from Jacksonville. That was a connecting point.

P: So it starts in Port St. Joe and goes to Apalachicola?

- B: Yes, and then Chattahoochee. There were a number of saw mills up and down the line, a number of naval stores operations up and down the line, farms, and honey operations. [There were] a lot of employees in those mills, and they would come to the coast for swimming. There was a beautiful park here and beautiful swimming facilities [with] bathhouses, piers for diving, beautiful water, and people would come for recreation. As I said earlier, there was quite a bit of interest in sports, [especially] baseball. They would come down for Saturday and Sunday baseball games. They would come right in, step off the train, go to the ballpark, and get back on the train and go home. It was the way to get about. When I stated to you that Mr. duPont put in the bridges, it still was not easy to get in and out of here. To go east – perhaps you may have come that way from Gainesville – you had to take a ferry across the Apalachicola Bay to get to Carrabelle and then on to Perry. That was very difficult.
- P: We came that way. Obviously we did not need a ferry.
- B: No. Now you have the John Gorrie Bridge, the second one. But [there was] deep water here for shipping for export and for shipping coastwise. A lot of our product went up and down the coast to Newark, Philadelphia, and ports up there where it was discharged.
- P: So as I gather, then, you had the beginning of a highway system, the gulf highway here.
- B: The Gulfcoast Highway.
- P: Then you have the railroad, and you also have the ports for shipping. So it was really made-to-order for an operation like a paper company.
- B: [It was] made-to-order. There was one other thing that is very important in the manufacture of pulp and paper, and that is the supply of fresh water. We are using forty to fifty million gallons a day, and we have a good source of good, potable water. It comes from the Chipola River. We dug an eighteen-mile canal from the Chipola River to the mill which supplies us with our fresh water requirements. Additionally, we have wells if we need more. Water coming from the ground has a lot of minerals in it, and it is very difficult to treat. It is very hard on valves and pipes and tubes. So the soft water coming from the springs from the caverns up at Marianna and around and the big springs that feed the Chipola [is good water for our operation].
- P: All right. So you have the natural resources and the transportation, and you have Mr. duPont's money. Now, where did the labor come from? Did this call for a lot of skilled labor?

B: Yes, and we did not have it. The labor came from the paperboard industry, not Kraft, [but] principally from Bogalusa [Louisiana]; Pascagoula, Mississippi; and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. There was a great deal of paper manufactured there from forests. [It was] not necessarily all pine. [Some were] hardwoods in the Pearl River valley and along the streams of the Coosa River, up around Tuscaloosa. It was made there, blended with waste. Those employees there had experience in manufacturing paper, although not from the Kraft process. They came down looking for new fields and were trained and were put in. They came along to be good workers.

P: Now, you had plenty of common labor in this area, did you not?

B: We did. Fisherfolk.

P: And you could hire them? They did not need any special training?

B: No. They did the work on the yards and in the warehouse, loading cars, loading vessels, and that sort of thing.

P: From the beginning did you use both white and black laborers?

B: Yes, from the outset.

P: And they were all covered under the minimum wage law?

B: That is right.

P: Was that a problem, working with the government right from the beginning on labor?

B: No.

P: You never had a problem with the unions that early, did you?

B: No. We had only one problem with the unions. We had a very prolonged strike. But our relationship with all of our employees is excellent. We still employ unions in the Florida East Coast.

P: Well, during the war years did you have a major labor shortage?

B: Yes. Everybody did. We employed a lot of women.

P: Oh, you did bring women into the operation?

B: We sure did. We did it during the war.

P: That is interesting. Where did you get these women?

B: Some locally. We had to train them. [They also came] from the areas [of] Liberty County, Calhoun County, [and] Washington County.

P: Where did you house them?

B: We put in a housing project, the Florida Housing Company. We sold to them with low interest rate mortgages.

P: Of course, women coming in from Liberty County could not commute.

B: Not easily. Of course, there were a lot of wives and daughters of fisher[men] whom we employed.

P: Of course, there was not a large population in this area then.

B: No. Our population then, well, we are 6,000 now.

[break in tape]

B: – started building and construction.

P: Did you have a good political climate here for this?

B: We still do.

P: City and county?

B: We still do.

P: Of course, they were receptive. This was a big payroll.

B: Sure, it was a big payroll, and what did we do? We came in and put in a fine water sewage system for them, [and we] helped them with their schools.

P: You were a positive force in the community.

B: We built up the police department [and] built up the fire department.

P: There were a lot of benefits for the community, obviously, and the main thing was

employment. I was going to say that other than that, there is not much to offer young people here.

B: That is the main thing.

P: Mr. Belin, we were talking earlier about the history of the St. Joe paper mill, and I would like you to develop that story. I think that is an important one for us.

B: The St. Joe Paper Company was founded in 1936. That was a year after Mr. duPont's death. We began operating and manufacturing paper on St. Patrick's Day, 1938. I came to St. Joe in 1938, right after it started operation.

At the outset of our operation we manufactured about 300 tons a day of Kraft paperboard. We continued at that capacity until right after the close of World War II, when we increased the output from 300 tons a day to about 1,200 tons a day.

P: What were your markets from 1938 until the end of World War II? Plus the Lend-Lease, of course.

B: Our markets were all east of the Mississippi River. [We shipped up] the eastern seaboard of the United States, from Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and on to Boston. We [also] exported to the United Kingdom and the Low Countries of Europe, and we had a great portion of the market in Cuba before Castro, during Batista's regime.

P: Was that true up until, let us say, the middle of the 1940s?

B: Yes, that is correct.

P: Did you have a sales office up north?

B: No, it was all handled from Jacksonville and Port St. Joe. We could ship coastwise to those areas for less than five dollars a ton.

P: Were you shipping, though, during the war by railroad?

B: By railroad and coastline. Mostly by rail, because of the shortage of vessels for the war effort and because of the danger offshore. It was very difficult then to ship by rail because there was a shortage of freight cars. Those were all taken for the war effort. But we continued to market into that area until, I guess, the early 1950s.

P: But you greatly expanded your production after 1945.

B: We started doing that in the late 1940s.

P: That is because of an expanding market and an increasing demand?

B: Exactly. And because of tax laws that I alluded to at lunch, a lot of my market was family groups [and] independent converters. The head of the family would be getting old, and because of tax problems and declaring the value of the stock they started merging. We took over some, purchased them outright, and started building. We had to build in our own market. So it was then we got heavy in manufacturing corrugated boxes using our own product. Today we are 100 percent integrated. We had twenty-one box plants, [and] now we have about eighteen box plants that use the entire output of our mills.

P: I gather from what you were saying earlier that you really had to go out, though, and educate the producers to convert over from barrels and wooden containers to this new product.

B: [That is] true. Up until the early 1930s, until the Kraft process came in, the materials made in the construction of corrugated boxes were made from waste papers. It was heavy paper. A corrugated box was extremely heavy, and of course you paid freight on that when you were shipping a commodity in it. Going back to Dr. Hertey, we were working with him and the industry and the Institute of Paper Chemistry and others to put in the Kraft process. We started making high-speed production machinery and making a better product that went into the manufacture of corrugated boxes. It had greater credibility, greater stacking strength, [and] greater puncture resistance. The freight carriers all accepted it, and we were packaging and delivering the commodity without any spoilage or damage, so to speak.

P: It sounds like it was not a terribly hard package to sell to the producers because you had so many positives going for you.

B: It was not the hardest selling job in the world. The hardest job we had in selling corrugated boxes was to get some of them to convert their packaging lines to where they could efficiently fit in. Industry and people are very difficult to change. They become set, and there are precedents and customs they do not like to get away from. But you have to come over and educate them and lead them and show them, and they did come.

Today the market has expanded tremendously. I will have to check the statistics, but I believe here in the United States we are consuming about 600 pounds per person per year. Second is Canada, with less than 400, I believe, and [third is] England, with about 350. Some of the areas like South Africa use one-half pound per person per year. Now they are being taught how to use Kleenex, paper

napkins, paper drinking cups, paper plates, [and] they are learning how to read a newspaper and are getting that, so the usage per capita is increasing tremendously.

P: Does this mean that after the end of the 1940s, into the 1950s, you are expanding your market beyond just the U.S. and Western Europe?

B: Yes.

P: Where were you going? To Africa? Asia?

B: Oh, we went to both Ireland and England. We stayed in the English-speaking world principally, and we stayed where we would have no problems with currency, where you could get your money out and [where there were] no language barriers.

P: Of course, you did Western Europe, the Low Countries.

B: Yes, but that was not too bad. We were into the [European] continent, Ireland and England particularly, up until about ten years ago. We had some advantage there then because we could get our stuff in and were operating there without paying a duty on it, but if a competitor wanted to come in, he had to pay the duty.

P: What about the Latin [American] countries?

B: We stayed away from the Latin [American] countries for this reason: Their governments are not stable. I had looked at Costa Rica – I was impressed with Costa Rica – Ecuador, Colombia, down in there, and I went to the State Department and talked to the group there about going in down there, if they would guarantee our loans and guarantee us against confiscation. Nothing doing. We got to looking at governments and thinking about what could happen, and we stayed away. I think that was a wise choice.

P: It sounds like it was a very wise choice.

B: Witness what the Charter Company got into down in Venezuela. Their oil wells in Lake Maracaibo were taken over. I was impressed.

B: So conservatism, obviously, worked well for the company.

B: It did. Costa Rica had a unicameral system of government; it still does. You recall [that after the bombing of] Pearl Harbor, the first country in this hemisphere to declare war on the Axis [powers] was Costa Rica. Of course, Costa Rica had no army, no navy, no police force. [It] had nothing, but it did declare war on Japan.

Anyway, it was a good, sound, stable government, as Latin American governments go, until [Robert] Bob Vesco [American "fugitive financier" and drug trafficker] got down there. No, we would not make a nickel's worth of investment there.

P: So you are not into the Latin [American] countries today.

B: No.

P: And you have not gone into eastern and central Europe.

B: No.

P: And you are not planning to, obviously.

B: No. I lost my whole market in Cuba.

P: How about West Germany?

B: I think West Germany would be stable, but we are not going abroad anymore. We have too much to do here.

P: I was just going to say that with the expanding American market, you probably have all you can take care of right [here] in the U.S.

B: Right.

P: Are consumers increasing their demand for paper products?

B: Indeed. This year to date, for example, shipments of corrugated boxes is up 5.5 percent against the same period in 1991, which set a record. Kraft paperboard, which is used in the manufacture of corrugated boxes, is up 6 percent over the same period last year. Inventories are low, demand is great, [and] the mills are operating, believe it or not, in excess of 100 percent of capacity. That is a little bit wrong because the capacity is not reported correctly, but new capacity is coming in. It will be taken up shortly.

There is one thing that does give me concern about the change in the paper industry. When I came into it, in order to promote Kraft paperboard [and] Kraft corrugated boxes, I went out with members of the industry to promote new usages. I taught them how to package commodities in paperboard corrugated boxes that never had been packaged before. We did that by giving them a good product, by giving them a box that would carry the goods [and] would protect the commodity from damage and from spoilage.

We are coming back now to where we were a little over fifty years ago when I came into the industry. It is a social movement. The world is changing fast. We are coming here now to right back where we were, making it from waste. Of course, we have advanced greatly. Technological advancements have increased. We have new machinery, new processes [and] ways of doing things. We can make a better commodity from waste, but we are being forced to make it from waste by governments. Municipalities and counties can no longer take care of waste. We have to do something about it. Landfills here in the state of Florida are illegal; they have closed them all now. We cannot burn all of it for energy purposes. We are recycling a lot of solid waste back into the mills. It is an environmental problem that government has the paperboard industry out to solve.

What does that mean to us here? It means that the value of my pine trees for pulpwood purposes, this 1,100,000 acres of timberland that we have, has decreased because now we are permitted to use so much waste, where years back we could not use any waste in our product and call it Kraft. It had to be 100 percent virgin cellulose fiber. So now we are permitted and forced to. We are going to be taxed if we do *not* use a great deal of waste, or we are going to get a tax break for using it, one or the other. We are coming back now to where we are permitted to use, say, 30, 40, [or] 50 percent of our total fiber in the form of waste, blended with 40 to 60 percent virgin cellulose fiber. As time goes on, we will be able to make it and it will be an acceptable product with 70, 80 [or] 100 percent waste.

So we have come right back to where [we] were over fifty years ago. Maybe [we have] lowered the standards a little bit, but it is acceptable. We know more about it. We have better equipment to manufacture it with, greater technology, and [we] know better how to use the waste. So we are doing that.

The market is there for it, and there are fewer paper companies now than twenty years ago. I think there will be fewer, but it is a tremendous industry. It employs a lot of people here in the southeastern states, you know. I guess Georgia leads the nation in the supply of pulpwood from Southern pine. I guess there is more paper made in Georgia than [in] any other state. Here in Florida there are eight paper companies with about ten big paper machines that make a lot of paper, and we are using a lot of pulpwood, and we will be using more and more waste, too.

There are 13 million people here in Florida now, rounded, and the forecast for the year 2000 for the population, with the number of people moving into [Florida] daily – some say 800 persons per day, and others say 900 – is that we are going to have around 16 million. That means we are going to have more solid waste,

and we have to use it. I think paper mills will be using a great deal more. I was trying to see here about some pulpwood. We are doing right now 4 million cords a year. That is a lot of stuff.

P: Mr. Belin, at this time, after World War II, when you move into sales, who is running the St. Joe Paper Company?

B: The duPont interest was 100 percent.

P: This means Mr. Ball was the overseer?

B: Yes, Mr. Ball ran the company. Mrs. duPont was the chairperson.

P: But she was not on a day-to-day basis interested in this.

B: No. Mr. Ball was not involved in day-to-day operations, but he was over all of the operations.

P: Who was in charge of the day-to-day operations?

B: Over here it was [William T.] Bill Edwards. He came to Florida with Mr. duPont.

P: He came to Florida with duPont?

B: Right.

P: From Delaware?

B: He came down from Virginia.

P: They were friends and business associates there?

B: Mrs. duPont and Mrs. Edwards were childhood friends. They went to school together. Bill Edwards married his wife, who was a classmate of Mrs. duPont, and [they] came to Florida.

P: So it was a friendship relationship.

B: Right.

P: Then Alfred I. duPont gets to know Bill Edwards as a result of his wife.

B: That is right.

P: And they obviously liked each other.

B: Yes, it was a great association.

P: And Edwards comes here, then, to Port St. Joe about when?

B: He spent a great deal of his time over here. He did not spend it all here. He was involved in other things. We had a mill manager, superintendents of the pulp mill, [and] superintendents of the paper mill. It was a good organization. It did not require Ball, Edwards, Henry Dew, or anybody like that over here full time. [Henry Dew was Jessie Ball duPont's cousin.] They got daily reports and were in touch daily with the operation, but Ball had the banks [and] the railroads. He had a lot of other things.

P: He had other things, but did he come over relatively frequently?

B: Not frequently. He would come over every couple months.

P: He did not really need to, though. Did Edwards live in Jacksonville? His main office was there?

B: Yes.

P: So he could confer whenever he wanted to with Mr. Ball.

B: Right. He could walk into his office any day. Henry Dew was there. He, too, was a Virginian [like Edwards]. He came to Florida at Mr. duPont's insistence. He worked with Mr. duPont for the St. Joe Paper Company.

P: But I suspect that if there was a change in policy that the real power was at Mr. Ball's desk.

B: That is right.

P: He made the final decisions.

B: Yes.

P: Did the St. Joe paper mill pay its management well? I know Mr. Ball was not an overly generous man, but he was a wise man.

B: Here is the way the thing worked, Doctor. The people in the mill all earned the same rate that the hourly employees made. Supervisors, foremen, and the officers – people like me – were not paid a salary commensurate with others of

our rank and rating in other companies, but that did not bother any of us. To have been associated with Mr. duPont and with Mr. Ball [was enough. We appreciated] what they could do for us through their generosity [and] worked for nothing.

P: What do you mean, generosity?

B: They made things easy for you, investments [and such]. I would come in off the road from being out for a month to Mr. duPont's and Mr. Ball's office. We had a very formal relationship.

P: He was "Mr. Ball" to you?

B: I was "Mr. Belin" to him. He was not one you went up to and got too familiar with. He always stood off a little bit. He was very formal. He would go into his office [at] like 6:00 in the afternoon. His secretary would be there, and he would say, by the way, bring me in that file. I bought something for Mr. Belin while I was away. The secretary would bring the file in, and he would say, I found something that was good for me, and I bought it. I thought it was good for you, so I bought you some. I said thank you.

P: Site unseen, I will take it [laughter].

B: Good stock. I said, okay, I will pick it up. He said, no hurry. I said, I will jump down to the bank while I am here. He said, there is no use to go to the bank. I said, well, you expect to get paid one of these days, don't you? And he said, well, sure, but I might stake you _____. Why don't I just carry it for you? Could you stand 1 or 1.5 percent interest, or something like that?

P: Ridiculously low.

B: Yes. He would not push. He bought real estate site unseen. He said, Florida has only one way to go, one place to go, and that is up. He was always a great booster of this state and was bullish on Florida from the outset.

P: He really took care of his friends, did he not?

B: Yes, he did.

P: Mr. Al Ellis told me exactly the same thing. [See FBL4, University of Florida Oral History Program.] He was a great admirer of Mr. Ball, and it was based upon this kind of generosity.

B: Right. He bought investment properties for peanuts. He bought it himself. He said, do you want to participate, Mr. Belin? I said, yes, I will take participation.

[And he said] all right. I said, Mr. Ball, there is one thing about going into business with you. You do not have to sell. You do not need the money. My money is going to be tied up whenever I do pay you. You are going to run the business, and I am not going to be able to sell until you want to sell. He said, well, there is no use for us to sell right now. Let us get the appreciation. He made so many people rich that way.

P: Of course, he realized you had a mortgage to pay and two sons to raise, and you were not up in his category.

B: Right. Of course, he out-and-out gave me stuff like bank stocks and other stocks during his lifetime. I was his executive.

P: But Mrs. duPont was not as generous to individuals as Ball was, was she? She did not know you, did she?

B: Oh, yes she did. Mrs. duPont was very liberal and was good to me. She gave quite a lot of things to me.

P: You do not get that picture of her [from] reading her biography [*Jessie Ball duPont*, by Richard G. Hewlett].

B: She put people through school.

P: Oh, I knew she was very liberal to colleges [through] scholarships.

B: And she made loans to people to buy homes with and bought homes for people in the company. Ball was extremely liberal, but modest. You would never think it. I think that he did not want to leave the impression there was anything soft or charitable about him.

P: I was going to say, why do you think he comes out with such a mean, penurious image?

B: These are my words, my thinking: To keep panhandlers away, to keep people from coming around always wanting something.

P: So he generates a lot of this himself.

B: He generates a lot himself.

P: Do you think he has gotten a bad deal in history?

B: Yes, I do. It did not worry him. People carried old wives' tales. They did not know him. They just assumed this, and it did not bother him.

P: Everybody I have talked to who knew him like you knew him speaks in a very admiring way of him. [That includes] you, Mr. Ellis, and others who knew him on a day-to-day basis, but the general public considers him a mean son of a bitch.

B: Right. He was not, but the general public did not know him. Mr. Ball was a loner. He was not close to his sister. He liked his freedom. He liked hotel suites; he did not like to be a house guest. He liked to move about any time he wanted to. He did not like to make appointments far in advance. He wanted to be able to move, move, move, and see things firsthand.

One day many years ago I was riding to a farm with him. We were going down to Wakulla subsequently. We left Jacksonville – we drove that time – after lunch. The sun was shining through the window of the automobile, and he got a little drowsy. He awakened over about Lake City or some place and said, Mr. Belin . . .

P: You had a driver?

B: Yes. He said, Mr. Belin, I want you to do a favor for me. I said, out with it. What can I do? Well, he said, we are here together. Let us talk about a few things. I said, what do you have in mind? He said, first, I want you to bury me. I said, no problem. He said, we are down here. I want a place in Wakulla Springs, and I want to be buried there. We talked. We went over. I did not say anything. He could not stand to go around his secretary. (He did not like her.) He could not stand to see a crippled child. He could not stand to see suffering. He would cry like a baby. He would walk away from it. He could not stand to go to a funeral. When he said, how about this pretty spot here, I said it looks pretty nice to me. I had test borings made. You know, it is limestone formation, and there are underwater sinks and springs. I wanted to get beautiful shrubbery planted there. I went back over months later, and he said, I changed my mind. I found a spot I like better. Well, I had to go through the same thing, and I planted shrubbery. He never knew it.

One day we were talking, one night we were together traveling (it may have been in Europe), and I said, you know, your remains will be the only ones there. I do not like to see things desecrated. Something may happen. It may change hands, and nobody is going to look after that stone out there in the country. I am a trustee over your Ball burial ground. There are six generations of Balls buried at Cressfield [the family farm in Virginia], and you have a spot there. I am a trustee. I have jurisdiction over it. Mrs. duPont asked me to serve. He said, I am not going to be buried in Virginia. I gave up Virginia a long time ago. Virginia has no pull for me. I am Florida. He loved Jacksonville better than any other place in the world. He did not like to stay away long from Jacksonville. I digress to tell you if we were in China he kept his watch on Jacksonville time – he never changed it – so he

could look at that watch and think, they are getting to the office. I can call them now. It would be 9:00 in Jacksonville. Anyway, he said, well, you have something there. You may be right. Let me give it some thought. I said sure.

He came back to me one time and said, I have some new ideas. I said, tell them to me. He said, I believe I would like to be buried – he always wanted to go across the creek – there by Mr. duPont and his sister. I said, you want to go the **moors** at **Karen** Tower? And he said yes. He said, do they have some extra crypts in there? I said, oh, sure. He asked, who has jurisdiction over the tower where the crypts are? I said, well, you and me, **Nels Coldaway**. He said, would you have me? I said, I would like to talk to them first and then draw up a resolution [and] get them to adopt a resolution. It should go through easy. He said, will you handle that? So I did draw up a resolution. I buried him and have him up there now.

P: That is where he is buried now?

B: He is buried now up there. He cannot stand suffering. You are from Jacksonville. There was an old boy there who had a newsstand. Do you remember Jake's old newsstand?

P: Jake, of course. I remember.

B: He was a spastic of some kind.

P: Right. Absolutely.

B: Do you remember how crippled old Jake was?

P: Oh, yes. [He had his stand] right off Adams Street on Julia.

B: It was on Julia Street.

P: Julia Street, right down from the George Washington Hotel.

B: It was our habit after we would leave the office and before we went to the apartment to meet guests [to go to Jake's newsstand]. He took a lot of reading material with him home every day. He read it late at night. He wanted to go get *Barron's* [*National Business and Financial Weekly*], [and] he wanted to get out-of-town newspapers. He would say, let us walk over to Jake's. He never would go into Jake's. He could not stand to see Jake.

P: Shaking and all that he did.

B: He would say, would you pick us up this? He would not even go in the place. He

could not stand to see him.

There was one crippled boy who used to come up the elevator up there and bring the *Jacksonville Journal* to the office. Mr. Ball could not stand suffering; he could not stand it at all. Ball was generous to the people, but did not want it known. [He] just could not stand it.

I was in Ireland with him one afternoon. The ambassador called me over at my hotel, and he said, Mr. Belin, can you get your chairman to join us for dinner at Phoenix Park about three or four nights from now? We would like to have you out there. We want to talk to you about some things and get your ideas. I said, yes, let me see the chairman to see if his calendar is clear. He is not in now. Mr. Ball came in that night, and we were having drinks. I said, the ambassador wants us out for dinner about three or four nights from now. He said, what does the ambassador got up? I said, I do not know. He wants to talk to us. He is a very likable person. We like him. Ball said, he has the best wine cellar in Europe and has the best food. Certainly we will go out there. He said, you know they do not allow but two people to live in Phoenix Park, that is, the American ambassador and the president of Ireland, [Eamon] De Valera.

So we did go out. It was an arm-twisting. We talked. The ambassador said, I want you boys to help me. Russia is gaining an influence here in Ireland, and I want to offset it. We have not done the right kind of job here in Ireland of selling us. People like us. They admire John Kennedy [very] much and all that. We want to do some things here and toot our horns a little. I will help fund it personally. [I can] give a lot of books. I have a tremendous library. I want to put a chair in American history here at either Trinity College or the University College [in] Dublin. I want to get your idea about it, and I want you to help me fund it. I want some money from you.

Then he said, I want to have another meeting with you and Mr. Belin, and I am going to have the chairman of Pfizer, the chairman of Gulf [Oil Corporation], and a lot of the pharmaceutical companies that have gone into the Shannon area. And we did have it, and we funded that chair. Ball got carried away.

P: So Ball did not freeze up at the idea of giving money.

B: No. The ambassador talked to me, and he said, what do I call it? [I suggested] the Mary Ball Washington Chair in American History. Ball is a great admirer of Washington. He came from the same group that Mary Ball came from. Ball came to me that night. Always before he went to bed [he invited me to his room for a nightcap and brief discussion]. Our rooms always adjoined, and we had a big parlor. He was a very private man. He never took off his coat. He did not want anybody to come to the office without a coat. He dressed formally. The only time

I ever saw him without a coat was [when,] before we would retire, he would knock on my door or telephone [me], and he would say, do you think we can strike a blow for liberty before we retire? I would say yes, and he would say, come over and we will start pouring. I would go over and have a little brandy, and on that occasion he would take off his coat. He wore detachable collars and always French cuffs. [He was] immaculate.

He said, you heard the ambassador's plea. I said yes. He said, what would you do? And I said, help him. We have to give it to him. He said, well, how can we work it out? I said, you just give him some money. That is the way to work it out. He did it. You would never know. He never said anything about it. He kept it quiet.

P: It is probably not even known today. On the other hand, was he generous to educational institutions or anything like that in the U.S. or in Florida?

B: No. Quite frankly, he was not a religious man. His grandfather was a Baptist minister. But I have been with him. I have seen clergymen do some things in churches during my lifetime, and he has seen them. He would not make any contributions to religious things. He had a strong feeling against most clergymen.

P: But [he did] not [make contributions] to educational institutions, either?

B: He did contribute, I believe, to Cumberland College.

P: Mrs. duPont gave the money for the library at Stetson [University in DeLand, Florida], and she gave a lot of money to [the University of the South in] Sewanee [Tennessee].

B: She gave money to Davidson College [in North Carolina].

P: Yes. But he did not. Except for the enormous fortune that he left for incurable children, there is nothing that bears his name in Florida.

B: No. He was not generous toward educational institutions. The only contribution he gave, I think, was perhaps to Tennessee Cumberland. It has moved now. It is in Birmingham. I think it was taken over. No, he was not particularly generous to educational institutions.

P: Or to anything, really. Was he generous to people below you, to workers?

B: Yes.

P: I mean, it is obvious that he liked you. He considered you to be a good personal

friend.

B: Let me cite you a case. One night my buzzer rang. He was always very nice. He said, are you engaged, Mr. Belin? When you are free, I want to see you. That meant, get the hell in here now. So I went in, and he said, the bank has a problem. I asked, bad loans? What? He said, no, there is a lady here that has been a good employee. She is a junior officer. She has resigned. I said, what is the trouble? He said, her mother fell and broke her hip, and she does not have anybody to stay with her mother to care for her. She is having to give up her job. He would always turn to me and say, what are you going to do about it? I said, that is unfortunate. Can the bank pick it up someplace? That was before all this hospitalization and stuff. I said, you will set a precedent. He said, not necessarily. I said, well, there are ways to do it from somebody's generosity. He said, Mr. Belin, will you pick up the tab for the nursing care and everything for this young lady's mother? I said, yes, send the tab up to me at the bank. I got the tab, and he paid all of her nursing care. Nothing was ever said. He sent people to hospitals and paid for their care.

P: None of that will ever be known because there is no way to document any of that.

B: Right. It is not documented. That is the thing about attempting to write a biography. He did not want to preserve any correspondence. His letters were usually short. His idea was: Do not say too much; you will get your foot in your mouth, and you are just making a living for lawyers if you do. You go through his files and go through all of his correspondence and everything, and it does not disclose a lot of stuff that you would like. It does not disclose that side of him.

P: No. And he would never subject himself to this kind of an interview.

B: He would turn it off.

P: Yes. Now, let me go back and ask you a couple questions about your own career. You move into sales. I would like you to tell me what motivated you to do that.

B: The senior officer in charge of sales retired. I was in St. Louis. Ball liked to promote from within. I had been moving about, selling. I was number-two man in charge of selling. Ball called me on the phone and said, look, I am putting you in charge of sales. I said, well, I will get back down there, and we will sit down and talk about it. He said, no, I have talked about it. You are in charge of sales. I said, okay, I will take it over, but I do not know what all has happened. I want to keep everything kind of clean here. He said, nothing has happened. Take over. Report to me. When I say report to me, I want to know something before it is history. If you sit down and write me, when I get it, it may be too late. I would like to know

what is going to happen before it happens.

He was a man who got out to see things first. We communicated. He would call me at 2:00 in the morning if I were in Chicago [and say], can you give me a report on today's activities? He kept an itinerary on all his responsible people. And we discussed things. I would confirm things, [like] what inventories were and what this company's credit was. We kept up with things.

And he moved in a hurry. He did not want a lot of staff. He could make decisions like Harry Truman. He did not have to have a lot of committee meetings. Nothing was ever too big that he could not handle it.

He did not worry; he never went to bed worried. He always had a solution to things. He was never afraid. He never took a worry home with him. He would take his *Wall Street Journal*, his *Barron's*, and his magazines and go home. He liked to talk to people in the evening for three or four hours over drinks. He would go out and have a good dinner. He loved to discuss politics, business, particularly banking, the events of the day. He liked good amusement. He liked jokes as long as they were clean. He could not stand vulgarisms.

He had no hobbies. He did not care for baseball. He did not care for theater. He liked hunting, and he liked to protect wildlife, particularly migratory game. He set up the Edward Ball Wildlife Foundation [and] funded it out of his pocket. He liked that. He would go to bed and get up in the morning, and everything seemed to work out.

I was in his office one afternoon when we had the strike on the FEC [Florida East Coast Line Railroad]. Willard Wirtz was secretary of labor [1962-1969]. The secretary called him and said, Mr. Ball, I would like for you to come up to my office and sit down and negotiate this thing with us. He said, Mr. Secretary, I am not coming. My quarrel is here in Florida. I am not coming to your office to be subjected to the pressures of your office. I will extend every courtesy to you, Mr. Secretary, if you were to come down here and talk to me in my office, [but] I am not going. He did not.

P: Did Wirtz accept the invitation?

B: No, he did not. I had bought for the company a number of container plants, box plants – we had to expand – and I acquired three or four from Continental Can Company. [U. S.] General Lucius Clay was chairman. In acquiring these box plants and under the negotiations and under the agreement, I agreed to take for a certain number of years some of the Kraft paperboard from Continental Can to run through that plant so they could reschedule their production. [The agreement was] under certain terms. Well, Continental broke those terms, and I sued them.

[Ball actually sued them].

General Clay came down to Savannah to talk to Ball. He said, Mr. Ball, I am in Savannah, and I would like to fly down to see you. [Ball] said, General, we are in the courts. I would like to settle things with you in the courts. I am not going to have any out-of-court settlement. My view is that you are generally guilty of breach of contract. You do not get down here and get with those lawyers and get some hearsay. Let us meet in the courts and see what decision comes out of that. He said, General, I will not see you. Well, Lucius Clay thought everybody should jump over him when he called.

P: He was the commander-in-general.

B: That is right. Ball said, I will not see you, and [he] did not. We did go to court. General Clay said, let me get out of this thing. I want to settle. I was in New York, and Ball was in Spain. He called me and said, I am coming in. Wait for me. I did wait for him. He came in and said, how are things going? Have you been testifying? I said, Mr. Ball, the general wants to settle. We can get good terms and good conditions for him. Here is our counsel, Mr. Justice **Peck**. He was with the Sullivan **Cromwell** firm. He had been a judge. [I said,] the judge says we can do this, Mr. Ball. [Peck] said, Belin and I have been up here for days [doing] this and that. I will not make any recommendation to you. I will just tell you what it is, and you can tell me what you want to do. So we talked and talked.

Ball looked at me, and I said, I think we ought to go ahead. We are coming out way in front. We are out of the agreement. They violated it. So we settled. [Ball] said, Judge, you know the other side pays you. He said yes. [Ball] said, have you stipulated your fee? He said no. [Ball] said, they are going to settle, and your fee is a part of the settlement. Let me suggest to you that you give it some thought. We sat around talking about the fee. The judge said, well, I was thinking about this. Ball said, wait a minute, Judge. I thought you had done a lot of hard work here, and I think you ought to be compensated. Since the other crowd is paying, you are too lenient [laughter]. He said, why not stipulate something more reasonable? Come on up, he told the judge. [The judge said], the court will not approve that. Ball said, Judge, have you asked the court yet? He said, no. Ball said, ask the court. The court paid it! The judge came up and said, Mr. Ball, I am flabbergasted. I never thought they would approve it. [Ball] said, ask and you shall receive.

P: Of course, Mr. Ball was also trying to get back at that other side.

B: That is right. But he was kind and generous and liberal. He did a lot of things he would never mention [or] never say anything about.

P: Were you his closest confidante in the business?

B: I think in the paper company, yes.

P: Not in banking and not in the railroad.

B: The Apalachicola Northern, yes. I guess as officer and, I guess, in all of the activities, I was his greatest confidante. I did not get in day-to-day operations in the Florida East Coast Railroad. He would talk to me about things.

P: Did he ever talk to you about his personal problems, or did he separate his personal life from his professional life?

B: He separated them.

P: So you knew nothing at all [of his personal problems]. He never discussed them.

B: Well, he talked to me about his youth, his childhood. He held his father and mother in such great awe and respect. He talked about his father, Captain Ball, quite a bit.

P: I bet he did not talk very much about his wife.

B: No, he never said anything against Ruth. He talked about Ruth and when he was married. Well, knowing Mr. Ball and being closely associated with him, he could not have been an ideal husband.

P: She said it was pure hell in the divorce settlement.

B: Well, you saw the marriage contract, did you not?

P: No, I have not seen that.

B: Have you [read] Raymond Mason's book?

P: I have it. Raymond sent it to me.

B: When you go out and stipulate a contract of that kind, you are starting off wrong. That is a give-and-take situation.

P: And she hated him to the end.

B: Why the hell did she marry him?

P: And she brought those charges against the poisoning long after his death.

B: She worked for him in Mount Vernon. They were married in the Carlton Hotel.

P: In Washington?

B: Yes, sir. It was then the Carlton. Now it is the Sheraton-Carlton. They were married there. Mr. duPont was there [and] Mrs. duPont. They kind of did a little bit of matchmaking. They were Cupid there, that sort of thing. But if you read the marriage agreement where you can have these guests on these afternoons at this time, no mail, I can have these, and we are going to have certain evenings together – it will not work [laughter]. It is a give-and-take situation.

P: It was not a real marriage, then.

B: No. It cannot work that way. He wanted his freedom. He wanted to move about. I always believed this and still do: he admired women very much. He thought that feminine beauty was the greatest work of art there ever was. He told me, if you see [a] lady dressed in a gown and gloves, immaculately coiffured, that is the most beautiful thing in the world. On the other hand, if they come around in blue jeans, that ruins it. But he admired them greatly. Mr. Ball, in my judgment, always felt a little bit ill at ease around ladies. He was so polite.

P: He was a courtly man.

B: Courtly. He could not stand vulgarisms. If anybody told anything off-color around a lady, he thought it was terrible. He stood – a man of ninety-three years old – when a – young girl came into the office. He never wore a hat around a lady. If one would come up, off came his hat. He never got on the elevator first [and] never got off the elevator first. At dinner he wanted you to be served first; he wanted you to get what you wanted first before he ordered his. He did not want you to follow him, because there were a lot of things he would not eat or drink. He had some peculiarities, but he was courtly and was extremely nice around ladies and very attentive to them, where they were seated and that sort of thing.

P: Did he like children?

B: No, he felt ill at ease around children. He said he always wanted children, but I do not know what would have happened with children. He did not know what to do around children and really preferred not to have them around. They got in his way when he wanted to talk with a judge or a banker or somebody, and he would not know what to do.

P: Ruth was, from her pictures, a very good-looking woman.

B: Oh, he said that. He told me repeatedly she was a very beautiful woman. Look what he did there. I think he asked for an annulment originally instead of a divorce. Judge Roberts represented him. He has the whole story.

P: And they were married [for] nine [or] ten years.

B: About ten years. They did not live together ten years. [They were married,] I believe, [from] 1934-1944, but they did not live together. I think he had a place in Wauchula he wanted. He was not going to stay in Wauchula, but I think he envisioned that he and Mrs. Ball would stay there part-time. But Mr. Ball was going to travel. He was going to get back to that Jacksonville mess.

He was a strong individual. He had peculiarities galore. He never drank water; he would not touch water. He would drink soda or club water, but if he had to take medication, a pill, he would not go to a spigot. He would not touch the stuff. He never drank coffee in his life.

P: Tea?

B: Hot tea. [He] never drank a *Coca-Cola* in his life. He did not care for it.

P: Did you ever meet Ruth?

B: I met her one time. We were coming from Jacksonville to Tallahassee, and we had gone down [on the train]. It was our habit to get a bedroom on the train.

P: You are talking about you and your wife?

B: Mr. Ball and I. We had the bedroom set up. We would have a table put in and had set-ups there. Here came one of the attendants with a note. It was for Mr. Ball. We had not left the station. [Ball said], my God, that is my wife over here. She has seen me board. That is Ruth. He went to see her, and I went down and met her. That is the only time I met her. She was going down to New Orleans or someplace on the train, and we just got together. That was just a coincidence.

P: Is she now deceased?

B: I do not know.

P: She was still living in 1985 when the article came out. [Christine Donahue, "The Death of Alfred I. duPont – A Postmortem," *Forbes* 400, Oct. 28, 1985, 62-68. The article alleges that Alfred I. DuPont was poisoned.]

B: I do not know.

P: She has to be a very old lady if she is living.

B: She called me after Mr. Ball's death. She was very gracious and very generous. I am paraphrasing here now. She said, Mr. Belin, I have heard a great deal about you. I have heard much. Frankly, I had trained myself not to like you. I just want to make up my mind that I do not want any part of you and do not like you at all. I do not recall ever meeting you. I may have, besides the little time on the train. I said, well, I am sorry about the impression I have made. She said, well, I am wrong, and I wanted to call you to tell you. I am now convinced after talking with people that you are not the type of man I envisioned. You are not that kind of person. She was a genuine sort of a person, and she mostly wanted to say, I would like to ask your forgiveness for what you did not know that I thought about you [laughter].

P: Well, that was very gracious.

B: She was. She said, I think I am wrong. I think she said, I would like to meet you sometime and talk to you. But yes, she did call me, and I think she was a very gracious person.

P: Now, according to my figures, you were director of sales from 1949-1956.

B: I carried on. I was vice-president in charge of sales on up until 1968. That is when I became president.

P: Did you start in 1949?

B: Yes.

P: What were you doing? You were not still doing the testing bit.

B: No, I was out of that. I was strictly selling merchandise.

P: You were already selling, and in 1949 you became Director of Sales. That meant that you were traveling a great deal.

B: Right.

P: You had family, though.

B: I did.

P: It must have been hard on your family, your being away.

B: It was. I had one son [Jacob, Jr.], and then another son came along in early 1953 [Stephen]. It was hard on my wife, but she was the type of person who could do things. She was not totally dependent on my being around. I missed being with them. It was not easy then to pop home like you can now.

P: Oh, yes. You did not have airplanes and all.

B: That is right.

P: Where were you all living then?

B: Here. Ball did not like that coming home over the weekend. He liked for you to stay out and work. Do not come home Friday night and go back Monday morning. He did not like that. It was difficult, but selling is easy. It is a pleasant thing. It is not hard. If you have a product that is comparable to your competitors' and your terms are the same (credit conditions) [and] your delivery schedules [are similar, it is easy to sell]. When you are selling, [you must] be able to say, I know I cannot do it. You have to be honest and honorable, and you have to admit at times – rather than go out and sign somebody up on a contract – that you are not able to do it. Just say, I am sorry, I would like to do it, but I cannot meet those [terms] and I would be kidding you if I do it. There will always be a time when you can come back and have a chance again – at somebody else's expense, somebody else's hardship, somebody else's misfortune. You just have to be a little patient, and you will be sure to get your foot in the door. Then when you get in there, do not mislead anybody. They may not like it at first, but they are going to come back. Sometimes the customer will get in trouble, and you will want to help them. You will lean over backwards to help them. [But] sometimes you have to say, look, there is no way I can do it. If you tell them you are going to do it and then cannot do it, he is in more trouble. But you can bide your time and be cordial and honest with them.

We had a sales contract – it was Ball's idea – with every comma in there, every period, same price, same conditions, same terms to all. When you start deviating you will get in trouble with the Sherman Anti-Trust Act or something like that, so we did not. I just said, look, fellows, we get along good. I want your business, [but] I cannot do it.

I told you I had everything in Cuba. I had the most pleasant relationship over there. I said, now, fellows, look. I can ship you from my docks at Port St. Joe to Mariel, and you will have your stuff in forty hours. [I can] give you what you want from your machines. I can give you the latest technical knowledge and can keep you abreast of developments in the industry. [I can] come down and bring technicians with me. I am not a great engineer, but I will do that. They said, we want to know what is happening, so I would visit with them. I would spend one day with a customer. You do not pop in for two hours; that is discourteous. You

give them the whole day. [We were] strict on credit. I said, now, look. You have to put money up, and the bank on my side [will issue an] irrevocable letter of credit [detailing] our terms and conditions in the Bank [of] the United States. They said, those terms are a little hard. I said, I do not think so. They said, we do not mean it is unreasonable to put money up for a bank, Mr. Belin, [but] our relationship has been with the Bank of Newfoundland up in Canada. We have had a relationship there for years. We can put it up there for you. I said, all right, that is agreeable. We collect an on-board bill of lading before you get the stuff. I went over there one time. It was in 1951, Eisenhower was running against [Adlai] Stevenson. They wanted to know some information about sugar quotas; they were interested in that. I went over and talked with them. I attended meetings with them.

One of my customers published the South American edition of *Time*, and he said, I am being paid so many hundred dollars an hour. The whole press has stopped to put a story in there. He said, I have two stories made up here, one Stevenson and [Estes] Kefauver and one Eisenhower and Nixon, and it is just terrible to sit here. I can press those buttons and get those stories out. Sit down and talk to me about this thing and what button I should press. I said, which do you want to press? You get so much an hour for holding. He said, I want to get this thing out. I said, press that Eisenhower button, and he did. Of course, we were lucky.

But he stuck with me. He would not let anybody else come in. I used to go down to his farm. He raised "peenapples," as they called them – pineapples – and sugar and all that kind of thing. They were good people. I had every bit of their business, and I could get it back today.

Castro is not there long. When Castro goes out it is going to help us in the paper business. But we are in the sugar business [also], and it is going to hurt the sugar business. I think we will give Cuba sugar quotas, and I think it will hurt the sugar business. But that is another story.

P: Let me go back to this earlier story of you. How did it happen [that] you got into local politics and became the mayor of Port St. Joe?

B: Well, I have always been interested in politics, [because of] my Washington background. I was very active and instrumental in the Jaycees. That was a very active organization some years ago. I was an officer in the state organization and the head of it here. While in chambers of commerce and then the Jaycees, you are not supposed to get politically motivated. You do, invariably. There the state Jaycees was made up of politicians. Legislators came from there, governors came out of there, and sheriffs and all got involved in it. I was interested in politics when I was a kid in high school. We got one of our chaps here to run for the legislature when he was not quite old enough to run, and [he] was elected. I

knew Fuller Warren.

P: He was not old enough to get elected, either.

B: I knew Fuller Warren when he was in Blountstown. I campaign-managed for Dan McCarty [Florida governor, 1953]. I was close to Dan. I worked for George Smathers [U.S. senator from Florida, 1950-1968]. I used to go here in the park. I remember Claude Pepper [U.S. senator from Florida, 1937-1951] ran.

P: 1944. He ran against Ollie Edmunds.

B: No, [that is] not what I am thinking about. Charles Francis **Soccer Coe** ran [for U.S. Senator in 1940]. Bernarr Macfadden [unsuccessful politician and editor of *Physical Culture* magazine] ran [in the same primary], did he not?

P: That is right.

B: I saw old Claude walk out here. He got off of a pick-up truck. The crowd was about 150. He made one of the best speeches you ever heard. Charles Francis **Soccer Coe** came into the bay down here on an amphibian plane from Palm Beach. He landed in the bay, taxied up on the beach, and got out and walked to the park. He had a big gold ring on, a big diamond. [He was] spellbinding. It interested me. I went to the University of Florida homecoming years ago. Back then, freshman games were on Friday afternoon.

P: Right. I remember that.

B: And then the big games were on Saturday.

P: Right.

B: Well, at halftime of the game Fuller Warren was going to make a speech like a student there. Now, is he not a hell of an entertainer? But Fuller did. It was not bad. It was entertaining. When my father had this naval stores place down near Wauchula, his friend was _____. You know [him], do you not?

P: Yes.

B: His brother Charlie was sheriff of the county. They were big friends. Old Jim Lee, former Comptroller [1933-1945], was my neighbor in Avon Park.

P: So you had politics in your blood.

B: Oh, yes. I knew it all the time. I was trying to think of the governor's name before

Martin.

P: Hardee.

B: Cary Hardee [1921-1925]. I knew Cary Hardee. He used to come fish with my father a lot. He would come up here. I liked Cary Hardee. I believe he represented Sidney Catts in one of his court scrapes or something. Cary Hardee was a delightful person to be head of the government. My father knew all of those people, and I knew them and was around them. I enjoyed it. Of course, I was older when I got to Washington there in the early to mid- 1930s. But walking around Capital Hill, where I was there [with] heads of state [was something I enjoyed]. I would go up to the Supreme Court for lunch.

Let me tell you a little story. I was going over to lunch one day at noon, and a fraternity brother of mine worked in old "Cotton" Ed Smith's office, Senator Ellison D. Smith [from South Carolina, 1909-1944].

P: Roosevelt tried to get rid of him.

B: He hated Roosevelt with a passion. Cotton Ed was a son of a minister. He wanted to be Secretary of Agriculture, and Roosevelt would not go [for it]. Roosevelt tried to purge him.

P: In 1938.

B: It did not work. Well, I was going to meet my friend from South Carolina in Cotton Ed's office. He worked in there. I walked into the office, and the senator was back in his room on a big leather couch stretched out. The bell rang. That meant the Senate was going in session. We used to get on that trolley. The bell rang, and Old Cotton got up [and said], what does that old crippled son of a bitch want with us today [laughter]? His boy's name was Dave McCloud.

P: Now, he is talking about Franklin Roosevelt as the "crippled son of a bitch"?

B: Yes, Franklin Roosevelt. Dave McCloud's uncle [Thomas McCloud] was governor of South Carolina. Senator Smith said, McCloud, is that your friend from Florida? He said, yes, sir. [Smith] said, ask him to look in on me. So I looked in. He said, I want you to do a favor for me. I said, what is it, Senator? He said, take this goddamn book out of this office. I asked what it was. He said, it came from your new junior senator. I want no part of that son of a bitch, Dr. Claude Pepper. Why did you send that liberal son of a bitch up here? The book is John Perry's [and Frank Stockbridge's] book *So This is Florida*. Claude put in there, "To my honorable, esteemed colleague, Senior Senator from South Carolina, Ellison D. Smith, from the junior senator from Florida." I have the book.

P: You have the book?

B: I have that book with that in there [laughter]. He said, get that damn book out of here.

One day a copywriter [and I] were going over, and he said, I have to go by the vice-president's office. (They are in the same office building.) [He said, I need] to drop off something there that the secretary wants. We went over, and he said, here is the book that I was asked to bring over. I think it is for the Vice-President. She said, put the book down. He said, yes, ma'am. Sign for it, will you please, ma'am. She said, you sign for it. [He said,] you do not want me to do that. She said, well, just leave it here then. He said, I have to get this thing negotiated right. [She said,] it will be all right. He said, whose name do you want me to sign down here? [She said,] just sign it Mrs. John Nance Garner [Roosevelt's vice-president, 1932-1939] and get on out of here. That was Mrs. Garner sitting there, see? We had lots of fun.

P: You were not drafted or anything to be mayor, then.

B: Right. Ball encouraged me.

P: He encouraged you?

B: Yes, Ball encouraged me.

P: I thought he would say you were taking time away from the business.

B: Well, Ball thought people could manage anything. He worked all the time.

P: And he figured everybody else worked.

B: Holidays meant [nothing] to him. He did not know when Thanksgiving came around and did not care. They did not mean a thing to him.

P: So did you have any opposition?

B: Oh, yes, tough opposition. I won it in the first primary. I had three terms. I did not run any more than that. I was getting a little bit tired.

P: You were getting politics out of your blood.

B: To tell you the truth of the story, for years I was president of St. Joe's Land Development Company, which owns 100 percent of the stock [of St. Joe Paper

Company]. I am still chairman of the executive committee. **Hyde** put in the water system here and borrowed money from the St. Joe Land Development Company. I went in, was elected and took over, and the St. Joe Land Development Company called the loan. That was a lot of money for the city. I did not have the money to pay it. I called Ball and said, look, this is a little difficult. He said, well, why not float some certificates of indebtedness? I said, you have to get those approved by the courts. He said, well, get them approved. So I went to the [Florida] Supreme Court, to Judge B. K. Roberts [Florida Supreme Court, 1949-1976; three terms as Chief Justice], and got them approved. [I went back to Ed Ball and] said, I got them validated now and everything. I have to sell them. He said, do you have a market? I said, not yet. He said, take them over to the bank. I bet they will buy them. He called the bank and said, Belin is coming over. Pick it up. I had trouble at the hospital. Credit was bad, and I did not get that. I had to have some money.

P: This is the Port St. Joe Hospital.

B: Yes. People were coming around, and I put out some bids on some things. I had to have some money. I called him and said, I thought you were going to have some bids in over here for me. It is a competitive situation; you have to bid. I have some things here to sell. I have to pay off some of this debt. He asked, what was that? I said, oh, it sure did slip my mind. He said, have you got kidney trouble? I said no. He said, why not develop a cough or some kidney trouble? I will give you about fifteen minutes.

I stalled and filibustered, and after a while he came [back with the] president of the bank. I acknowledged the president and asked him if he had any remarks to make to the city council. He said he wanted to place a formal bid. He did not know what he was bidding on. The bonds gave me a premium, good interest rate. [We] paid it off, and he called me back and asked, who got the bid? I said, you are the lucky guy. He said, how many people rushed over there to bid? I said, you know, you are the first one in line. He laughed and said, I thought so. But he had a good sense of humor.

I was barging in one night to Columbus, Ohio. [It was] late. I was off the itinerary schedule. I had flight problems. Back in those days a DC3 was the big [carrier]. I came into the [motel] about 2:30 in the morning. The phone was ringing. The night clerk said, maybe this is Mr. Belin coming in now. Are you Belin? I said, yes, I am a little late. He said, okay, there is a phone call for you. I said, can I take it over [at] your desk here? He said sure.

[It was] Ball. He said, how about pitching in with me? I said, what is going [on]? He said, I have a little business over in Tangiers, over in Morocco. We have a syndicate going over there, three or four people and you and me and some good

friends of ours. We are going in. I said, what are we in? He said, this little matter. I said, you mean we are doing business with the Arabs? He said, exactly. I said, you are pretty shrewd, but you have to learn something to do business with the Arabs. He said, do not worry. I said, I thought when we were over in Italy we talked to the American ambassador, and they advised us not to go into an international settlement. It is going to be short-lived. He said, he did, but he may be a bureaucrat and not know what he is talking about. I said, well, let me look at that thing. I have been out on the road. I have a family. I have to get back home. I will have to go to the bank to make arrangements to pick up this stuff. He said, you have to make up your mind in a hurry. We do not want to wait around.

I came back in. The bank called me, we have something down here for you to pick up. I asked what it was. They said, what do we know? We cannot read it. It is in Arabic" [laughter]. I said, well, will you lend me any money on it? They said, we do not lend money on anything we cannot read. We will give you some of their currency if you will take that. I said, all right, I will pick it up. I did, and we were in business.

P: Just like that.

B: We bought bonds, [and] we bought real property. It was a holding company. The bourbon sessions were over there. Of course, the Arabs are not supposed to drink, but they do. He was buying gifts though. You see, there were a number of gift shops. He had Mount Vernon, Wakulla Springs, Edgewater Gulf Hotel in Mississippi, the **La Conchia** in Key West, and one in Miami. [He was] buying up gifts and things like that, and we were in business, doing well.

Things did change, and our Arabs ran us out of business. We liquidated. I made more quick money on the liquidation. Most of our assets were liquid, except for the real property. That was in the United States.

P: It sounds like Ball made a lot of money for you over the years.

B: Sure.

P: That was the kind of thing he was doing.

B: [He would say], look here, we have a good bunch of guys. Why not come in with me?

P: I want to clear these dates with you, Mr. Belin. First of all, I have you from 1949-1956 director of sales, from 1956-1968 vice-president . . .

B: I was still over sales when I was vice-president.

P: Okay. And then 1968 as president.

B: Right.

P: Now, what do you mean, vice-president? Vice-president of what?

B: I was vice-president in charge of marketing.

P: Of the St. Joe Paper Company.

B: And the St. Joe Container Company.

P: Okay. By the way, each of these things are upping your income? You are making more and more money?

B: Sure. I never asked for a raise in my life.

P: It just came?

B: It just came.

P: What was an income for a man in your executive position in the 1950s?

B: Well, in the 1950s it was \$70,000 a year.

P: That was a lot of money.

B: Damn right, it was.

B: That was a lot of money by comparison with 1992 dollars.

B: Ball did not take a salary.

P: What did he do?

B: He had his own personal businesses [and] put all the money back in that. He had a terrific income. He did not take any money out of St. Joe. Finally one of our tax boys said, you have to take a little something for this. I think he took like \$18,000 a year.

P: So he paid for his own expenses, which sound like they were not exorbitant at all, out of his own personal income. I notice he left an estate of about \$75,000,000.

B: It is worth more than that. Mr. Ball never inflated a statement. His assets were always shown at cost, not at market.

P: I see. So it would be way up.

B: You see, I was executor of his estate. He gave me a lot of stuff before he died. [He said in his will,] leave Belin nothing. He has been pretty well taken care of. He did take care of me, and he left a lot of real property that he bought and never did see. Somebody would call him on the phone, and he would say, how much water does it have on top of it? They would say, it does not have any. He would say, how high is it above sea level? If it does not have any water on top of it, I will buy it. And he did.

All of those now have gone into the Nemours Foundation under the provisions of his will. We have not yet sold off all of those properties. What they were valued at, at the time of his death, and what I have subsequently sold stuff for and can sell other stuff for, has greatly appreciated.

P: Was his tax bill, then, giant?

B: Yes.

P: If he had been a little more generous in giving, it might have been less.

B: Oh, he could have done lots of things. He just hated to pay taxes.

P: And yet he did. Every year he paid taxes.

B: I encouraged him, why not go into tax-exempt bonds? You love Florida. You can buy state, municipal, county bonds, good-rated bonds, full faith and securities. You do not have to pay taxes on them. I do not know why he would not do it. In the company and in the banks, he bought bonds. He bought bonds for the McArthur Causeway. He bought bonds for the Orange Bowl. He could do those things. I went abroad with him. He had a little bit of disillusion about these United States. He wanted to change his citizenship.

P: That is strange.

B: After being from a family who had been a vital part of America . . .

P: From the beginning.

B: From the beginning. He got disillusioned [about] taxes, bureaucracy, and a lot of immigration and race things.

- P: About when was this? The 1950s? The 1960s?
- B: The late 1950s – 1956, 1957, 1958.
- P: He was unhappy, and she was too, about integration.
- B: Yes, he did not like it at all.
- P: She did not like it at all.
- B: He did not, either.
- P: She cut off her support of any educational institution that integrated, even though they were forced to by the courts.
- B: Well, Ball saw it coming, and even if he had been inclined to give, he would not have given them a nickel because of integration.
- P: Where did he want to transfer his citizenship to?
- B: Well, we went to Ireland. He bought the castle and lived there. Then we went to England. We talked to people there [such as] the American ambassador to England. We went to Gibraltar, and he was impressed. I said, Mr. Ball, let us talk about it. I know how you feel about the United States. I know how you are thinking, [but] I am not agreeing with you. He tried to get me to move with him. Of course, I did not want to. I said, you are going to think this, but that is the best one yet, Mr. Ball, the best place yet and it is deteriorating. (It was.) That is best, [and] you are going to come over here. We do not know everything here yet about these tax laws. Wait till we get through over here. He said, Mr. Belin, I think we can do it. I said, yes, but wait, wait, wait. I think we went out to Downing Street, Number 10. We were told when we talked to the heads of Her Majesty's government [that] you had to live ten years after you had established residency, and Ball was afraid of that.
- P: Was Ball anxious to do this because of a tax situation?
- B: Tax and, principally, integration.
- P: Because integration was coming everywhere.
- B: Well, not in Ireland. When we first went to Ireland there were 240-something blacks in the whole Republic of Ireland.
- P: It was not like Jacksonville.

B: [The blacks] were principally in the ligations; [they were in] embassies of South African countries and some others. That is where they were. But they were not [everywhere]. You did not see blacks over there.

P: You know, another thing that comes across always with Mr. Ball is the fact that he was supposedly a super-patriot, strongly in favor of all the traditional American values.

B: He was not in favor of mixing the races and integration. He did not associate with them, did not say anything about them, did not recognize them.

P: Was this true of other ethnic groups?

B: No. More particularly blacks, although I think he would feel that way [about] Puerto Ricans or Jamaicans.

P: Was he anti-Semitic?

B: No.

P: You never get that kind of a feeling from anything you read about him at all.

B: No, he was not anti-Semitic.

P: Just blacks.

B: Just blacks. He had good friends who were Jewish people.

P: Maybe this came out of his strong Virginia background.

B: There is no question about it.

P: How did it happen that you became president in 1968?

B: Ball had some heart attacks, and he had been looking for somebody to take over. We had been together for years. We had traveled together. I was down in the Keys bonefishing, and he went down to Miami [and] over to Flamingo for one of his wildlife meetings. He called me and said, I am going back to Jacksonville tomorrow afternoon. He gave me his flight number. Can you join me? We will ride up together in the plane. I said, yes, I will come on in. And I went on in. [There were] five or six or seven people with the wildlife foundation on there, and I got on there. I noticed this musical chairs. Somebody would come sit by me and move, and somebody else would come plop in there. I did not say anything, but I

thought, this is kind of funny.

P: This is on the flight?

B: On the flight. [I thought], something is going on here. We got to Jacksonville and went on up to our hotel suite. Mr. Ball said, are you engaged for dinner? Let us have dinner. I want to meet with you. We did not talk about anything in particular.

He never ate breakfast. He said, are you having breakfast in the morning? I said yes, and he said, I believe I will join you for some grits. He came down, and we talked. He still did not say anything [except] who are you having lunch with? I said so-and-so, and he said, I will join you. I want to talk to you about something. Nothing particular came up.

We went back over to the office and were having a meeting of the directors at 2:00 p.m. I called my wife and said, something is going on over here. It is very funny. It is odd. No matter what you hear or what happens, do not let it upset you. You do not have to worry. Neither do I. [I am] being looked at strangely, kind of hands-offish, and people are coming around a little bit afraid to say anything. I do not know what is coming on, but do not worry.

I was talking to Ball, and here came one of the directors. He said congratulations. I said thank you. I did not know what he was talking about. Ball called the meeting.

P: This is in Jacksonville, now, at the bank building?

B: Yes. [Ball] came in and said, because of old age [and] numerous infirmities – losing memory, general incompetency – I believe it is time for you fellows to name my successor. We want somebody who is young, somebody who is aggressive, somebody who knows the real world, somebody who has been on the firing line. I would like for him to come in and take over.

P: There must have been great silence in the room.

B: It was already set up.

P: I know.

B: Somebody got up and nominated me. [Ball] pushed back the chair and said, Mr. Belin, here is the chair. You take over. It is your company.

P: Just like that?

B: I think he fully intended to say something to me [when he asked], would you join me for dinner? Let me have breakfast with you. He never did. Of course, I was not prepared. I did not have an agenda. I was not prepared to meet the press. But you could always improvise, and I did.

Sometime during the afternoon after the meeting I walked into his office, and he said: I am glad you came in. I would like to see for a few minutes. Furthermore, I would like to ask a favor of you.

P: You are the president now.

B: Yes. We had a good rapport. I said, I am not very inclined to hand out a lot of favors right now [laughter]. Well, he said, I want to get my request in. I asked, what is it? He said, I want you to give me a job. I want to hold on. Would you let me handle real estate transactions? I said, now, wait a minute. Do you know a great deal about real estate? Can you learn? He said, no, but I am learning fast. I said, I don't know where you got your training from, but I am willing to give you a chance providing you will do this. If you will make the same mistakes you have been making for the last thirty-five years, it is your job. He said, thank you, I will accept it. I said, now, let us talk about pay. There will be not much compensation [laughter].

P: It is the honor of it.

B: He said, I understand. Thank you. I said, let us talk further. I have roots in St. Joe, family over there. I can jump on a plane and be over here. Where do you think I ought to live? He said, wherever you want to put your hat is all right. You can live in New York, St. Louis, Detroit, St. Joe, Jacksonville. Anywhere you want to be. I said, I am going to stay in Port St. Joe. He said, we own the telephone company. We can be communicating. We had a great rapport, and it worked for him.

P: And your wife was satisfied to stay in Port St. Joe?

B: Yes. I tell you these little stories. He did not make loans to churches.

P: He did not make loans?

B: To churches. He told me repeatedly, now, there are only two denominations that pay off bank loans. The Mormons are one of them, and the Catholics. Father has ways of twisting arms. Father can say, "I will not consecrate that six feet," or, "You cannot take communion," and they will come around and pay the loan. But the Mormons are just good stewards. We lend to the Mormons.

Well, I went down to make a church loan. One church called me and said, do you have a relationship with the bank? We want to make a loan. Will you represent us? I said, give me your balance sheet [and] statement. I went down to Jacksonville. I had a lot of fun with it. I went to the loan committee and said, look, guys – I knew every one of them – I want to make a church a loan. They said, get out, Belin. Get out. I said, wait a minute. This is a good loan, I think. At least they tell me it is. They have given me a statement, and they are going to make some pledges and promises. That is all you need, isn't it? They said, Mr. Belin, you know our policy about lending to Baptist churches. I said, okay, I think you guys fish on Sunday, all of you. I do not believe any of you belong to a church, and I strongly suspect none of you is going to heaven [laughter. I said, I know you guys. Would it offend you if I went over your head? They said, offend us, Mr. Belin. Please do. Please do. I said, okay, be up on the eighth floor in twenty minutes, right outside Mr. Ball's office.

I went on up to Mr. Ball and said, you know, Mr. Ball, you have a group down there in that bank coordinating loans. They are never going to get to heaven. They just do not know how to make good loans. He asked, what is the matter with them? I said, I talked to them about a Baptist church loan, and they do not think favorably of it, so I thought I would appeal to you. He said, they are showing good judgment. I said, now, look. Those people over there at those churches all work for us. They pray for management religiously. They are on our team. My goodness, let us go ahead and help these people. He said, well, go talk to the loan committee. I said, they are a bunch of heathens, Mr. Ball. They will never get to heaven the way they look at a church loan. I thought I would get you to talk to them on my behalf. He said, I will. I said okay. I opened the door, [and] they came in. I said, here they are, Mr. Ball. He laughed and said, you stacked the deck on me. Belin has been talking to you about poor loans? Yes. Did you make him a loan? No. Did he give you any security? Yes, he told us he would leave us some Bibles and tell us about the Gospel [or] something like that. Ball said, fellows, I have never asked you to show poor judgment. I never asked you to deviate from any set rules. But if I close my eyes and swallow, would you guys get in the corner and pray and see if you could help Mr. Belin? I got my loan [laughter].

P: Mrs. duPont, on the other hand, was very supportive of religion. [In 1949] she donated a church at Bolles. [Constructed in 1925 in Jacksonville and acquired later by Alfred I. duPont, it was used as a chapel for the Bolles Military Academy. Originally named Grace Chapel Parish, the name was changed in 1971 to San Jose Episcopal Church.]

B: Sure. She contributed liberally.

P: Very much so.

B: She contributed to churches. I got \$250,000 from her estate to put in a family center for my church.

P: From her?

B: Yes, [from] her estate. Mrs. duPont used to give liberally to matching funds. The next morning I went in to see Ball. I saw the headlines there on the *Florida Times-Union*. A Baptist minister out on Beaver Street got shot. The husband of the music director, the organist, caught him, and he shot the minister. Mr. Ball said, do you see now why I do not like to [give] Baptist [churches] loans? I said, my timing was just right, wasn't it? He said, it could not been better.

P: I was going to say, if you had come in a day later they would have held up the headlines for you.

B: Yes. I have an old friend out in Meridian, Mississippi, who is chairman of a big bank out there. It is the biggest bank in Meridian. I had him over to the farm one night. Ball and we were sitting around talking. I said, B.J., do you make any church loans? Yes, certainly. We make a lot of church loans in Meridian, he said. I said, do you make loans to Baptists? Oh, yes, he said. They are good public relations loans. Some of the front people in my town are Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic. We make a lot of those loans. I said, how many Baptist loans do you have out? He said, fifty-three Baptist churches. I asked, do they pay you? He said, punctually.

Ball was over there. I said, tell Mr. Ball about it. Mr. Ball said, now, wait a minute. B.J., you have different kinds of Baptists out there than we have here in Florida [laughter]. He said, they are not Jacksonville Baptists or Port St. Joe Baptists. He had a good sense of humor.

P: When you arranged his funeral, and I presume you arranged the funeral, did you have a religious ceremony?

B: Yes, I did that. I took it in. He did not want to talk about it. Before I get into that, let me tell you [that] when his brother died, he was buried at the old Cressfield [cemetery, at the] old Ball burying ground. [Cressfield is the family farm in Virginia.] I was with Ball in New York. He did not want to go. He could not stand these funerals. Mrs. duPont called and said, Ed, you have to go. We took him down.

I talked to him, and after I had gotten the resolution through Nemours where he could be buried in a crypt, I said, leave it to me. Much, much before his death I had planned it. I went to a minister. Some of Mr. Ball's kinsmen were Greshams on his mother's side, whose great-grandfather was a Baptist minister. Did you

know Mr. Ball was brought up in a Baptist church? His mother was Baptist. [The minister] said, Jake, if I can help you anyplace . . . I said, okay, thank you.

I did engage Dr. **COOPER** from Jacksonville, the learned minister of Riverside Baptist Church. I engaged a mortician. Ball had long ago purchased a solid copper casket he had put away and taken care of. He had it stashed away in Tallahassee. I had arranged for everything. I had gotten with Raymond Mason and had four big airplanes to take everybody to Wilmington [Delaware], to take the undertaker, the mortician staff, the minister, the pall bearers, the trustees. We flew everything up there. I had everything up there set up in the **moors** for the burial. There were tents put up outside. There was not a hitch in the whole thing. It worked out. I had flowers purchased – his kind. He loved beautiful flowers. I had gotten with the minister to help him prepare what he was going to say. The minister said to me, I want to see his books, his library. I would like to rummage through those. Frequently I get some ideas from reading notes in the margin of books, or maybe in the fly leaf cover. Let me see what he reads, and let me look through it. He spent time on that.

Ball read [the *Rubaiyat of*] *Omar Khayyam*. He could quote the whole thing. He loved beautiful poetry [and] prose, beautiful works of art. He did read the Bible; he was a biblical scholar. [He was] a historian like you have never seen in your life. He was interesting to talk to. He could talk about English history, about American history. [He was] a great conversationalist. [He enjoyed] getting together [with] four or five people. He did not like big crowds.

I planned it [for] months and months and months. I knew it was gong to happen, and I had everything worked out where everybody could see. I am not really a meticulous planner, but in this case I went ahead and did it. He asked me to bury him. I told him, now, look. You have some grandnieces and a grandnephew or two, and that may give me trouble. Let us go to them and get this thing straightened out. Stipulate this thing. Put a codicil to your will. He said, you will not have any trouble.

I called them in. I had them down to Jacksonville, and I took them to dinner. We went to the River Club. I said, your granduncle has asked me to do this. I am taking the ball and running with it. I want you to know about it. I have made plans and am making plans. I will disclose these plans to you and will carry them out. But I wanted you to know about it and to inform you in any way I can. I want you to know that I am not trying to just take over. One of the grandnieces said, I wish, Mr. Belin, you would bury him at Cressfield, up on the northern neck. I said, he asked me not to. Quite frankly, he has severed all ties with that part of the country. Here is where he loved: Jacksonville. He does not want to go back to Virginia and does not want to be buried there, although he held his mother and father in great awe and respect. They are buried there, the Ball forebears. The

two younger ones spoke up and said, Mr. Belin is right. You know Uncle Eddie would not go back. He told us that. She said, I know it.

They said, Mr. Belin, we endorse all of your plans. We are with you, and we will help you. We are grateful to you and thank you for taking this over and [for] sharing it with us. I said, it would be a heartless thing for me just to go in here and not let you know.

But I did work it out meticulously. I worked it out well. Raymond Mason helped me out with a lot of transportation, and it worked well. There was a good representative crowd. [There were] bankers from all over the country there. It was not Ball's church. Ball did not have a church.

P: Was there a representation from the governor's office?

B: Yes.

P: Were you involved in the growth of the duPont operations, the increase in the number of banks, the acquisitions of the Florida East Coast Railroad?

B: No. I was engaged in building up the paper company assets.

P: As president in 1968, then, you were the president of the paper company.

B: Right. I was president of the St. Joe Paper Company. Where your power comes in is as trustee of the estate. Trustees have jurisdiction over all those things, and I am a trustee.

P: Was Ball, then, the man who increased the number of banks, who bought the additional land, the forest land, who acquired the Florida East Coast Railroad? Was this his decision? Did he operate alone in making these decisions?

B: Pretty much so except in the paper company. He had me travel to acquire assets, to acquire box plants, to acquire sites for box plants, to acquire woodlands. I helped acquire a lot of the woodlands properties and put him onto it. We did that. If I found out anything that was good, whether it was in their line or not, I let him know, and we would sit down and buy it. I bought all of these box plants from Fort 14.9 Corrugated Case Company. I bought box plants from Baltimore Paper Box. All of these box plants I negotiated for him. I bought sites for putting in new ones. I increased the output. I was instrumental in tripling the production. I was an instrument in saying, we have to go in this business, we have to be more fully integrated, and those sort of things.

He would ask me to go out and study markets. To get in, I rode buses with employees of large companies to find out if they were satisfied, how strong they

were in supporting unions, what their wages were, what they were thinking and talking about. [I would] get on company buses like in Greensboro, North Carolina, and ride up to these textile mills and back. [I would talk to] shift workers to see what their beefs were. I would engage them off the company conveyance or off a public bus and quiz them and talk to them about salary rates, overtime, unionism and all that. We would sit down. That is the way we selected sites, selected companies, selected places to go. He was meticulous that way. [We] negotiated over in the Channel Islands with him; I spent weeks over in the Channel Islands [California]. He wanted to put up a residence there. Jersey, Guernsey. Buying motels; he bought motels and stayed in them.

P: But he buys these on his own. Obviously you are advising him, giving him leads and all. But for instance, when he acquires twenty-three more banks for the Florida National Bank chain and increases it to thirty, this is something he presumably works out with his sister.

B: That, and he comes into the trustees with a recommendation and says, here it is. I think it is good for you to endorse. The trust controlled the bank.

P: Did you have anything to do with the Florida East Coast acquisition?

B: No. He started out on that in, I guess, 1944. He purchased the bonds.

P: When they went into bankruptcy, then he was ready to move in.

B: Yes. He purchased those bonds. He was in the courts eighteen years in hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission. There was not much to do there, Doctor. After you had bought those bonds you could not do anything except go in to the courts. It was run by the trustees: Scott Loftin [Jacksonville attorney], John Martin [Florida governor, 1925-1929], and the other guy down there [J. Turner Butler]. The road running off I-95 to the beach, out to Ponte Vedra, is named after him. We are trustees. They operated it. I came out of trusteeship in 1961. Then we started operating and then fought unions.

There was not that much to do. Declare the bonds; the courts did this as the equity holder. They were the owner. [We had to] go through a lot of hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission. There was not anything else to acquire. [We could] modernize. That was simple. We just had to wait it out and spend a lot of time in court.

P: Was it the paper company or was it the duPont trust that owned the million-plus acres of forest land?

B: St. Joe Paper Company. We owned 1.1 million acres of Florida timberland.

- P: That is about 3 percent of the state, I understand.
- B: Right. There are, I think, 58,000 square miles of Florida, 54,000 land and around 4,000 water. [That is] somewhere around 38 million acres. Anyway, we owned about 3 percent of it, [all in] timberlands. Now, we owned 50,000 acres of [sugar] cane.
- P: Where is that located?
- B: Just south of Okeechobee, in Palm Beach County.
- P: Obviously, where they grow sugar cane is where you own it.
- B: And we own around 50,000 acres in Georgia around Thomasville and Albany.
- P: No cattle land? No ranch?
- B: We have 11,000 acres set off for raising cattle. It is not a profitable venture. We raise cattle over in Leon County, Tallahassee, at Southwood Farm. We raise registered Herefords, and we bought from Judge Alto Adams, who is a great historian . . .
- P: Oh, I knew Alto. [Adams was chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court from 1940-1951 and 1967-1968.]
- B: We bought his place. He had registered Aberdeen Angus. We raised breeders – bulls. Now, I got out of that and went into the McDonald brand. I am raising hamburger cattle now. But the land is getting so valuable, it is too valuable to raise cows on.
- P: Alto used to send me tomatoes from his place over there near Fort Pierce.
- B: Did he? I liked Alto Adams.
- P: Oh, I did too.
- B: He was from right up here around DeFuniak Springs.
- P: He did a couple of books on Florida history [*A Cattleman's Backcountry Florida* and *The Fourth Quarter*].
- B: I know. He came to me and said there were seven great Floridians he wanted to write about: [Frederick and Howell] Lykes, [Henry B.] Plant, [Henry M.] Flagler,

[Alfred I.] duPont, Hamilton Disston, and maybe John Ringling. We talked about it. He wanted to get me engaged in that.

P: I have saved all my correspondence with him.

B: Did you? Let me digress to talk to you about that. Ball liked Alto Adams. He and Millard Caldwell did not get along, I am told.

P: Ball and Millard, even though you liked Millard Caldwell very much.

B: Millard was just like Ball: Tough. He was a fighter. And they fought. They got together on Judge Adams when Adams ran for the governorship [in 1952]. Caldwell liked Adams, and so did Ball, and they got together on him. They kind of made up after that. Adams and Dan McCarty were close friends. I had to choose sides there one time. I knew Dan. I worked with Dan in the chamber of commerce.

P: Dan ran first, in 1948, against Fuller [Warren] and lost and then won in 1952.

B: Ball liked Fuller.

P: I am surprised that he was supporting Fuller. I thought he would have gone for Senator [William A.] Shands.

B: No. Fuller. Ball wanted one thing, and Fuller promised it to him, and reneged. I knew Fuller. [He was] honest [and] honorable, [but he had] no depth. [He was] no great statesman. Egotist.

P: But [he had] a great sense of humor.

B: He did not hurt anything.

P: His sister Alma lives in Gainesville.

B: Yes, she does.

P: She is a good friend.

B: Ball wanted a sales tax. Fuller came in and posted a sales tax, but instead he put in a gross receipts tax. Same damn thing.

P: Why did Ball want the sales tax?

B: To take tax off of real property.

P: I see. To relieve himself.

B: And lower them. It is the most equitable tax you can levy. You pay on your ability to purchase. Fuller put it in, and I think he exempted so much [in] groceries and some other things.

P: Yes. There were a lot of exemptions to begin with.

B: It went on in. Anyway, it is an equitable, fair tax. Dan [McCarty] was opposed to it. When Dan was Speaker of the House, he kept sales tax out. But Dan was honorable. I traveled with him. He would kid himself. [He would deliver] sixteen [to] eighteen speeches a day. [He was] making these canned speeches, [and] he would be so tired and punch-drunk.

P: But he was greedy for political office.

B: Right. I said, Dan, you cannot stand up. He left after about two or three months.

P: Right. That is all. Well, he lasted [as governor] until August, about seven months. [McCarty died September 28, 1953.] Then Charley Johns came in.

B: I knew old Charley.

P: What a successor he was!

B: I used to see Charley coming out of the garage. On a day like this morning, raining, we were coming out of a garage there in Jacksonville. It was raining, and we sat down in that garage four and five hours and talked. It was entertaining.

P: How much of a political animal were you in the 1950s and the 1960s? To what degree did you influence state government?

B: I guess I went out and campaigned.

P: OK. So you made friends.

B: And campaigned for them. A lot of my friends were in the House and the Senate.

P: Now, it is said that Ball was the most politically powerful man in Florida in the 1940s and 1950s and 1960s. Is that justifiable?

B: Yes, it is. I want to say this: He did not make political contributions. He had power over people. He had influence over votes; he delivered votes. Employees, other

politicians who were seeking favor – everybody was always hoping and seeking something. If you are in control of one of the largest banking institutions in the state, you are going to have muscles.

P: Were people like Farris Bryant [Florida governor, 1961-1965] and Haydon Burns [Florida governor, 1965-1967] beholden to him, then?

B: Yes, and he loved them both and supported them both. He did not like LeRoy [Collins, Florida governor, 1955-1961].

P: He certainly did not like Robert King High when he was running [for governor in 1966].

B: No. After Ball's death Claude Pepper called me and lauded Ball. He wrote a nice letter. He had no animosity. Mr. Ball had animosity toward Claude.

P: He did not like Claude Pepper.

B: Not worth a . . . Claude could get mad at nobody. Claude wrote me the nicest letter, and then he came back to me and said, I want you to help me. I said, what do you want? He said, I want you to serve on the committee. I think he said [he wanted me to be] vice-chairman with Marshall McDonald [CEO, Florida Power and Light] to put in his chair over here at Florida State University in honor of his wife.

P: Yes, the Mildred Pepper chair [in] gerontology.

B: He said, help me with that. We raised the money like that. I did that, and he was everlastingly grateful. He sent me books and other things free all the time. I got a little bit tired of getting things. But they did not get along.

P: Did Ball play the role that history says he played in the Smathers-Pepper campaign in 1950 [for U.S. senator]?

B: Yes.

P: He put money into Smathers's [campaign]?

B: Well, [he] put money into it, [but] not directly to that. Ball had press, he had people, he had newspapers, he had people going out and doing things, for instance, getting and running the photographs at dinner with Stalin and with Paul Robeson.

P: He was responsible for the huge number of photographs that was distributed.

B: Yes. He had secret press, people who put out stuff and published things for him, running Robert King High's home and all like that. They did not call it dirty politics back then. Everybody did it. But he believed in fighting in the trenches in politics.

P: He let nothing stand in his way?

B: Nothing. He elected Claude Kirk [Jr., Florida governor, 1967-1971].

P: Would you call him a ruthless man, loving him as you did?

B: No, I would not say he was ruthless. [I would call him] extremely hard and a very, very difficult opponent who would do inside fighting. He got that way with the Dixiecrats.

P: Strom Thurmond.

B: Strom Thurmond and Dick Russell supported him. Ball was a strong infighter, and he would not get in and say nasty things about [others], like it being said today about somebody being caught in a house of prostitution. He would not do that. He would say, he is liberal, and if he wants to go around with Paul Robeson or Joe Stalin, I think I will let that be known. Some people may say that is pretty strong politics, but I do not think so.

P: What do you mean he elected Claude Kirk?

B: Who was Claude's opponent? Haydon Burns?

P: Robert King High. Do you remember the bitter campaign between Burns and High?

B: Sure. He went after Robert King High. His press and his influence beat Robert King High and elected Claude.

P: Do you think he ever regretted it?

B: Well, I think he did.

P: He elected a clown.

B: He did. You know, Fuller wanted to run again after he was out, and Ball said, Governor, do not get into that. I am not with you this time.

P: The state would have been better off with High as governor than with Claude

Kirk. [laughter]

B: Claude was a clown. He did not hurt anything, and the old guy has run time and time again. He has changed party affiliations every month.

P: And now his son-in-law is Ander Crenshaw [Florida senate minority leader from Jacksonville].

B: I know him, and I know Ander's father, Mack Crenshaw. I like old Claude personally. I saw him down in Palm Beach at the Florida Council of 100. He has slendered down [and was] fairly presentable, and I enjoyed chatting with him.

P: He probably is not drinking like he used to.

B: [Claude] came out to the farm one day. He always wanted to be late, like two or three hours late. He had a highway patrolman trooper bring him in. He had a champagne bar in the back. Ball and I were waiting. We were going to have drinks. The governor got there, and he came in. Rush, rush. [He was] always busy. He told the trooper, bring the champagne. He did not offer any of us a drink of the champagne. We did not want it. He sat there before us and drank the champagne, took it back out to the car, and left. Ball and I had what we wanted. But he was a clown and pretty much of a nut. I felt sorry for some people who supported him. Ash Verlander [Jacksonville insurance man]. Do you know Ash?

P: Oh, of course, I know Ash.

B: Ash is a nice guy.

P: Very nice guy.

B: There are some good people. I think J. E. Davis is a nice guy.

P: I do not know him, but I do know Ash.

B: Ash is kind of a guardian. I like Ash. Ball supported Sumter Lowry [general, Florida National Guard].

P: Oh, I know.

B: I never knew Sumter very well. I knew him. Sumter was not a colorful candidate.

P: He knew how to stir up controversies. He raised hell about the University, because when they built Tigert Hall they found that they had three flag poles – they never figured out why – so they decided to put the American flag on one, the state of Florida [flag] on one, and then they ran up the United Nations flag, and

oh, he raised hell about that.

B: Ball did not like to lose.

P: This is Sumter, now, that was doing that. Ball would not have done anything like that.

B: Ball did not like to lose battles. He would fight hard and long but would not do anything that was downright dirty. He was a tough one.

P: Did he not hold grievances, though?

B: He did. I do not know that he ever forgave anybody.

P: Once you got on the bad list, you were there forever.

B: You were there forever. You never came off the bad list. Angels could not bring you off.

P: When you traveled with him, both within the United States and abroad, [it was] just the two of you? Your wife was not going along?

B: No. She did not want to.

P: Did she not like Ball?

B: She liked Mr. Ball, but did not particularly care for his company or anything like that.

P: She did not dislike him, but he was not her type of person.

B: That is right. My wife is a family woman. She likes her husband and children and grandchildren. Ball, as I said, did not feel comfortable around children and with ladies. He was always a little bit too much in his p's and q's. She liked him and admired him greatly, but . . .

P: What role do you play in the various duPont operations? I have the estate, the institute, the foundation. I am not quite sure I understand what all of these are.

B: Well, let me see if I can run through those with you. I gave you Mr. duPont's will. Mr. duPont stipulated in his will that his trustees shall cause to be incorporated, a corporation called the Nemours Foundation, and on his death, his assets would become the beneficiary of the income from all of his assets. All of his assets went to the Alfred I. duPont Testamentary Trust, and from there the income flows into Nemours, which is the chief beneficiary. He stipulated that no crippled child

should be denied care if he could be rehabilitated and returned to society and take his place among his fellows.

P: So that a terminally ill child [with] cancer or whatever would not be allowed.

B: [No. The disease must be] curable. Let me digress to tell you what Mr. duPont then thought was incurable now can be cured.

P: I understand that.

B: So all of the income from the trust, the Alfred I. duPont Testamentary Trust, flows into the chief beneficiary, the Nemours, for the care of crippled children but not incurables, and the care of elderly if we wish to do that.

P: And if they were, preferably, citizens of Delaware.

B: Preference goes to those in Delaware. [Our instructions were,] after you take care of them, go everywhere else.

P: Were there any distinctions among either the children or the elderly as to color? Does the will stipulate that?

B: No. Just not incurable.

P: I understand.

B: They have to be citizens of the United States. He stipulated in his will that first there should be a memorial established for his father and his great-great-grandfather, Samuel Pierre. We have done that. I was on that committee, and we put that up. He wants his mansion opened for the pleasure of the public.

P: And that has finally been done.

B: [We] had the library opened and the works of art displayed. The grounds are opening.

P: So that means that a visitor going to Delaware now can go into the house?

B: That is right.

P: That took a long time before that happened.

B: Well, to open it and plan it and get the landscaping up and parking [arrangements made] took a little while. That was not to be done, really, until

after Mrs. duPont's death.

P: I see.

B: She died in 1970, and it was done shortly after her death. You see, all of the income from the estate went to Mrs. duPont until her death, and then it came to the trustees.

P: Okay. So that was part of it, you said, opening the house and all. What else?

B: Building the hospital for the care of crippled children but not incurable.

P: And that was done in Delaware? Was it done on property near Nemours?

B: It was done on property at Nemours.

P: As I understand it, Alfred I. duPont's son was the architect for that.

B: Originally. For the first hospital he was there. I believe he may have been the architect for the carillon tower.

P: According to the biography he was. That is how I heard of it.

B: He had a friend in France, young duPont.

P: So they built the hospital, and the hospital is functioning today?

B: Yes. We went in and put in another hospital, a terrific hospital.

P: In Delaware.

B: [It is] next to the first one. [It is called] the Alfred I. duPont Institute. It is on the grounds of Nemours [and is] a tremendous hospital. We increased the staff, [and] we increased our services. We are doing research.

P: With inflation, is there money enough to maintain it? A hospital is a very expensive [operation].

B: It is. I do not know of anything where the cost is increasing commensurate with hospitals.

P: Hospital care is [so expensive these days].

B: We opened up the Nemours Health Clinic for the care of the elderly.

- P: And that is a going operation?
- B: Yes. We perform services there that are not taken on by Medicare or Medicaid. We have an eye clinic. We test their eyes [and] fit them [with] glasses for free. We have a hearing clinic where we test their sense of hearing [and] give them hearing aids and all kinds of aids. We do anything we can.
- P: But a Georgian or a Floridian would have to go to Delaware to avail him/herself of those services.
- B: Right. We have a denture clinic. We give them free dentures [and] take care of the gums and other treatments there. And we give them free prescriptions.
- P: That is a tremendous service.
- B: The elderly can get free prescriptions. We deduct seventy-five dollars a year from all of their prescriptions. That is little. We have put in satellite clinics downstate and around where the elderly can come.
- P: When you say downstate, [do you mean] in Delaware?
- B: Yes, downstate Delaware, over on the Maryland line.
- P: So they do not have to travel quite as far.
- B: No. And we have prescriptions. We have pharmacies down there where they can pick up their prescriptions. We have dentists down there so they can take care of their teeth. We do that.
- P: What have you done in Florida?
- B: Well, you can use Mr. duPont's money in Florida, too. There is enough there. What Mr. Edward Ball stipulated [was that] "the income from my estate, my assets, can be utilized in Florida only." He told me, Mr. Belin, Florida has done much for St. Joe Paper Company and the Alfred I. duPont estate. We owe something for Florida. Mr. duPont has made provisions for Delaware, but mine are going to be limited to Florida.
- P: Once again, curable children?
- B: Once again, curable children. He said, Mr. duPont was my great benefactor, and I want to do exactly in Florida what he is doing in Delaware and elsewhere.
- P: Did he concern himself with the elderly?

- B: No, he did not. We cannot use his money for the elderly. Mr. Ball had a feeling about the elderly. He thought they were mistreated. He did not like homes for elderly – nursing homes. He thought that elderly people should be taken care of in their own homes and [that] they ought to provide for their own stuff. Of course, that is easier said than done. No, [it is] just for crippled children.
- P: And yet he was not particularly partial to children.
- B: No. Mr. duPont's influence caused him [to do that]. And we have taken his assets and increased the income. We have built a big hospital there.
- P: In Jacksonville.
- B: Yes.
- P: They had Hope Haven [Children's Hospital], did they not?
- B: Mrs. duPont funded Hope Haven. We bought the old Hope Haven for **seventy** and used it for the hospital.
- P: Is that where the hospital is located?
- B: No. We are just across from Baptist Hospital, across I-95 as you come off the Fuller Warren Bridge.
- P: I did not know where it was.
- B: We have a working agreement with the Baptist Hospital, Wolfson Children's Clinic. We put in our own people there, and we are doing a great deal of work there in the clinic. Now we are putting satellite clinics in LaBelle, Belle Glade, Fort Myers, Wauchula.
- P: Areas where low-income families live.
- B: Yes.
- P: Now, the Wolfson Children's Hospital is part of Baptist, is it not?
- B: Yes.
- P: Do you know the Wolfsons?
- B: Yes. Mrs. duPont gave Baptist Hospital a lot of money.

P: And yours is on the other side [of I-95 from Baptist Hospital], south of the Fuller Warren Bridge.

B: Yes. I believe it is on San Marco [Boulevard].

P: OK. The next time I go there I am going to look and see.

B: Of course, there is going to be a new Fuller Warren Bridge. We are doing great work there, and we are expanding our clinics.

P: So the estate, the institute, [handles these children's hospitals]. What does the foundation do?

B: The Nemours Foundation?

P: You are on the Alfred I. duPont Foundation.

B: That is separate. That was a foundation that Mrs. duPont set up in honor of Mr. duPont. It has nothing to do with his estate; it has nothing to do with Mr. Ball's estate and Nemours.

P: So it is her money.

B: She started it. She put the first money in there in the corpus. It has grown. She left Epping Forest to it; she left some of her assets to it on her death. She wanted first to look after [the elderly], to supplement the income of elderly people who had experienced some misfortune in late life, and that is what we are doing. I spent a lot of my time in it, as well as [with] Nemours and the Alfred I. duPont Testamentary Trust. It is very difficult for us to do what she envisioned and wanted us to do. In the first place, we help these elderly supplement their income, like retired ministers and ministers' wives. We do that. But when we supplement their income, the welfare and the other benefits [offices] say we are going to take it off.

P: So it really does not help them very much.

B: We do it sometimes, frankly, in devious ways. We are doing that, and I am helping scholarships. We help through the Alfred I. duPont Foundation an Alzheimer clinic near Mayo, a place called Cyprus Village.

P: I know where it is.

B: I got it from J. E. Davis. [He said,] we will fund you a place there when you come over and join me. We do that. I have done [some contributing] to the University of Florida through the years. It is not a lot of money. I have [donated funds that

enabled them to] carry out a program there of research on Alzheimer's.

P: Through the medical center.

B: Yes. They are still doing that. The Nemours funded a chair over there in pediatrics.

P: I know that.

B: We are assisting in the [purchase of medical equipment and supplies for crippled children]. Kids cannot buy motorized wheelchairs. We purchase a lot of that kind of equipment.

P: Mrs. duPont was not interested in supporting the arts: Music, art.

B: Yes, I have done that at the Cummer Gallery and the other one there in Jacksonville [the Jacksonville Art Museum]. We have done that, and I have done something up at Lee's home and [with] somebody up in Virginia. But I like to see things more tangible.

P: Are you the man in charge of that so that if somebody makes the proposal it comes to you? Is it your decision?

B: I am helping buy this hospital now. They are expensive. I went through that.

P: What hospital?

B: Baptist Hospital.

P: Oh, the Baptist Hospital.

B: I am putting in a new hospital. I help with shelters for the people who come through and do not have a place to stay at night.

P: You must be a very busy man, Mr. Belin.

P: It is not hard to do.

P: You obviously are enjoying doing it.

B: Well, yes. It is not hard.

P: Do you have an advisory board that helps you with all of this?

B: Yes.

P: Is this what George Bedell is on, for instance?

B: No, not that. I have **Braden** Ball, Gilbert Smith, and others. We have directors in there who sit down and advise me. I use paper company staff to help me on investment decisions. I use staff and investment counsel we have in the Alfred I. duPont Testamentary Trust to help me. I get by with it all right.

P: In other words, you write and say, here is a proposal. I think you know more about this than I do. Read it over and tell me what you think.

B: Right. It is not difficult.

P: It is obviously something you enjoy doing.

B: Right. We do not send out people to check on some of these people who apply. We can smell phonies. I see things coming in from a section in Georgia [where] somebody is filming the same old house, the same old run-down front porch. You would get requests for help from these people because their house is blown down. [It is the] same photograph, same old home.

P: Sort of like my students telling me their grandmother died on the day they were supposed to take an exam.

B: [laughter] You know that. We try to look out. I do not like to call on welfare to check because they will cut them off. I have called on ministers, people like Episcopal ministers, and they kind of want to help their flock only, not the others. So we just go out and call somebody and say, look, Joe, get over there and look on this one and tell me what is absolutely going. Call me or write me a report. We do that. We are leaning a little bit heavy yet toward people in that section of Virginia where Mr. Ball and Mrs. duPont came from. We get our legs pulled a little. There are so many there yet who went to school with her. It cannot be so, you know that.

P: Thousands. Sort of like all those descendants from the *Mayflower*.

B: Sure, and we laugh about that. Yes, we like to do the things principally here in Florida. I do go up to Virginia and Delaware. I help kids with summer encampments and [give] pretty heavily on scholarships around junior colleges.

P: Now, Ball began to run into some legal problems in the 1960s with federal government saying banks and philanthropic organizations [could not engage in both banking and non-banking enterprises].

- B: [That was strictly] punitive legislation [referring to the Federal Bank Holding Act of 1966]. It started because Ball beat the labor unions. He fought them and whipped them, and they went after him. **Senator Morse** from Oregon, who is favorably looked up by the labor unions.
- P: And the senator from Wisconsin, [William] Proxmire.
- B: The one who had the herring plant. He is not there now.
- P: No.
- B: Proxmire and Senator **Willis** Robertson from Virginia.
- P: And of course, Claude Pepper.
- B: Claude, and the one who was opposed to very much was Wright Patman, who was chairman of the House banking committee.
- P: Right.
- B: That was punitive. They wanted to break Ball's hold on union labor, so they passed legislation whereby a charitable trust or charitable foundation could either be in banking or in manufacturing but not in both. [They had to] get out of one or the other. So we waited with all of our assets in manufacturing. [There was] a good future in manufacturing, and we chose manufacturing. We fought it. We hated to give up the [Florida National] Banks. It was a good chain of banks. [Ours was a] good banking policy. We knew that Florida was going to grow and expand. But it was punitive, and we did fight it. They allowed us to come down, and we could hold 24.9 percent.
- P: Which gave you 25 percent control.
- B: Well, 24.9 percent damn near ran it. They said, we made a mistake there. That is too much. So they came down and said, you can have 4.99 percent.
- P: With the 24.9, as I understand it, with Mr. Ball's investments and Mrs. duPont's investments, you really had over 35 percent.
- B: Right. Management controls proxies.
- P: Yes.
- B: So we had control. They knew that, so we had to go down to a little under 5 percent. We said, heck with that. Let's get out. And we did get out, and we are

out. That was a bitter pill.

P: But you sold the banks well?

B: Yes, we sold the banks well. It is now merged, of course, with First Union, a strong bank. [Alpheus] Ellis [prominent Florida banker, past chairman, NCNB] should have come in and taken the banks. [See FBL4, University of Florida Oral History Archives for an interview with Al Ellis.] I have talked to him about that a lot.

P: He certainly had the assets to do it.

B: Right. We could not have operated it without Al. But that was a bitter pill for Ball. That was a bitter defeat for Mrs. duPont, too. But he never cried over spilled milk. He fought it hard. He just started spending his time toward St. Joe. Ball was one who liked to acquire. He had the liquid assets. He had funds available to make acquisitions. [He would] go out and buy for cash. [He would] buy at a low price, hold it for appreciation, and then sell it.

P: But he did not want to distribute very much of the income, did he? Was that another big battle?

B: [He would] keep putting it back in.

P: Was that not another big battle, that they were not distributing enough of the income from the estate?

B: No. We had some battles inside with some of the trustees who wanted to oust me and Ball, and they alleged that we were not distributing it enough. Florida changed the law on that. It originally [said] you must earn 3 percent of the inventory value, which was book value. Then they changed it to 3 percent of the market value.

P: That is a big difference.

B: Yes. Well, we were closely held. We were not a public company, so it was very difficult to say what the market value was. We would get appraised every year by experts, and we got a pretty high appraisal. Now we are a public company, and we do not have any trouble. But we have to earn 3 percent of the fair market value of all the assets in the estate, which we are doing. We are funding a lot of things, and [we are] not short on money.

P: I thought in the early 1970s they brought a court suit saying that more had to be distributed from the estate.

B: No. We made a settlement where we would distribute more. It was not a must.

P: There was no compulsion, then?

B: No. You earn 3 percent, and that was it. We would try our best effort to increase the income. My God, what did we do? We went out and bought Hope Haven [Children's Hospital in Jacksonville and] we went around and put in all these clinics. Look what we are doing – we are just spending, spending, spending, and keeping up with the cost of health care.

P: Which, of course, I know is really something.

B: It is really something.

P: Speak to the hassle that developed in 1970 when you had [William B.] Mills on the board, the four members, replacing I guess it was [Elbert] Dent who had died in 1964. Then when Mrs. duPont dies, Alfred Dent [a grandson] comes aboard, and two of these people begin to buck Ball. Then he adds the other three, including you.

B: Was it 1970?

P: Well, she dies in September 1970, so it has to be 1971, I guess.

B: Well, on her death, Mills . . .

P: Mills was on in 1964 after the first Dent, the Senior, died.

B: Elbert died. [William B. Mills] took Elbert's place.

P: And he was the Florida National Bank president then, or something.

B: Yes.

P: Mrs. duPont dies in 1970, and Alfred Dent then comes aboard, and he and Mills begin to buck Ball.

B: Well, Mills was removed as president of the bank, or was limited.

P: But it was my understanding from reading the [Jessie Ball] duPont biography that Ball then added three people; he increased the board from four to seven, and you are one of the people that he added, plus . . .

B: [Winfred L.] Thornton and [Thomas S.] Coldewey, was it?

P: Yes. [A. L. GRAVES is listed in Hewlett's biography on p. 330, note 53.]

B: I went on in 1967.

P: No. This shows you going on after Mrs. duPont's death, in 1970 or 1971. That is what I have. As I say, the author obviously could have gotten it wrong.

B: No. I was a trustee before I was president of St. Joe. I was made a trustee along with Thornton in December 1967. Mrs. duPont died in 1970. There have been no trustees added since Mrs. duPont's death.

P: Wait a minute, now. If both of you were added and Ball is on there, that is three. Mrs. duPont is on there in 1967, because she does not die until 1970. Plus Mills is on there.

B: Right.

P: So that means there were five people on there.

B: Mills, Coldewey, [Alfred duPont] Dent, Belin, Thornton, Ball, and Mrs. duPont.

P: That is seven.

B: We petitioned the courts to increase the number of trustees.

P: Four to seven.

B: Because Mrs. duPont was infirmed, she could not attend. She could not get out of bed.

P: I see. OK.

B: Mr. Ball had four heart attacks. He was aged. We were growing; the trust assets had increased. We needed management, so we petitioned the courts to increase it.

P: And the courts agreed?

B: The courts ruled this: under Mr. duPont's will there was no provision for it. It had to remain at three. The corporate trustees were four. But under the Doctrine of Deviation, where there is clearly need, and [because] Mr. duPont stipulated in his will that his trustees are empowered to do all things necessary for the protection and perpetuity of this trust, they are given free will to go ahead and do whatever is necessary for the benefit of it. The court said, you truly need them; on the

basis of the Doctrine of Deviation on need that you have shown, we approve it.

P: Mr. Belin, I want to shift to another [topic] because we are moving toward the end of this [interview]. I want to ask you what your own philosophy is in terms of the long life and active life you have led. What moves you?

B: There are lots of things yet I want to do. I love this country, [and] I am concerned about a lot of things in this country. I am a conservative Democrat. I am really concerned about growing bureaucracy. It is terrible, the thing we are getting to in this country. Government employees, bureaucracy – we cannot do anything. Business is stifled. The [Florida] Growth Management Act has caused a recession here in Florida. Real estate values have deteriorated. Contractors are going broke because bureaucracy has everything in its hand. You cannot get a permit to do anything. It takes you three to five years.

P: I understand you said that on your own land you have to get a permit to cut your trees.

B: In certain counties we do. In Leon County you do have to get a permit to cut your trees.

P: So you are saying bureaucracy is drowning us.

B: We are drowning in bureaucracy. I cited you about working in Millard Caldwell's office with two and a half full-time equivalent. Millard Caldwell did not have any district offices. Now my Congressman has an office in Marianna [and] one in Tallahassee. I bet he has seventy-five people working in his office, and [it] does not accomplish anything. Bureaucracy is strangling us, and we have to do something about it.

P: So you are a free-enterprise man.

B: Absolutely. I was given the free-enterprise award by Jacksonville University two years ago. I was given an honorary degree from there, a doctor of law, and I made a talk on the free-enterprise system. I am a champion of the free-enterprise system and fight for it.

I am working for privatization in government. Get government out of some of it and let industry get in there and do it. Sure, you have to have checks and balances. There has to be more accountability. Private industries can run prisons, like Bay County over here. They can run the jails. They can do a lot of running of welfare programs. Private industry on a bid basis can go in and replace bureaucracy.

P: Do you think we need things like Social Security, as a for instance?

B: Yes, but not like it is being enacted. I paid into Social Security in 1935 when Franklin Roosevelt was championing it. Now, because of my age, I get Social Security. At seventy years old you get it anyway. I do not believe the Social Security Act was meant for me and Mrs. Belin.

P: You do not need it.

B: Do you know what we get in Social Security? I am getting \$32,000 a year. It is not meant for me. They tell me when you paid into it you are entitled to it. Well, it was not meant for me. Do you know my three little grandboys are on Social Security, and they get \$32,000 a year. I never see a Social Security check. My wife takes that, and those grandbabies get it. Do you think it was meant that way?

P: No. It was meant for poor people who needed it.

B: Now Mrs. Belin and I get \$32,000 a year.

P: You get the maximum.

B: I sure do. The thing about it is they recapitulate me every year. When I get an increase, for whatever purpose, Mrs. Belin automatically gets an increase, so my grandboys get an increase.

P: In other words, you just sign the check over to them.

B: I never see it. My wife gets the money and gives it to these grandbabies.

P: So you think that the bureaucracy on every level of government – local, state, and national – is encompassing [and] drowning all of us?

B: There is no question about it.

P: Can we reverse this situation, do you think?

B: It is difficult to do, but we can do it. People are going to rise up and do it. I think one form now is by limiting terms. I do not know that I am in favor of that. [I am speaking of] the terms of the congressmen and cabinet members and things like that. There is the move that way. We can reverse it, but it is going to be difficult. I want to see things come down [to] local fiscal home rule. Cut out big, strong, central government.

I am not sure about the statement I am about to make to you, but I believe when I

went to Washington in the early to mid-1930s, around 1935, there were less government employees in the District of Columbia than they now have in one building across the river. I will bet you the Pentagon has more people in it than we had in the whole District of Columbia.

P: You probably are absolutely right, Mr. Belin.

B: We cannot continue this.

P: Do you think in your lifetime or my lifetime that we are going to see a reversion to this?

B: I am seventy-eight.

P: And I am just behind you.

B: I will be seventy-eight in October. No. We may see a trend, but we will not see it fully accomplished.

P: Well, have we become politically on the national level more conservative in the last fifteen [to] eighteen years [with] the Reagan administration [and] the Bush administration?

B: I will say this to you. The greatest man in my lifetime was Winston Churchill. The greatest president we had during my lifetime – in my judgment – was Ronald Reagan. We can have some more of him. Bush is not a Reagan, not by any stretch of the imagination. He is going to cave in on a lot of things. I am afraid he is going to cave in on this legislation with respect to giving families all the leave they want if they have a sick member or if somebody has a baby and the husband can stay home. I am opposed to that. Business does not have to pay for it. They are off without pay. But then you have to get somebody in.

P: To take their place.

B: And then you have that welfare to take home for them, and you just have continuities. I do not believe in it. It is going to be hard to reverse, but we will show a reversing as did Russia change things. They did it much more hurriedly than we will ever do ours, but we have to do that, and we have to cut out some of the social programs. We have people today who will not work because of it.

You know, Florida is principally made up of service businesses. It is a great area for services. Florida does not encourage heavy industry. They do not want it. They discourage it. They do not want smokestacks, rails, and whistles. They want people to come in.

P: They want Disney Worlds.

B: They want Disney Worlds, Sea Worlds, they want entertainment, recreation, and that sort of thing.

P: Hotels, restaurants.

B: Right. So I think there, when you are looking at that, a lot of those pay pretty low. I think we are going to have trouble here in our own state. When the Haitians start coming in, and they are coming, we are headed for trouble, I think, and I would like to see it turned around. We have to do it. We cannot tax people to death.

I have served on the state taxation and budget reform commission. Governor "Martini" [Robert Martinez, 1987-1991] called me and asked me to serve. I said, Governor, I do not want to serve. First and foremost, I do not believe in making a financial disclosure. You are not going to pay me anything; I am not going to get any money from that. I am not asking for any. I do not want to make a financial disclosure. I do not mind it, but I am against the principle of it. Second, I do not want government in the sunshine. I cannot do things that way. If I want to talk to one of my committee members or commissioners on the phone, I cannot call the press. But they have to know everything. Governor, I do not want to serve for that. He said, well, I want you to serve. I said, I do not want to, Governor. First and foremost, let me get you straight: I am not a Republican.

P: He knew that ahead of time.

B: He said, I knew that, but sometimes you act like one. I said, well, there are some nutty Republicans, Governor. I did not mention Claude Kirk. Now they have the governor of Connecticut.

P: I know. [Lowell] Weicker.

B: So I am serving. I am amazed! People there [whom] I thought were strong members were weak. Because of our rules we are keeping things out. I would not be surprised, Doctor, [to see a personal income tax in Florida]. I take some credit for keeping the personal income tax off the ballot.

P: That is never going to happen.

B: They wanted to put it on that ballot, after coming on there. They are all opposed to it, and then they keep breaking down.

P: Mr. Belin, that is never going to happen. We are not going to get a personal

income tax.

B: Well, I am opposed to it, and I fought it. I was told that I was wrong, to put it on the ballot and then let them have a chance to vote to see if we are going to have it or not. I said, I may not be fair, but I am practical. Chances are, they will not vote for it, but I am going to be practical. I am not going to give them a chance to. You can read into that anything you want to.

P: I understand what you are saying here. You are conservative. You want to go back to what we once had, perhaps: less regulation, less control.

B: Less control, better accountability [in] industry and in government. I think they ought to account for what they do with the monies they appropriate that are loose.

P: All right. Let me go beyond the economic thing, though. What about the world in which we live? To what degree are you concerned about rising crime, drugs, [and] what is happening to young people?

B: We are having that because of the social welfare program. We have taken the duty and responsibility of raising families out from under the family [and put it] into government. We turn children over to others to raise. The mother is working, [and there is] nobody at home. We turn the kids out into a world of crime. If we can have somebody to stay home to show affection for children, to set examples for children, to bring them along, encourage them to read about Lincoln, Washington, Daniel Boone, encourage them to get on the playground and make their own rules and play, run and whoop and holler and be healthy, bring them in and let them eat and do their homework. Those are basic things, but we do not do that. We would not have this crime if we would do that. But here we are paying people to go out and look after our children. I mean, government pays them to go out there and have somebody look after your children for you, and it is wrong. We are not going to cut out this crap [unless we get back to basics].

P: Well, are you optimistic about those kinds of changes?

B: No, I am not.

P: Because as we read the papers and listen to the news and look around us, it just looks like everything is collapsing.

B: It is going to get worse in our country. You are talking worldwide, I know.

P: I am really talking about our country.

B: We are soft-headed, Doctor. The liberals come in and say, we were all immigrants. Our country is made up of a mix of races. True. But our founding fathers, we sure got on the ball after they got here, and we had a great country. We are opening the doors. There are 187 different nationalities represented in the Dade County public schools. We are going to open to Haitians yet.

P: They will be open to the Cubans.

B: After Castro, more are coming in. They are going to bring in AIDS. They are going to come in and get involved in narcotics traffic. Nicaraguans, Mexicans. I think we are in for it. I think we are in for it. I do not want one world, I do not want one tongue, I do not want one currency.

We here are in trouble for another reason, Doctor. We have lost our sovereignty. You remember what old T.R. said, old Teddy Roosevelt: "Tread softly and wield a big stick." We cannot do anything now without getting a resolution – permission – from the United Nations. We have lost our sovereignty.

Did you know when we went into Desert Storm it was the first time in the history of this country we had to call on allies to help us pay for that battle? We used to make a token [request]: Would you pay us the war debt? I think Finland one time made a payment against one. Has anybody ever paid us?

P: No.

B: We funded [them ourselves]. I talked to you about Lend-Lease. Was that [not] a misnomer? It was a giveaway program.

P: Of course. We knew that was going to be a giveaway from the beginning.

B: Sure. That was a giveaway program.

P: But that was a war.

B: Right. We have to get a resolution through the United Nations. By God, we cannot do anything on our own. We did not go in against the head of Iraq [Saddam Hussein] because the United Nations resolution prohibited us from doing it. We could not go in there.

P: That was a mistake.

B: If we had been on our own, we may not have gotten their support. Anyway, we could have done it on our own, and it would have been corrected. We are losing our sovereignty. Another thing here that does concern me – I was taught this

way, and I got a lesson from Mr. Ball on this – it is too easy to borrow money. Debt does not worry people. Debt will strangle you, Doctor.

P: Young people are not worried about debt.

B: Debt will bring you to your knees. I have seen giant, giant companies fail because of debt. I was with interest, but I got out. I got out of Charter Company and did not lose a nickel. I could see it coming. Debt will kill you. It is easy to borrow money, too easy.

It is easy to get into trouble here in the city. Matching funds will strangle you. You say, well, we ought to do something. The state will give us 50 percent, and we can go in debt for the other 50 percent. We get half of it for free. They go in over their heads for the other 50 percent. They probably did not need it in the first place. There you are. You used bad judgment. You are strangled because somebody gave you something that is choking you. Debt will get you.

There was no use for banks experiencing the difficulty they did. It would not have happened in the Florida National [Bank if Ed Ball had still been in charge]. There is competition, ego, wanting to get big. I know Florida real estate. I read what Mr. duPont said about it. Banks wanted to make a loan. Federal savings wanted to make a loan. Do not let your competitor outdo you. Get in this race. The appraisal on real property (so they could lend against it) was jacked up. It would be a lot worth maybe \$100,000 that was appraised at \$175,000 so they could lend 80 percent on it and give the guy more than \$100,000. When they defaulted, the real value was disclosed. It was not worth \$175,000 [or] \$180,000. That is where they went in.

P: It was not worth \$100,000.

B: It was not worth \$100,000. That is where they go. I am concerned about that.

I came along years ago and studied economics. General Motors, U.S. Steel, the duPont company were held up as big models. Fine. Look what has happened to U.S. Steel. [And] would you ever have thought that General Motors would experience trouble?

P: No.

B: Bethlehem Steel [is] gone. [The] duPont company has now been taken over by Seagram's, a Canadian distillery company. Bureaucracy [is at the root of the problem]. Government is getting bigger and bigger. We are finding out about things now. For instance, the banking scandal in the [U.S.] House [of Representatives], that is nothing new. The bank in the first place was not put there as a bank.

P: No.

B: It was put there for a privileged few to do just what they did.

P: Yes. It was a service.

B: And they did it. Those guys there [are] making their own rules in the House and the Senate – free haircuts, free medicine, all this stuff. They get freebies, freebies, freebies. They have been getting it [for] a hundred years. It is nothing new, [but] we are just now finding out about it. They are not as discreet now about what they do.

P: Maybe the media is good, then. It is bringing all of that to our attention.

B: It is good in that sense. That is the thing that is bringing on limited terms, and it may work here. It may pass here in this state. If you do that and you start seeing this thing turned around, you may see some changes. It is very possible that changes in bureaucracy [can come about, such as] limiting the size of government and putting spending caps on government where they cannot have deficit spending. That would help us. But we are not going to work out our problems – it is a very serious problem with respect to narcotics, even rape – until we get back to the basic values of keeping the kids at home and teaching them.

P: Mr. Belin, tell me about yourself now. What do you do for recreation, for fun? I know you are close to your family, but your family lives away from here except your wife.

B: Right. I read when I can.

P: You read a lot, I understand.

B: I like history, as I told you, and I like art. I visit art galleries. I like to visit with people. I like to sit down and have a conversation, discuss history and discuss political views.

P: Well, you are obviously a very warm and great conversationalist.

B: I like to have guests in the evening at my home in my apartment or at the chateau, have good drinks out, sit down, and engage in a good conversation.

P: I will be coming back. I am inviting myself [laughter].

B: Well, you have an invitation. We will sit down and strike a blow for liberty. Mr. Ball used to call it "confusion to the enemy."

P: Right.

B: And I love to go out and eat. I would invite you to Jacksonville to do it. I used to have George Smathers up there and all these fellows.

P: It is more convenient for me to come to Jacksonville than it is to Port St. Joe.

B: It is just as good food. [We can] go out and eat a lobster. Ball and I and our guests used to go out.

P: And when you come to Gainesville we will see each other.

B: Right. I love to sit down and discuss things with some humor in it. [I like] good, clean jokes. I have had a lot of fun. That is one of my great pastimes.

P: Do you still travel a lot?

B: No, but I would like to start. I would like to go back and start doing it. I have been to so many places where I was involved and engaged in business and I did not get to do a lot of things I wanted to do. But I want to go back now on a different row. I want to go to France. I do not speak French. I had two years of French, but I have never practiced it. I want to go to France and do some study. I want to go to London and do some study. I want to go back to both Irelands just for sentimental trips.

P: Does your wife like to travel?

B: Yes.

P: So you will go together.

B: Yes. We are going out to Los Angeles before long to see my little grandsons. I have a lot of fun writing them. I write them letters and things. I try to encourage them to read.

P: How old are your grandsons?

B: Philip is about to turn fifteen, Stephen is ten, [and] Patrick is a little past five.

P: So they are great joys to you.

B: Oh, yes. Here is an old boy seventy-eight years old who works a lot in the trust and the foundation in Nemours, [and then I] go down to Tampa. I went out to a karate match for my grandchildren. They are interested in karate. I enjoyed it. I got up at 7:30 the other morning in Tampa (7:30 in the morning!), [and] I went out to a Little League baseball game to see one of my grandboys.

P: When do you get to Jacksonville?

B: I go down every other week. The man who does my cooking and takes care of my apartment except my bed – he puts out the ice and set-ups and things – I let him on vacation. So, I have not been down there in a couple or three weeks, [but] I am going Sunday.

P: We are going to transcribe all of this soon, and we will get it back to you.

B: All right. Be a little patient with me when it gets to me because I may need to move it [around]. Our continuity here [has been disrupted]. I have digressed and all this, [so I do not know] whether it will be a continuous flow.

P: Well, this is not jumping around as much as you think it is, and it is flowing nicely. Now, it is true that we have moved some things out of the chronological order, but in your case I have listened to you now all day – and I consider myself to be somewhat of a specialist in oral history – [and] it has been a wonderful interview. Unlike many others, I am not going to move much of you around.

B: There are lots of things we could talk about.

P: Well, we are going to do that at our next session over the lobster.

B: All right. I have had great experiences with people. I have met with heads of state.

Let me tell you one or two more things about Edward Ball. Here again, my continuity [is going to be disrupted]. We were at an exclusive party. Mrs. Belin was not with me. We were entertained there by a count.

P: This is you and Mr. Ball?

B: Yes, and we had two or three other guys with us. One of the guests was advisor to the Pope. His name was Michel **Sindoni**. Does that ring a bell with you?

P: No.

B: He clipped the Pope for \$60 million.

P: Oh, the banker.

B: Yes. I think there is a book written about him called *The Pope's Banker* or something like that. He came over here and got involved in the Lincoln Savings. He left me a note that [read]: I have gone off and committed suicide. I am dead now. Do you know that?

P: I know that.

B: Michel **Sindoni** was there. The reception before dinner, the cocktail party, was in a tremendous hall with works of art [by François Auguste] Rodin and all that stuff. The countess was there. She was, I think, a German girl. She was rather attractive. Right over the bar was a portrait of a nude, of our hostess. She did not even have on a hairpin. [She was] just as nude as hell. There I was talking to her right there, [and] right up there she was.

P: And you could not even make a comparison [laughter].

B: No. The funny thing is, I was talking to someone – I do not know who it was; I was having a drink – and Mr. Ball came up to me and said, Mr. Belin, get out from under that thing! I said, what is the matter? He said, get out from under there! I said, geez, Mr. Ball, I am making an acquaintance with her. He said, move out from under there! I said, well, their noses are a little bit too pointed. They could improve on this. I am going to do it when I am here myself. [He said,] get out from under that thing [laughter]! He was that way. He did not like that sort of thing. Of course, that is Italian art, just as nude as hell. My hostess and her husband and son walking around. I said, Mr. Ball, this is another one over here. He said, it is kind of a vulgar painting.

P: It is not done in Wauchula.

B: No. Anyway, [let me tell you about] another thing [that happened] one time in Washington. Do you remember old [William] Joe Sears [U.S. representative from Florida, 1915-1929, 1933-1937]?

P: Oh, yes. Congressman Sears. We have his papers at the University.

B: Oh, do you? I knew the old congressman. Then reapportionment was different. We had a congressman at-large, and old Joe Sears was it. Joe served in the House, I think.

P: You know he lived in Jacksonville, right down the street from us.

B: Oh? His son was over there in Kent's law firm. Anyway, it was in the winter –

cool – and I was making rounds. That was right after I had gotten to Washington. Several of my friends down here – Nathan Mayo, [James] Hodges, and those – said to call on Uncle Joe Sears, just as a courtesy. I said I would. I rang up and talked to his secretary and told her I would like to come up and, if it would be convenient, I wanted to speak to the Congressman. The secretary was voluptuous. She was very attractive.

P: You had better [be] careful. I am documenting all of this, and Mr. Ball may be looking down, or looking up [laughter].

B: It will not hurt him. It will not do any good. It certainly does not hurt me [laughter]. I hope I run through it again sometime. Anyway, she said, the Congressman is in there. He will receive you. Go right on in. As I said, it was in the winter. Back in those days men wore hats. I had bought me a new \$5 Stetson, I guess, and I had on a big, grey overcoat. She said, just take your coat and hat on into the Congressman's office. There is a hat tree [in] there to hang it. So I went in. The Congressman said, son, how are you? Sit down and talk to me. Tell me what is on your mind. I got letters from your people down there. I am going to help you. Just tell me what is on your mind, and I am just going back to see what I can do for you. I sat down and talked to the Congressman. We had a little meeting for fifteen minutes, and then I walked out. I left my hat and coat in his office. I got out there to the secretary and said, gee, I left my hat and coat in the Congressman's office. She said, go on in there and get your hat and coat. It is all right. I went back in, and he said, son, how are you? Come on in. I have been expecting you. Sit down, boy, and tell me what is on your mind. I have been getting a lot of letters [from your people] down there, and I am going to help you. Tell me what is on your mind, and I will push you [laughter]. That is the truth! I said, thank you, Uncle Joe. I got my hat and coat and left out of there. I could have gone back in there, and he would have said the same thing.

P: When were you last at the White House for dinner?

B: Oh, I guess that was 1937 [or] 1938.

P: 1937? I thought maybe Mr. Reagan has been inviting you.

B: Well, he did invite me, and I am invited up there by the vice-president.

P: Mr. [Dan] Quayle?

B: Yes. I was invited back up there just recently.

P: To dinner?

- B: Yes, with Charlton Heston. We had won the *Beck* case in the Supreme Court. This was the national Right to Work Committee, [which] I am [still] active in. Charlton Heston is a good American, incidentally. He is a right-thinking sort of a guy, he and the president of the national Right to Work [Committee]. We were invited to the White House for dinner to have a little celebration, and we were going to do our thing in the Rose Garden and all that in honor of this Right to Work thing. The president was going to put some teeth in it. I was there. We gave Pat Buchanan an award, and I was supposed to go up there. [I was] invited out to Houston next week to participate in some things.
- P: Are you going?
- B: No. I am a Democrat, but I do not go out and shout about it and admit it. I try not to talk about it too much.
- P: Particularly when you are at the Reagan White House talking to Vice-President [Dan] Quayle. You do not say that too loudly.
- B: Oh, I had to eat crow about Harry Truman. He measured up. It is amazing the way one can measure up when he is thrust in. You know I was thrust in as president of St. Joe Paper Company.
- P: Yes, you told me.
- B: It never bothered me. When the responsibilities and duties are thrust upon you, most people rise to the occasion, with the exception of one vice-president of the United States, and that was Andrew Johnson. About every one has come up.
- P: But that was a tumultuous time.
- B: Yes.
- P: And it was not totally Johnson's fault.
- B: Right. Teddy Roosevelt made a good president.
- P: An excellent president.
- B: LBJ could hold it down.
- P: And Calvin Coolidge made a better president than Harding.
- B: He sure did. We had great times. He did not put any restrictions on anything. The business of America was business, and we had great times there. But Franklin

Roosevelt had to do what he did, I guess, or we would never have gotten over that chapter.

P: Well, we are going to call it a day with you. I am going to take this back to Gainesville, as I told you, and we are going to transcribe it. [Then] I will get back in touch with you, and I will send [a copy of the transcript back to you] here. It may take a few weeks to get this done.

B: That is all right. I have things to do.

P: We will turn it around, and if there are gaps, things that you and I need to talk about some more, we will just come over to Jacksonville. We will get Carter [Boydston, director of development, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences] to drive us over, and we will all strike a bell for liberty [laughter].

B: Right. We can have lobster or something like that.

P: Do you go to the River Club?

B: I am a charter member of the River Club.

P: Is their lobster good?

B: Yes. I go out to Timucua [Country Club]. There is Mrs. duPont's old home, Epping Forest.

P: That is a grand dining room at Epping Forest.

B: I have eaten over there. I do not belong to that [Epping Forest Yacht Club]. I know the owner, Herb Peyton. Do you know Herb?

P: I have done an interview with Herb. [See FBL9, University of Florida Oral History Archive.]

B: You have? Old Herb is a friend of mine. I like him. You do not push him around. He is a peculiar [person].

P: Yes, but he is a delightful person. I like him. It is one of the best interviews I have ever done.

B: I like old Herb.

P: Do you know he has become a father?

B: I did not know.

P: He got married again, for the third time, to a woman considerably younger than he, and now he [has] decided to take a chance, and he is a new father.

B: Well, congratulations. He is hard to get on the phone. I like old Herb.

P: He will answer. He will call you back. It seems to me that I have already interviewed almost half of your friends.

B: I am blessed with friends. I have a multitude of them, and I am very fortunate. I think that is one of my hobbies, spending time with them as much as I can and talking about things, reminiscing and guessing and laughing about things that may come to pass.

P: Are you going to promise to come over to the campus [of the University of Florida] this year?

B: I do not know that I will come over this year.

P: We have a new art museum to show you, and we have the [Florida] Museum of Natural History where I am. We have a lot to show you over there.

B: Oh, yes, you have lots of things.

P: You would have a wonderful time in the Harn Museum [of Art].

B: It has been a long time since I have been on your campus.

P: And it is only an hour's drive from Jacksonville.

[Carter Boydston enters the conversation at this point.]

CB: President Lombardi can show you how [football coach] Steve Spurrier works.

B: Well, I have seen Steve operate in the pros.

CB: Yes. That is right.

B: He is a good man, and he is a good coach. He did an excellent job at Duke [University]. I think you have a good man there. We are blessed with three schools here in Florida that are going to keep us on the map.

CB: That is right. And academically, UF is getting Florida on the map. We are in the Southeast, for sure, and in many ways we are national.

B: Did you know Jeff O'Neil?

P: Yes, sir.

B: Jeff was about as healthy-looking as Godfrey Smith [President of Capital City Bank Group, Inc., in Tallahassee. See FBL6, University of Florida Oral History Archives, for an interview with Smith.] He was quite a guy. He used to visit with us. I went to Rollins College. His widow wanted me to come over there and do a eulogy, and I did. We used to do things. I did not know much about his background, about his history. We used to meet and do a few things with Mr. Ball, but his widow wanted me to do it. She did not give me much notice. Like I was going to be there Sunday, and she called me Friday night. The banks were closed, and I could not get a hold of bankers. I went over, and [delivered the eulogy, and] I think she was very proud of it. It was not all exactly true. I made more of a saint out of old Jeff than he was. That will not hurt, will it?

P: No, it will not hurt at all. He deserved it.

B: Yes. I liked him. We have a lot of old friends in common. I had a friend I liked [who] was good in the evening. Sometimes he would get a little brash – he loved the booze. [That was] McGregor Smith.

P: Oh, yes. McGregor Smith precedes Marshall McDonald [as CEO of Florida Power & Light Company]. [See FBL5, University of Florida Oral History Archives, for an interview with McDonald.]

B: McGregor and John Pennekamp [former editor, *Miami Herald*] used to come up with us.

P: I knew John Pennekamp better because of his interest in history and getting the reef park [John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, off Key Largo] set up.

B: Do not overlook Mr. [Florida Supreme Court Chief] Justice [B. K.] Roberts [1949-1976]. Keep him in mind.

P: Well, I have to go out to Tallahassee and do B. K. Roberts. Everybody tells me that. It is just a matter of getting out there.

B: He and Fuller [Warren] were close friends.

P: He is a very good friend of Stephen C. O'Connell [chief justice, Florida Supreme Court, 1955-1967; president, University of Florida, 1968-1974].

B: Oh, yes.

P: Steve has a great regard for Justice Roberts.

B: I went to a thing over there in honor of Mr. Justice O'Connell and Judge Roberts.
Judge has been part of the political history of Florida.

P: Oh, he has been a part of it for a long time.

B: He sure has. Okay.