This is an oral history interview with Dr. John K. Mahon, being conducted in his home in Gainesville, Florida. Today is July 2, 1993, and my name is Stuart Landers.

Can you tell me what the K in John K. Mahon stands for?

Keith. That was my great-grandmother's maiden name. Scotch.

Was she an immigrant from Scotland?

From Ireland. They were Protestants from Ireland, and I am told they were Huguenots who went to Ireland when thrown out of France, but I do not know that. Anyway, that was her name, Sarah Keith. So I carried [on that tradition]. My father was named that, and my son is named that.

When did they emigrate to this country?

They got to my hometown of Ottumwa, Iowa, in 1853. So in the late 1840s they left because of the potato famine, the great famine. I am not sure of the year. I have something around here, because my grandfather Samuel Mahon was a boy of eleven, and he wrote a little reminiscence that I have stuck around someplace in which he gives these dates.

Were they farmers?

No, they were not. They were linen workers or something. They were educated, and they apparently had enough means to get out when the famine came. When they came to this country, my great-grandfather, ending up in Ottumwa, Iowa, ran a little tavern. He was not trained to do anything, and the girls taught music and that kind of thing. I think my grandfather, when he was old enough, taught school. They made their way.

Well, tell me a little bit about your parents, their names and backgrounds and what they did and things like that, if you could.

My father was also John K. Mahon. Ottumwa, Iowa, was where they ended up apparently, because according to the account in the county history they came in there stone broke in a coach, a family of husband and wife and about four kids. They did not have anything to go on, and the people in this little town of Ottumwa were so nice to them that they decided to stay there, and that is where they stayed. So my father was born there and went through high school there and went two years at Harvard. Then his father jerked him out of there. His father was my grandfather, Major Samuel Mahon. All of his life he was known as Major Samuel Mahon because he was in the Civil War, the Union Army.
To bring him back to business, Grandfather Mahon had founded a very successful wholesale grocery business, so my father ran that. But in 1921 he killed himself at the age of forty or forty-one. Of course, nobody ever knew why, and I hardly knew my father, so I am not able to comment. My mother was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister, and I am one of three sons. They had two that died as infants.

L: They have three surviving sons?

M: Well, my older brother is dead. My younger brother lives in Iowa still, and here I am.

But anyway, the monumental thing impressed in my life on my mother is that she had the most severe case of arthritis that I had ever seen. It was terrible. It started in her hands, and she became stiff in every joint. As the years went by she just became more and more helpless.

L: What was her name?

M: Her name was Ellen Stoltz.

L: Was she of German background?

M: None of them could speak German. They came from southern Illinois, her mother did. I do not know anything about them. None of them could speak German, so they were some generations removed.

L: When were you born?

M: February 12, 1912. I am eighty-one.

L: Well, you do not look eighty-one.

M: Well, I am.

L: You grew up in Ottumwa?

M: Yes, I went through Ottumwa High School. Then, on some account, which I cannot really [explain], I was enrolled in Dartmouth. In 1929 the great crash came—you will recall what I am talking about—and I did not go anywhere. But the next year I went to Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.

L: That is a Quaker college.
M: Yes; it is not [strictly religious, though]. You do not go to the chapel or anything like that. The Quakers founded it during the Civil War. So I have a B.A. degree from Swarthmore, and if I live I will attend my sixtieth reunion next spring.

L: So you got your B.A. in 1934?

M: That is right. Then I went back and went into the family business with my brother. The family business had been going since a little bit before the Civil War.

L: And this is grocery wholesale?

M: Yes, wholesale groceries. Then my neighbors selected me, and I went off to World War II. I was drafted, in short. [I spent] four years in that.

L: If I could back up just a moment, the reason I had asked about Swarthmore was I was wondering what your family's religious background was.

M: Well, my grandfather on my mother's side was a Presbyterian, and we went to Presbyterian church some of the time. My father was Episcopalian, and we went to the Episcopalian church some of the time. None of us were Friends. I do not know how my brother and I ended up at Swarthmore. There was a little stream of people from Ottumwa that went there. Swarthmore already had a very fine reputation as a small liberal arts college, which it was, and I owe it a great debt, I think. It opened my eyes to things. So I have always been loyal to it and remain so. I myself am not [affiliated with] anything religiously.

L: Did you have the classic liberal education there?

M: Well, there was a president there named Frank Aydelotte. I do not know where he came from, and he inaugurated the concept of what he called an honor system. We went two years to classes, and then if your grades were high enough you entered the honor system, which really was a set of graduate seminars cast at that level, with six or seven people in them, which met once a week. You were given assignments to go do. You went off and worked yourself. Each semester you had just two subjects, your major and some other. That is how it worked. Yes, it was a classic liberal education.

L: So you worked for your father's company from 1934 until . . .

M: Yes, except my father was dead by this time.

L: OK. So you and your brother were running it.

M: That is right. He was president, and I was secretary and treasurer.
L: This would be your older brother?

M: Yes. [He is] deceased. He was also Samuel Mahon.

L: Is he the one that went with you to Swarthmore?

M: Yes. He was the class of 1931. And my son went to Swarthmore; he was the class of 1972.

L: Could you give me all of these people's names, your older brother, your younger brother?

M: My brother was Samuel Mahon; my younger brother is Paul Stoltz Mahon; my son is John Keith Mahon III. I guess that is all of the names I have mentioned.

L: OK. What year were you drafted?

M: 1942.

L: In to the . . .

M: I was exempted for a while because my mother was dependent on me. She was desperately crippled and depended on me. Then I was an official in that company. I probably would have gone much earlier, but when the United States summoned me--as they usually said in the notices, "Your neighbors have selected you"--of course, I went. It pulled me out of that [wholesale grocery] situation. I do not think I was ever cut out to be an entrepreneur, if that is what you want to call it. I did that work for eight years, and I did it all right, but I never was . . .

L: Interested in being a businessman.

M: No. Businessman is the term I should have used. So when the army selected me, it jerked me out of a situation that I could not in [good] conscience get out of myself, unless I was a much harsher person than I am. I could have just told my mother, "I am going. To hell with it". Of course, when we got into the firm, times were rough, and the firm was old. We owed a lot of money, so it was a sort of back-to-back struggle, with him and me back to back to keep it going, which we did. Then the war came along and the economy improved somewhat, and our business improved with it. So we made it through. But in the midst of that I went off to the war, you see, leaving him alone.

He got a chance to sell the business. By this time it had been in the family nearly ninety years, and he did sell it. I got leave from the army to come home and sign
some of the papers as secretary and treasurer. So that ended my saga or whatever you want to call it as a wholesale grocer.

L: How long were you in the army, and where all did you go and what did you do?

M: Four years. [I served in the] European theater for one year of it, in the combat zones. I ended up with a commission as a second lieutenant graduated from OCS Class 78 in field artillery, and I spent the principal war years in the 399th Armored Field Artillery of the Eighth Armored Division. In other words, we were the supporting artillery for an armored division. I ended up with what is called a tombstone promotion to captain. When they finally discharge you--I was a first lieutenant when the war ended--they elevated you to the next highest. They just did it.

L: OK.

M: But I never kept up a reserve commission. I did for a little while. See, I got my Ph.D. at UCLA. You may be interested in that, since you are apparently interviewing me and not really the department right now. I came back as a semi-casualty into this country in 1946. My life had been pretty well chopped in two in Ottumwa. They asked me where I wanted to go, and I said California--I had never even been there--so they flew me to hospitals in California.

L: What had happened? How were you wounded?

M: I was injured in this left leg and [had] a nerve problem.

L: Was this a combat injury?

M: Yes.

L: In . . .

M: In the course of the year. I cannot remember. Anyway, when I finally got sprung from army hospitals, there I was in California, out in a hospital in Van Nuys, and I applied for graduate school at UCLA and they accepted me.

L: This was in 1946? 1947?

M: Yes, 1946. There were not any GREs [Graduate Record Examination] in those days; I have never taken one of those. They took you on your undergraduate record and recommendations people made, so I got in.

L: Why did you pick history?
Well, that was my major at Swarthmore, and I just have always been interested in it. I personally have a theory that people are interested in the past and some people could not care less. From the teaching I have done, if you will forgive the term, I have always said, "I do not think Jesus Christ could interest some people in history." But others are attuned to it. It almost strikes me as intuitive. For instance, when I worked for the army for a while as a civilian, the guy I had the greatest admiration and respect for was in military history, and his great love was military buttons. Who would give a damn about military buttons? But he did. That was his life's fascination. Where does that come from? So I have always, I think, had a bent toward how things happen and so on. I cannot explain it any other way.

What was graduate school like for you in the late 1940s? What do you remember about that? Was it rigorous?

No, it never seemed so to me. Of course, I had been out of schooling for something like twelve years. I was graduated in 1934, and I reentered UCLA in 1946, so that is twelve years. No, it never seemed particularly difficult to me. I was sick the first part, and it took me a long time [to get started]. I had hepatitis in the army and God knows what else and did not have much energy. I got to UCLA late when the fall term started, because you do not get out of an army hospital easily. All you have is a pair of pajamas and a robe and slippers, and the United States is very careful to see that they are not releasing you so that you have grounds to sue later, saying, "I have been injured," and ask for millions and whatnot. So I had a hard time to get out. I foreswore all claims and everything: "Just let me out! I want to go back [to school]." I was about a couple of weeks or a month late.

I went over and saw UCLA professors in the areas I wanted to take classes in. I had studied their catalog. UCLA was not the great academic powerhouse that it is now. Well, they said, "Travel at your own risk. Come on over. If you want to try it, try it," and I did.

It never seemed particularly difficult to me. I never felt that because of those twelve years I was terribly handicapped. I do not have any idea why. Even when it came to the examinations, the orals and stuff. I do not remember that I felt particularly upset or nervous. I was much more brash in those days than I have become since, and I guess I felt, Of course, I can grapple with it, and I will.

What were your areas of interest going in?

Well, I developed an interest in military history because I had been in the army for four years, and my interest was in the citizen soldier, because that is what I was. I had watched the soldiers during these four years, the American as a soldier. So I requested permission to work on the citizen soldier. I thought to do that I had to go
way back, to colonial times, so my dissertation was on the citizen soldier in national defense, 1791, I guess, when the government, under the Constitution, began, and it finally ended through 1815. That is what got me into it, the citizen soldier, and hence the militia and that stuff. All my professional life I have had an interest in that.

Let me think. I minored in English in American literature, primarily the novel.

L: Of your own choice?

M: Yes. I have a warmth of feeling for Swarthmore, but not for UCLA as a graduate student. You went through it with catalog in hand. Nobody paid much attention to you. My major professor was Dr. Brainerd Dyer. He was not, in my opinion, a great historian. He wrote a life of Zachary Taylor, and he wrote a life of one or two other people. I do not think Dyer ever thought I would make it. I was somewhat crippled and older by this time, you see, than was characteristic to go back to graduate school. He never thought I would make it. I was sort of an oddity in his book, but he did not hold that against me.

So you planned your course; nobody advised you that I recall. I do not think I had two hours of Dyer's undivided attention during the three and a half years [I was there], until it got around to the dissertation. Then they all read it. Of course, I made good friends [with other] graduate students--you know how that goes--and have hung on to a couple or three of them--not closely, but I keep in touch with them.

L: Are they historians also?

M: Yes, they are. One of them, Andrew F. Rolle you have probably heard of. You are not from California. He wrote a history of California that was used in the schools. Since they require California history in California, this became a very popular and for him a very profitable book. He just published a life of John C. Fremont. He is not quite as old as I am, but close to it. So he has probably been a more-prolific historian than I am. Another one was James M. Merrill. I have several things up here he has written on these shelves of people and friends of mine. So those two I have kept more or less in touch with.

L: How did you fund your education, your Ph.D.?

M: Well, of course, we sold out the business, and I had some capital. I funded it myself. Oh, I had the GI Bill of Rights, but I funded it myself too. For instance, when I went to work on the citizen soldier, Dyer, my senior professor, did not know anything about it at all. He said, "If you want to try it, go ahead." But he said, "You will have to go east and work in some of the records. No question about that." When the time came, which [was] 1949, for me to do the research leading up to my
writing of the dissertation, my wife and I--I was married by that time--made the trip. We paid for it, and we visited seven or eight of the archives in the original states.

L: And the National Archives.

M: And the National Archives.

L: Since you have mentioned your wife, can you tell me her name?

M: Her name is Enid, as in Oklahoma. Her maiden name is Pasek.

L: When were you married?

M: 1948.

L: Was there such a thing as an assistantship or a fellowship at UCLA?

M: Yes, I had one, I guess. Yes, I must have. Do you know who John Higham is? Are you an American historian?

M: Yes.

L: He has become very distinguished. Well, I was a teaching assistant for him. I was much older than he was. As you know, he had been in academics straight through, whereas I had not been. But I was a teaching assistant for him.

L: So he was a junior faculty member.

M: Well, I think he was. What we did, as I remember, was at UCLA the major professor in something gave a lecture before anywhere from 300 to 500 students, and then they broke them up into little sections of twenty-five, and we the graduate students took two or three of these sections. Now, when I was in the Department of History here we never had that many assistants, and we could not do it that way. But I always thought it was a pretty good system. A lot of us got some teaching practice that way.

L: Yes. Professional training.

M: The conscientious ones did well by the students. Those who were maybe not quite as conscientious, perhaps the students got shortchanged. Now, I do not know whether we have adopted any system like that here or not. We had not in my time.

M: Yes. Well, the major professor there would hang onto the principal lectures there; we never gave any lectures. But we did have study groups, and we graded the papers, as I remember. So I must have had an assistantship. I cannot remember anything about the stipend or whatever.

L: So you graduate in 1950. Where do you go at that point?

M: Well, by that time I am thirty-eight, and I am on the market, and the market is flooded because there were a lot of men and women--mostly men--who have gotten Ph.D.s since the war, and they are younger. I was sort of a drug on the market, and it was very hard to get a job.

L: Because of your age?

M: Yes, and I had not written anything, and I did not have any teaching experience. I had been in the wholesale grocery business and the army, and in the academic, at least at that time, and maybe now, those things did not make any difference. They asked, "Where have you taught?" "Well, I have not." I taught a little bit in the army. "What have you written?" "Nothing." So jobs were difficult.

I taught at UCLA a little while as a sort of scab because they had a big . . . this is 1950; this is the McCarthy era, and California required all professors to sign an oath saying they had never been a commie, never wanted to be, and never would, and a lot of them simply quit. So I taught a survey course for, I guess, a semester. Then I got a chance to go (a nontenure position) to Colorado A & M, which is now Colorado State.

L: Which is in what city?

M: That is in Fort Collins. So I went there for one term. I would like to have stayed there. It was beautiful, with mountains and stuff, but I was not on a tenure track. I was replacing some fellow whose lung had collapsed, and his lung got back into function, so I was out.

Then I do not know exactly how it happened, but I got a job working for the Office of the Chief of Military History, the Department of the Army, as a civilian, in Washington. So off to Washington we went. We had a son by this time. I worked in that till I came here. So that was my career.

Going back to teaching in the army a little bit; you might be interested in this. When the war came to an end, of course, American soldiers historically have always gotten in trouble if they do not have an enemy they need to fight. I mean, they drank and caroused and hurt themselves and got in car wrecks. So the army devised what it
called the Information and Education Program. They set up little schools wherever you were. We were in Czechoslovakia, and I was the most educated person in the battalion. I had not gotten a Ph.D. yet, you understand, but I guess I was the most bookish, and I was put in charge of our little education information school. We set up the little classes for whatever we had. We had trade classes for carpenters and that kind of stuff that the local folk taught, we taught German, and so on and so on. I did a little teaching of something.

L: So this was to keep them occupied until the demobilization.

M: That is right. [It was] to give them something to do that presumably would help them in the future.

L: What did your duties as a military historian in Washington consist of?

M: Well, I worked in what is called [the] Organizational History and Honors branch. The fruit of it was, in part, that. I wrote the introduction to that massive volume. Our purpose was to keep official track of the honors and a historical record of all units—the army, regular and irregular. So that is what we did. I gained invaluable information there. We had access to the Pentagon, we had access to the library of the Army War College, we had secret clearance, and we had access to the military stacks of the Library of Congress. In other words, we could go right back and sit around in front of the books. So it was an invaluable experience, and I learned more about where you could find things relative to the military history of the United States than I possibly could have learned anywhere.

L: By "honors," you mean citations?

M: Yes, and credit for combat. All regiments of the army, if you have ever seen a review or anything, have many streamers hanging, and there are accorded a streamer for every action they have been in. Let us say Gettysburg, or any other war. So the old regiments have a whole sheaf of these, and that is what we rode herd on. The army was very careless about its history. It would frequently inactivate some old outfit and then a few years later activate it again. Military outfits to some degree depend on morale, and morale somewhat depends on pride of unit and lineage. They would come to somebody and say, "What have we done? Where have we been?" That is where we came in.

L: I am going to read the title of this into the tape so we will have it: Army Lineage Series, Infantry, Part I, by John K. Mahon and Romana Danysh, Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, Washington, DC, 1972. So this would be a reprint of the original.
M: Yes. The original was a paperback, and I have it around here. I was on that alone. That came on years later when the army had a lot more money for publications and put it out. But it is an interesting little piece. A history of the organization of the United States infantry is what I wrote in there.

L: Which fed closely into your research interest, to a certain extent.

M: It sure did, and then of course that is what I was assigned to do, so I chased around in all these resources in Washington, DC, tracking it down. It was a priceless experience as far as military history is concerned.

L: Was that a well-paying job? Was it a poor-paying job?

M: Well, it was to me. I ended up finally before I came up here as a GS-11.

L: Oh, civil service. I see. That is high.

M: Well, you would be astonished. I put together a few other papers here. I thought you were going to talk more about the department--maybe you will get that--than you have about me.

L: We are getting there.

M: Anyway, I came here in 1954, and my starting salary was $5,000. That was for nine months, and I did not get any pay in the summer. We usually went off, and I did research. Again, at my own expense. Oh, I got a couple of grants from the American Philosophical Association and a few things like that. So this was a reduction of a little something from my GS-11, but I have no idea what I [was paid]. I have papers, and I would have to go back and scrounge around. I lost maybe $1,000 or $2,000, but I was tired of it. I had always wanted to teach.

In the system in the Office of the Chief of Military History they had a strange dual system: the chief of military history was a major general, and then they had a chief historian who was a Ph.D. It went all down the line like this. Well, I finally got to be the head of the Organization History and Honors Branch. Then when the Korean War was over or nearly over they had a bunch of colonels and whatnot they did not know what to do with, so they brought a colonel in to be head of the Organizational History and Honors Branch, and I was just supposed to tell him what to do. That did not suit me at all. I mean, he did not know the history of the War of 1812 from the Mexican War, really, so I decided then, I am getting out of here the first chance I ever get. The first chance I ever got was to come here, so I came here. That is how that happened.
L: What was Gainesville like in 1954? What was your reaction? What did your wife think?

M: Well, I bought this house in August. She was not here; she stayed in Washington while I came down here and scrounged around. And this was out in the woods. When she first saw it I think she thought we had come to the end of the line. This was too much. She had never lived in the South. She lived most of her life in California. Spanish moss hanging from the trees, and we did not have any street lights, and the road was two ruts, the grass growing between them, and at night you could hear wildcats and others back here crying or howling. It suited me all right. I was sort of a country person anyway, [having come from] a small town, and I was glad to have employment. Then Gainesville. Well, I liked it better then than I do now because it was beautiful. You will not remember, but University Avenue used to be lined with big, fine trees. They cut them all down to widen the road so more cars could go on it. I do not know how big [the population was]. I guess maybe Gainesville was 25,000 or 30,000 people in those days. You knew a lot of people. Now we can go to the cafeteria and hardly see anybody we know. In those days we went to the one cafeteria there was, long gone downtown, and you knew lots of people.

L: Was that Byron Winn's?

M: No. This was called Long's Cafeteria. It has been gone God knows how many years.

L: You said you knew a lot of people. Were you socializing or making contact with non-University people in Gainesville?

M: No. I have never been a Rotarian and that kind of thing. It was a mistake I made, I think, because I think you do better if you are a church-goer and get in that routine and go to the Rotary and keep up with the boys. But I always was a little too cynical to take much pleasure in it. For instance, when I first published that book I got called around to talk about the Indians, so I appeared before the Rotary Club or somebody, and they broke into singing "John Brown had a little Indian" or something like that. That struck me as puerile, which is a lot of what men's organizations do. I started out sour on it and remained so.

L: The reason I asked is I have always been curious about the relationship between people that come to Gainesville because of the University and the non-University Gainesville community.

M: We knew a few of them. It was a smaller place, and my wife was very active in things then, so somehow or other she got to know some people who lived up on [NW] 22nd [Street] who were people of considerable means. So on the first New
Year's that we were here we got invited to a party they had. This was Old Gainesville.

L: Do you remember the family's name?

M: Well, maybe I can. She is dead, and maybe he is dead. Anyway, this was a novel experience to me. Remember, I am a Northerner and fundamentally a Yankee, and I always remember the lawyer O'Neil around here, retired. You were just wandering around talking to people, and the champagne was free, and there was a lot of stuff to eat and drink. I fell into a conversation with him, and he said, "I flew an aircraft. I always told them (this was World War II) the United States is only my third loyalty. My first loyalty is to Alachua County, and if they did not want me to fly their goddamn airplane under those conditions, why, to hell with them."

L: What was his second loyalty?

M: I do not remember.

L: Probably to the South.

M: Yes. Florida, probably. Then I ran into another guy--I do not remember who he was, one of the old-line families around here. He was talking about the birds: "The blue jays," he said, "and the cardinals they are around together, but they do not mingle." You get his point. He never used the term miscegenate and so on. All this was pretty alien to me, so they set up a mental barrier between me and them.

I have no respect, basically, for the history of the South anyway. You could write a history of Florida that would make you vomit on every page because of how they have treated the blacks and Indians and others in such awful human relationships. The scramble for land and whatnot. The history of any community like Gainesville is fundamentally based on property values, and those property values are based on people who were determined to maximize it. They do not care what happens beyond that. I do not start out with any fundamental sympathy for the Lost Cause. To me, slavery was the cause of the Civil War, and I have no use for such an institution. Well, I have lived here for all these years, and that is my own [opinion]. But you did not generally talk about it in those days to the natives. And remember, we should have left as a matter of principle. The society was sharply segregated. You just cannot appreciate it now.

L: Had you ever had any experience with that before coming to Gainesville?

M: Yes. The country was segregated, but we went to school with black kids in Ottumwa, Iowa. I do not think they ever went to the proms or anything, but they played in the athletic events. But in my home town, mark you, when Marian
Anderson, one of the great voices of this century, came, no hotel would admit her. My aunt took her in. But we were not as aware of it.

There were not many blacks there as here. But here there were two drinking fountains--black and white. Say down at the courthouse if you so much as went over and symbolically drank out of the black fountain somebody would probably knock you over the head. There were four toilets for black men and women, usually in filthy conditions, and white. The schools were segregated. The blacks could not go to any movie. They had a little nissen hut they had up there on 5th Avenue that they went to. They were not permitted to go to any football spectacles or anything, except there was a little place down behind one of the goal posts where they could sit and watch the game. The idea of having "niggers" on the team was something they could not endure. It is hard to communicate it, but I mean it was a hard segregation. I could not disapprove of this more, but we shamelessly put up with it all these years. And it came around pretty well, as you know. It has changed so much.

L: What was the University of Florida like in 1954? I know that there was something of a postwar boom.

M: Well, I think there were about 12,000 students in it at that time, and when I was hired I think I taught three or four courses, three or four sections of the basic history, what we called 240. Well, I do not know what we called it. You know what I mean--the first half and then the second half. That is what I was assigned.

But also, while we are on that subject, I came here because--and this is a rather interesting story--the Ivy League schools had decided that the ROTCs they had ought to be taught by scholars and not officers who did not know enough, so Harvard and Yale and Princeton worked up courses with trained military historians, Ph.D.s, running them. Florida wanted to trail along: "If they are going to do it, we ought to do it," so they began looking for military historians, of which there were not very many. Well, that is how I got a chance to come here. I was in the Department of History, but I was associated with the ROTC and helped with their course.

L: Were you leading drill and things like that?

M: No, no, this was just courses in history, strictly history.

L: Was ROTC mandatory at this point?

M: Yes.

L: For men anyway.
M: So I gave some lectures, along with the officers, before great big classes, several hundred of them.

L: You were hired as an assistant professor in the history department?

M: Yes, [at a salary of] $5,000, as I told you.

L: Were you teaching courses for the University College sections?

M: No. Well, yes, we had to do that some. At that time you had to. R. W. Patrick was chairman at that time, and he mandated--I guess it was he who mandated it--that everyone had to teach a course in what we called C-1, which was American Institutions or something like that, so yes, I taught some of those courses. I learned quite a bit in them too, because I had not been schooled in sociology or anthropology or anything, and they had a mixture of that. Those were pretty good courses if they were well taught. They were instructive.

L: I understand that there were a number of historians who were on the University College faculty as instructors.

M: Sure, there were.

L: What sort of relationship do you remember between those men (I guess they were all men) and the history department members?

M: Well, the relationship was kept aloof not by Patrick so much, but by some of the succeeding chairmen of the Department of History who did not like to use those people much. But we were dependent on them or we could not run things. Let me see. I wrote something here way back. I fished around in the files. "Ten members of the history faculty are not . . ." This is 1968; I was chairman at that time. I became chairman in 1965, and I remained chairman till 1973. I was chairman for eight years. So this is the biennial report. "Ten members of the history faculty are not on the history payroll, but the official size of our faculty is therefore twenty-four, because we elected these people to be in the history department. But they were paid by the University College."

L: You elected them in 1968, or this happened earlier?

M: We elected them, I guess, annually.

L: Oh. I see.

M: So we had to borrow. "The department offers about fifty courses every quarter except for the summer. In order to do this, it has to borrow five and a third full-time
FTEs [Full-time Equivalent] who are elected members from other departments, most of them from the Department of Social Science. In addition, we have to borrow two and one-third full-time equivalents who have Ph.D.s in history but have never been elected." I do not know how that happened. In other words, we simply could not function. We borrowed so many to carry out, for instance, United States history. People who came aboard, for instance, who were originally in the University College were like [David] Colburn and [George] Pozetta and [Augustus] Burns. They all came in via the University College, not the Department of History.

L: And also people like Dr. [E. Ashby] Hammond.

M: Yes. Hammond was an elected member of the Department of History, but he was paid by the University College. So we never had an ancient historian or a medieval historian. We borrowed them. We borrowed an ancient historian, an old gent named [John Henry] Hans Groth. And then Ashby Hammond regularly taught medieval history.

L: Upper division medieval history.

M: Well, no. I guess we had an offering or two of medieval history that were undergraduate, and he taught those. Nobody else did that I know of. So it was an interesting straddle.

Some of the people were never fully utilized. For instance, when I got to be chairman, Arthur Funk was over there, and he was not used. I asked him, "Do you want to teach some history?" and he said, "I would like to," so he did. Well, he is retired too, but he is still a very active historian, a productive historian. George Bentley [is another]; nobody ever used George, so I went over and asked George, "Do you want to teach?" and he said, "Yes, I would like to [teach] the history of the South," so he came over and taught the history of the South. There was a sort of "let's keep them off at an arm's length" view of it.

L: But you did not seem interested in that sort of view.

M: No, not at all. I was interested in if they were qualified to teach in history if they wanted to do it. In those days Michael Gannon was a priest. In fact, he was a monseignor, and he was paid in the Department of Religion, I guess. I asked him if he wanted to teach Florida history, as I remember it (I hope I am correct), and he said, "Yes, I would very much like to [do that] over and above the religious courses," so he carried an added load to teach the history of Florida. You would have to look at his record.

L: That is while you were chairman.
M: Yes.

L: I guess we should go back to the remainder of the 1950s. How large was the history department, and who can you remember as being [on the faculty then]?

M: Well, apparently in 1968, as I just read you, the official size was twenty-four, but we borrowed ten, so apparently we had fourteen.

L: In 1968.

M: I was trying to remember that. When I came here, as far as I can remember, the chairman was R. W. Patrick. You know who he was, I guess.

L: Chairman of the department [1950-1955].

M: Yes. And then Donald E. Worcester [was chairman] and Lyle McAlister and John A. Harrison, I guess, Jack Harrison, and Ancil Payne and David Dowd and James Glunt. Now, I cannot remember others; if there were any others that were on the history payroll I cannot remember. We borrowed at that time Hammond and William E. Baringer. You probably have never even seen or heard of him. He is still living around here. Deaf as a post. But he taught United States history. George Osborn, who is dead, and [H. Joseph] Jack Doherty, who just retired, and Hans Groth, who taught ancient history. We borrowed those. Later when they hired some more in the University College we borrowed [Augustus] Burns and [Julian] Pleasants and [David] Colburn and [Ralph] Peek and [Merlin] Cox and Gannon.

L: [Samuel] Proctor.

M: Well, I guess Proctor was in that. I guess he was University College. I am not sure. And a man named Clifton Yearley, who is still at the University of Rochester, I guess. And Frank Haber, now deceased. We borrowed those, and then others that came and went whose names I have forgotten. I tried to remember. Of these, Worcester went to Texas Christian [University], Patrick went up to [the University of] Georgia, and, if you are interested in this out-of-sequence, I was chairman, and they offered him about $5,000 more to go to Georgia than we were paying him. Patrick came in to me and said, "Do not make any effort to keep me here. I have been here so long, and I would like to make the move," so we never made any struggle to do it, and Patrick went. He died up there; he lived to be about fifty-one.

McAlister is retired up here [in Gainesville] and lives in the Atrium. David Dowd was killed in a head-on crash. Harrison went down to be some kind of dean at the University of Miami, but he retired up here. Ancil Payne is dead, and Jimmy Glunt is dead. Glunt was a prime student of Ulrich B. Phillips at the University of Michigan, who was a guy who really pioneered the study of the South. Glunt came down here
as one of his prime, first-class students. And he never did anything here. He just appeared to go to grass. I knew him at the end. He was teaching only correspondence courses and things, but he was my office mate in Peabody Hall.

L: I wonder why?

M: Well, this was not that kind of University.

L: It was not geared toward high-powered scholarship?
M: That is right. Patrick told me one time the first book he published was called *Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet*, and it was a revision of his dissertation. It came out, and he took it to the dean--I do not know who the dean was--and showed it to him, and the dean said, "That is interesting." So he took the book and went back down the hall, and a minute later here came the dean pounding after him on a double-take: "Did you write that?" He was perfectly astonished that anybody had done a thing like this. That is the way it was. It was sleepy, I guess. If you wanted to go to grass, you went to grass. I do not know. You did not have to. There were enough resources and so on to do it.

L: What were tenure and promotion based on at this time?

M: I do not know. All I can remember while I have been here is it is based on teaching and productivity, in other words, doing something original, and service to the University or to the community, that kind of thing. These are the only criteria I ever heard of.

L: So publication was a criteria.

M: As far as I know. When I came here it was, because McAlister sort of wakened me up to it. I came here and was very much interested in teaching and would pound away teaching those several sections, plus I taught quite a bit of other. I always taught a course in military history, even when it became disassociated from ROTC. Then we did not have a colonial historian for years and years, so I taught colonial history some, and I offered seminars in the early national period. We were not very widely covered in the matter of areas of history. That is one of the things that astonishes me in looking at the situation now--the remarkable affluence compared to what we had.

L: In terms of departmental funding.

M: In perks, yes. As an anecdote, you see, we did not have any air-conditioning in old Peabody [Hall] at all, and finally they said, "You just cannot have this," if a faculty member was willing to buy a window air-conditioner and have it installed. "We are not going to use the electricity." Then they changed this policy and said, "Well, if
you want to buy the air-conditioner, it is yours, but we will provide the juice for it." So that is the way it was. When I became chairman I bought the air-conditioner from John Harrison, who preceded me as chairman.

L: For the main office or for your office?

M: For the main office. And the classrooms did not have any air-conditioning at all. That is the way it was, and we were accustomed to it. Now everybody has a computer. We had one secretary who did all the work, and I mean worked! I fished out my stuff and looked, and the highest salary I ever got was $36,500. I do not know what they hire beginners now for.

L: $29,000 or $30,000.

M: I was always paid nine months; I never was on twelve months. I worked twelve months some years when I was chairman, and maybe they would find $1,000 or something for me, but my tenure has always been nine months.

L: What about money for travel?

M: Oh, that was very thin. These days they invite people down here to be interviewed and stuff. We had to go through a real legislative process to get anybody down here to be interviewed. If we got one or two a year it would be remarkable. But they flow in and out of here now.

All the way around, that is what astonishes me so much. I notice that I stated here in this 1968 [report]: "We have a great need for more graduate assistants than we have. We have never had either an ancient or a medieval historian on the payroll." We had just hired an African historian. "At present we have a departmental secretary plus a half-time secretary, the latter being paid from NDEA funds" (National Defense Education). Oh, that was [R.] Hunt Davis.

L: OK. I have met Dr. Davis.

M: And we hired Hunt Davis. He did not have a degree yet, but he got it. We hired [C. John] Sommerville, I think, before he had his degree—this is when I was chairman—and he got it. And we hired [Eldon R.] Turner. They did not have degrees. I suppose we were not very competitive pricewise. When I was chairman our problem was to hold the faculty together, so we lost several people. Dowd went off to the University of Kentucky.

L: And there was the one who went to Rochester.
M: Yearley went off to Rochester, Dowd to Kentucky, [Patrick] up to Georgia, whom I mentioned a little bit ago, and Dr. Arthur Thompson died, so we had somewhat of a problem to hang on to what we had and expand from it.

L: What can you tell me about the graduate program? What state was it in when you arrived, and how did it change through your career? What are your earliest memories of that?

M: Well, I have always had the impression it was a very good program, and my impression is founded in part on my own experience as a graduate student, because here, as I recall it, the graduate faculty was caring. They were involved and interested with the graduate students. At UCLA, at least in my case, that certainly was not so. As I mentioned to you, I hardly had the undivided time of Dr. Dyer. But the graduate students here had an almost unlimited amount of time [from] professors if they sought it and wanted it. So they got, in my opinion, as good a graduate education as you would at Harvard or anyplace else.

This was particularly distinguished in Latin American history. I think the evidence of that is the number of graduate students that went off and have become conspicuous in the history of Latin America all over this country.

L: Or even Murdo Mcleod.

M: Sure. He is a graduate. The European program was founded much later. I do not know what has become of it in latter years. When I finally left we had never produced more than about three Ph.D.s in European history—I do not know what has happened since—because we did not have much in the way of European historians. United States history I cannot give you figures for. Those we had were well trained and have gone off and done good things in general.

L: I am sure you had graduate students and directed dissertations.

M: Oh, yes. Not a lot of them.

L: Who were some of them?

M: I completed, I think, about twelve dissertations in the doctoral program. That does not compare with, say, [Lyle] McAlister. He must have had twice that number. Well, the most distinguished is Craig Symonds, who is at the naval academy and for a good while was chairman of that and just published a book on the life of General Joseph E. Johnston. It is somewhere around here.

L: I can find it in the catalog.
M: He has published several things.

L: They were all interested in military history?

M: Yes. Then Edward K. Eckert who is up at a college in upstate New York. He has published very substantially--I have a few things there--and Reginald C. Stuart, who is a Canadian. He came down here from Prince Edward Island, and he has remained in Canada. He has published several things. I have them all stuck up there; I would have to look for them.

L: Did the department have much money to fund graduate students?

M: I do not think so. We did not have much money to do anything. I repeat: what astonishes me is the relative affluence compared to what we had.

L: Well, that makes me feel better.

M: Of course, I have been out of it for eleven years. It was much more collegial to me than I remember it in later years. The faculty was not so affluent that they all had big studies at home in those days, so they had offices in Peabody Hall, and they studied there. There would be numbers of us there Saturdays and Sundays working. [There developed] a little collegiality that way. We put up the mail on Saturday; the mail was brought in in sacks, and some of us would come down and put it up. Now you walk through the halls on Saturday and Sunday in Turlington [Hall], and it seems like a deserted village. It was not that way in Peabody Hall in the early days, as I remember. You could always find somebody in his office. Now people come here and right away buy a very fine house with a nice study and work at home through preference.

Of course, I think the department has become very powerful, and is well known all over the country. It is far more significant, I think, than we ever were in our days. The problem in part was resources. It never occurred to this state, I think, to fund as they do now. I believe if you take my salary from $5,000 to $36,500, I do not believe inflation has been seven times. I think faculty salaries have exceeded inflation. I could not prove that because I do not know any inflationary figures.

Just let me read you a few little things here that I underlined. This comes from that report in 1968. "During the biennium, sixty-five history majors have received B.A. degrees," so that gives you some idea. In 1965 an estimate of ten for the next graduation. "We have awarded Ph.D. degrees to four persons in this biennium, master of arts degrees to twenty, and master of arts in teaching to four. Counting both Title IV and Title VI NDEA"--that was big in those days--"we have thirty-one NDEA fellows."
L: That sounds quite productive.

M: Just let me scan down here. I have already read some of this. "If the department is deprived of the services of the seven and two-thirds FTEs it borrows"--I mentioned this earlier--"it would have to cut its offerings back to about the level of a small college curriculum." That has to do with the relationship with us and the University College. "In all ways during the biennium we have strengthened our position as a center for the study of Iberian, Latin American, Caribbean, colonial expansion," and we certainly did. "During the last year of the biennium we switched along with the rest of the University to the quarter system"--we apparently had semesters--"and we reevaluated graduate courses from three hours to four hours. In the twenty-one years this department has been offering the degree"--so it is twenty-one years back from 1968 is when the first Ph.D.s were offered--"we have finished and sent out thirty-seven Ph.D.s." I do not know how this compares with other universities.

"The Department of History desperately needs a line item for a professor of modern European history." Since Dowd had left and was killed we did not have any. "We ask that a line item be created which will enable us to retain our African historian." Apparently we did not have a line. He was hired on OPS [Other Personnel Service] or something. "Other priorities for line items which we do not now have but need are as follows: the history of England with emphasis on the British empire, twentieth-century United States, ancient and medieval." Then I mentioned to you before we had a desperate need for more graduate assistants.

L: Which means a desperate need for funding for graduate assistants.

M: Sure. That is what it all probably comes down to.

L: So it sounds like your priorities as chairman were preserving what you had and expanding the faculty. Is that accurate?

M: I guess so, yes. Here is one from 1965 that I wrote to Dean [Ralph] Page [of the College of Arts and Sciences]: "At present the Department of History has sixty enrolled graduate students," which was pretty good. There are 100 now, and that is not too bad. "We have somewhere between 100 and 120 undergraduate majors."

This was in 1965, and [for] certain figures I have here I will go back to the 1968 [report], which interests me. "There has been a sharp increase in student enrollment in our courses at all levels." I am a little surprised at that, because I remember the 1960s and the students saying, "Who gives a damn about it?" But then we got the statistics here showing that our enrollment in history courses went up, and I have those statistics there. You notice the duplication at that time. Now you can rip stuff off on . . .
L: Printers. Those are carbon forms.

M: That is what we had in those days. "At the present"—this is 1968, again—"we offer no history courses specifically centered around the phenomenon of urbanization. It would be to our advantage to build on what strength we already have, and therefore our approach should be to lay stress on the history of the urbanizing South," because, of course, the South was the pitch, "and of the growth and impact of cities if we added a man or woman specifically trained in urban history." We did not have any women at all, and, of course, no blacks.

Then here is one dated 1968. "What we need is somebody qualified to teach and do research in some aspect of the history of science." Frank Haber had gone off to Maryland, and he is all we had in the history of science. I think this is prophetic in a way: "I refer to our need to have a better articulation with history teachers teaching at levels below the University." Well, we have since done that. They set up an institute here. I forget what they call it. Jane Landers ran it for a while [the History Teaching Alliance]. Well, we were aware of that then, but we did not have any money to do it. Every position we added by way of a new specialty would cost no less than $12,000, so you get some idea . . .

L: Of the entering salary.

M: Yes.

L: When did the department hire the first woman? Was that during your tenure?

M: No. We never had any women on the faculty that I can recall while I was there.

L: Between 1965 and 1973, when you were chairman, did you come under any pressure from above or from the legislature to hire blacks or women? Was that an issue at this time?

M: I do not remember it if we did. I do not remember. We did not come under any particular pressure. Ralph Page was dean, and I will mention to you how I got to be chairman, according to my memory. I never aspired to be chairman. I never thought in those terms. But there got to be a bitter rivalry between David Dowd and Arthur Thompson to be chairman; they both wanted to be chairman desperately, and it tore the department because they were proselytizing in the department: "Will you support me?" and so on.

L: This is when Harrison has decided to go to Miami?
M: Yes. Right. And he had been chairman. So I was called over to Page’s office for no particular reason that I knew of, and he said, "I want you to be chairman." I do not remember whether I said, "I will think it over," or not, but I did it.

L: Now, did the history faculty have an election for chairman at this time?

M: No. This was a fiat of the deans. It was not like that so much in those days. The chairman was pretty much responsible for hiring people. You could consult the other people on the side, but there were not any committees, and the dean acted by fiat, as he did in my case. So that is how I became chairman. I was associate professor at the time, I think, and I kept pestering the subdean because the work was onerous to me—not the work itself, but I never cared for the tensions that there are when you are dealing with people's lives. I mean, when you have to split up the pay, that was up to the chairman. I do not remember that I had any committee that sat there. They gave us a certain amount of raise money that came down from above, and you sat there and distributed it.

L: Making merit-based decisions.

M: Sure. Presumably that is what you did if you were unbiased, and I think I was. But there was always the tension of the people who were not going to particularly benefit from this or who did not think they got enough and one thing or another. As chairman, you got a great many of these personal problems about tenure and people who were worried to death about tenure. There was one whom I will not mention by name who used to make my life miserable. He had several daughters, and he was deeply concerned that he get tenure, and he had to keep feeding them. He would call up here at midnight distressed over his problems, and my wife— I would be in bed—would say, "He is already asleep." He would say, "But I cannot sleep." She would say, "Well, that is tough. You can call tomorrow." You got things like this which many people handle [thus]: "So what? That is that." It was not my temperament. I dwelled on these things; I thought about them, fussed about them in my mind. I never enjoyed that type of work, not ever. I did it, and I did it in the wholesale grocery business because I had to.

So that is the way it went, and it worked out all right. I lasted eight years at it. I cannot vouch for my own record. I do not know. I did what I could the best I could, I thought. I suggested from some of the stuff I have read that we had ideas about where we needed to go but had no way to put them into practice, and I always felt a little badly when Dr. [Kermit] Hall and the analysis he made some years ago spoke about the department in the past as being a sleepy little department. I never thought we were sleepy. It hurt my feelings a little because I thought we did maybe as well as we could with what we had. Maybe we did not. But it is a different ball game; it just is.
I do not think in my time Florida especially aspired to be a world-class university. It aspired to be a good teaching institution at all levels, which I think it was. I think the record would show the teaching quality of the Department of History has uniformly been excellent, and the graduate instruction too, as far as I know, has been excellent. I do not see why every university of any size has to be world class. I have never understood that; I do not now--always aspiring to be first. With the level which we worked we did all right, I think.

L: That has a lot to do with getting grant money and things like that.

M: That was another thing, you see: grant money came scarce. I think the first significant grant the Department of History ever got came through the Indian stuff.

L: I was going to ask you about that.

M: Doris Duke. I was called because somebody read that book [The History of the Second Seminole War, 1967], and Doris Duke is interested in Indian oral history because she realizes there is no Indian history because they never wrote. "Can we come down and see you?" So I got a hold of [Sam] Proctor, since he was already dealing with oral history, and they came down. In the end we got something like $250,000 from the Duke Foundation.

L: This book was published in 1967, and the Southeast Indian Oral History Program started in 1970?

M: I guess so. I do not remember.

L: Who is Doris Duke, or who was Doris Duke?

M: Duke tobacco. Duke University is named for them, her folks. I do not know what tobacco company. They made millions and millions. Doris Duke would be way in her eighties if she is still alive, and I do not think Doris had anything to do with it much. She was an enormously rich and spoiled young heiress. But [the] people [who] handled her money (and maybe it got back to her), the people we dealt with, said, "Well, we will have to take this up with Ms. Duke." She married a movie star or two and, I think, was accused of killing one chauffeur who was her lover, I guess, by driving the car and pressing him against the garage door or a wall or whatever. She had a turbulent personal life. She was a woman like Tallulah Bankhead--very handsome who could not bear to grow old, so she did everything in her power to continue to look young. I do not believe she has died. I have never seen any notice of it. She has to be pushing ninety.

L: So they set up a foundation in her name or the family name.
M: Yes. She may have had considerable control of it. I do not know. I would liked to have met her, but I do not know who we met. We went up there, Proctor and I, and talked to some woman who was Ms. Duke's personal representative, and in the end we got about $250,000. I do not believe, subject to correction, that the department of history had ever had a grant like that. Well, I never have been schooled in grantsmanship, and I did not make any effort to get that. I was called.

L: It sounds like it dropped into your lap one day.

M: That is right.

L: Now, how large of an oral history project did Samuel Proctor have set up at the time?

M: I cannot remember. I do not know. I was not interested in it except the Indian aspect.

L: I know that you conducted a number of interviews with Seminoles.

M: I did. Some of the most fascinating things I have ever done as a historian was talking to these people. I think it is a great way to go, to talk to people. I enjoyed it.

L: What were you researching? Were you researching a particular project when you did your Seminole interviews?

M: No. We just wanted to find out what they knew about their past. Most of the ones I talked to were white people who had been closely associated with the Indians in one way or another. Another fellow that got a Ph.D. under my direction was Tom King, and Tom King wrote a dissertation on tribal relationships or something, a very fine [work] [Robert Thomas King, "The Florida Seminole Polity, 1858-1978," 1978]. Well, he is at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas [UNLV], and he has gotten away from Indian history altogether. But he went down there; we had some money from Doris Duke to give grants, and he went down and lived with them. He got pretty close to some of the old Indians and picked up information from them.

L: How long did this go on after it started?

M: Well, as far as I know Sam is still carrying it on.

L: But for your involvement.

M: When I retired I never did anything more in it.

L: But it continued up until your retirement.
M: Oh, yes, and there is a body of very useful material for somebody to mine there. I would not mind doing it myself, but I do not think I will probably ever get around to it. What I have done latterly has been writing articles for encyclopedias, because I get asked to do it, and things like . . . this is not an encyclopedia work, but Gannon is putting together a synopsis of Florida history.

L: I think he has already published that: Florida: A Short History.

M: No. He is doing something else, and Proctor is writing something on twentieth-century Florida, and Brent Wiseman and I are writing something on the Indians. I have finished some stuff on the three wars. That is what I have done latterly. Then I get requests from all kinds of encyclopedias. There is the James Madison encyclopedia, and I was requested to write three or four things for them, and I did. There is an encyclopedia of small wars, or the Spanish-American War (I forget which), and I wrote several for them. And I have two or three yet to write. This is the kind of thing I have done. I do not have a book project going. I wish I did, but I do not.

L: I wanted to ask you about the library resources.

M: Then?

L: Well, when you arrived, and how did they change? Were they adequate?

M: Somewhere in here there is some stuff I underlined. This is 1969. "Perhaps the most serious area of underfunding for us is money allotted for the purchase of library materials. The American Historical Association states that a department offering a graduate program even in one historical area should have a library appropriation of $25,000. Ours last year was $11,000."

L: Yikes!

M: "I would like to point out that at this date"--well, you get the general point. And along farther down in another connection I say, "Our office space is perennially insufficient." So there was not any area in which we [did not need improvement]. We could have done better if we had had a little more means.

L: So money was the overall limiting factor.

M: I do not think it was talent. Of course, we did not have the money to attract the kind of talent that has come since. But what we had was at a certain level pretty good, and I repeat what I said before: I think the teaching was uniformly excellent.
L: I wanted to ask you a number of questions that go back to things that were going on in Gainesville and the larger University.

M: Fire when ready.

L: One of them has to do with when the [state Senator Charley] Johns Committee came. I know The Gainesville Sun has been running articles recently [about the activities of the committee]. What do you remember about that, about Cold War Gainesville, so to speak?

M: Well, I do not remember being much touched by that. I do not know whether it had run its course by the time I got here or not. That I cannot remember. I remember some of the people who left, because it was under a cloud. They have deleted all the names, it says in this stuff [articles from the Sun]. I remember some of those people.

L: Did the history department lose people?

M: No, we never were touched that I know of. I think it is possible that we might have been, [but we] were not that I was ever aware of. Of course, I was blissfully unaware of homosexuality in general until I got to college. I really never did think there was any such a thing, and I discovered that was not true. So I cannot remember being touched. I was indignant by what the Johns Committee had done, but I was not personally involved in any kind of protest, and I do not remember that we were quizzed at all in history. I would not know of anybody we had.

L: Do you recall having to go to the Florida Gym and signing a loyalty oath?

M: I think so; I think we did.

L: OK. Well, what about the turbulent 1960s? I know that your wife was involved in the Gainesville Women for Equal Rights.

M: Yes. My wife was president of the League of Women Voters and president of the Association of University Women or whatever you call it, and she was very active in those things. We were deeply involved. It was much more immediate in those days than it is now. Gainesville has gotten larger and more impersonal, and I find I really do not know enough about some of the things. Let us take this fracas over [Gainesville City] Manager [Paul] White. I do not know enough to sound my A on that one way or another, but in the earlier days at least I thought I did, so I was frequently talking before the commissions on one thing or another, more often than not [on issues like] preservation of trees and things like that, because I have always had an affinity that way. I guess you know I am a loyal member of the Sierra Club,
and I have been president of this chapter or chairman and treasurer of it, and also the Audubon Society.

L: Were you at all involved in the Civic Action Association [CAA]?

M: Yes, I was.

L: What can you tell me about your involvement with that?

M: Well, I think I have this right. We have papers around here on it. That constituted a major breakthrough in the politics of this community. If it was not the Civic Action Association it was another one, but I think it was that name that was primarily sparked plugged by John DeGrove [associate professor of political science], who has since become a significant figure in Florida history in general, and Ruth McQuown [assistant professor of political science who is] deceased. The problem was that the government of Gainesville was run by a little coterie of people of power, business people who fundamentally, from my point of view, ran the community to their advantage. They did some good, but they ran it to their advantage, and if it was not to their advantage, then the community suffered.

L: Who were they? Businessmen and land owners?

M: Yes, like Addison Pound, who in those days ran Baird Hardware, and [Florida] Senator [William A.] Shands, for whom Shands [Teaching Hospital] is named. I cannot think of the other name, but these people owned real estate. But the Civic Action Association for some reason unknown to me decided to try and break this chokehold on the government and got Byron Winn to run for the city commission. You spoke about Winn's place down there. Well, Byron was a local boy, but he did not really go along with what was going on. So the Civic Action Association got behind Byron, and we developed an organization and actually went from door to door and pounded the pavement and that kind of stuff and got him elected, which was the first breakthrough of anybody who was not in this inner coterie of people who were fundamentally property oriented. And Winn's associates, with whom he had gone to high school, persecuted him cruelly. His wife got so upset she left him, and people otherwise harmed him when they could.

L: In what ways? How did they persecute him?

M: Business ways and so on, just personal. They would not speak to him any longer and that kind of thing. They had been old friends. So that got the camel's nose under the tent. Then the Civic Action Association elected Alan Sutherland, who was a professor of [electrical] engineering. He is dead. Anyway, it began a progression that broke the hold of this type of people on the community.
So now they are not basically that type. Maybe they are right now more than they have been latterly, but in the past the commission has been changed from what it was in those days. The decisions as to who got what used to be made totally privately.

L: Above Pound's hardware store.

M: The hardware store but also out at the country club, behind the closed doors. The country club was sort of the habitat of those people, and they made decisions. For instance, let me give you a little anecdote I remember from Al Ring. Do you know who Al Ring is? Al Ring Park is named for him. He was a professor of research and real estate.

L: I have met his wife, Emily.

M: Al has made a lot of money, and he is eighty-seven or eighty-eight, very vigorous. He is in Maine right now. Anyway, he has always been a real estate appraiser. There was a fellow named Red Frank who wanted to be a county appraiser, which appraised both county and city, I guess, and Al told me that Red Frank had approached him one time and said, "Listen, Al. You get an office down here. I will have one here, and you have one here, and we will have a good handle on things, because I will be an appraiser." Al said, "You are not an appraiser. How do you know you are going to be an appraiser?" Frank said, "I know. It has been decided." So it was. Well, Al did not go with him, but I am giving you this just as an illustration of how it worked.

L: Where did the membership [for the CAA] come from?

M: Mostly the faculty. I have some papers around here on this.

L: Would it be possible for me to get photocopies of those?

M: I suppose so. I would have to hunt for them.

L: My research focuses on Gainesville during this period.

M: I will have to look for it, but a woman named [Carrie Pace] wrote about as interesting an essay on sort of the underside of the history of this place as anybody I ever saw. She wrote a little essay for one of the sociologists [Gordon Streib].

L: That would be very interesting.
M: Oh, it is, and is more nearly the honest-to-God history than anything I ever saw, because underlying everything that ever happened in this community is somebody's property interest, including like Senator Shands.

L: Sperry Rand and General Electric opened plants here in the late 1950s or [early] 1960s.

M: I do not remember anything about it. I was pretty strictly academic, I must confess. I got mixed up in public affairs to some degree through the Civic Action, and we had a neighborhood housing association that I was involved in and things like this, so I was pretty involved in those.

L: What about the civil rights movement when it came?

M: Well, I am ashamed to say I was not real active in that. I paid dues and everything, but I never went over and was arrested in St. Augustine. I wish I had been. [David] Chalmers [professor of history] did, and others did, but I did not. I always approved of it. I think that is what had to be done.

L: Do you remember the student pickets in front of the College Inn?

M: Yes, and I took part in that a little bit. I actually did some picketing myself, along with others.

L: And stayed out of there, of course, and did not eat there.

M: That is right. But I am sorry in retrospect that I was not more active in that than I was, because I very much approved of it.

L: You had said earlier that Gainesville came along quite well in terms of race relations. Is that accurate? Am I remembering [that correctly]?

M: I think it is. You bet.

L: Why do you think that is so?

M: Well, to start with, let us say that integration at this University was carried out, I think, very effectively, and that was due in part to Governor [LeRoy] Collins. When it was known the University was going to be integrated, Manning Dauer [professor of political science] told me that Collins was careful to have several concentric rings of highway patrol and others out to see that the rednecks did not penetrate in here and cause disturbances. So there were no major disturbances when the first blacks came that I know of.
L: The students, other than ignoring them and not accepting them socially, did not react.

M: I do not think there was any adverse reaction to it. I cannot recall anything of that kind.

L: Do you recall the University generating some sort of a plan for desegregation?

M: No, I do not. Maybe they did. I was not really privy to high-level planning except in the Department of History, such as we had. I always had a mistrust of the high command fundamentally. I guess that is intuitive or something. That is the best thing I can say.

L: Upper-level bureaucrats?

M: Yes. [I had] a suspicion that so much of what they did was hypocritical or based on their own property interests or something, and that was based on what I have observed about what goes on around here. But the reason why it got this way, that is one of them, I think.

But that it has gotten that way I will illustrate with one anecdote that I have enjoyed. I used to play golf with the guy who is head of the surgical department, Ed Woodward. He was the first head of surgery to come here when Shands was established. He retired a few years ago, and I went to his retirement dinner. One of the local doctors was master of ceremonies, and he told the following anecdote. I guess Woodward was a splendid surgeon, and his chief surgical nurse was black as coal. Her name was Shirley Demps from Micanopy, for God's sake. My point is that a few years ago if a black woman had stuck a hypodermic needle into a white man around here she probably would not have survived the day, but here this woman is from Micanopy--I do not know how in the world she ever got any education--as his chief assistant. This doctor (I cannot remember his name) was watching an operation. Woodward was always a very profane man, and he would say, "Goddammit, Shirley, hand me the scalpel," let us say, and she would put something else in his hand. He would go ahead. Pretty soon, "Goddammit, Shirley, give me this or that," and she would place something else. This guy--I think it was Dr. Samuels, maybe--watched this. When it was all over he went up to her and said, "How do you get away with this? He asks you for something, and you give him something else." She smiled at him and said, "I knew what he needed." [laughter] You get my point.

When we first came here they would not have had a black woman even anywhere around except to mop the floor. That is how far it has come. I remember the case of a black man that came from Africa somewhere in, I think, political science, teaching as an interim professor or visiting professor. He was out in the parking lot
to retrieve his car, and a half-ton truck plunged right toward him. They did not give him any ground—they were going to run him down. He jumped to one side. They came to a stop, and he went up and said, "What would you do that for?" I do not remember what they said, but he said, "I am a Nigerian," or something. Well, they apologized profusely: "We just thought you were a nigger."

L: "We did not know you were a foreigner."
M: That is right. So that sort of thing does not happen any longer. It has changed so much. I took a couple of Indians to see a football game. I have seen very few football games because that aspect of Florida never interested me very much. The Indians were fascinated by it, and they watched it like you would watch a piano master. Well, I think we were playing Kentucky. By this time we had some black players. Of course, a few years before they would not have had a black [athlete].

L: This would have been the late 1960s, early 1970s?
M: I guess so. Somebody behind us after a particularly interesting play commented, "Those niggers are yellow." Well, they made an especially fine joke. He could only view it that way. As far as I know, that does not happen any longer. I mean, you could not say that now or somebody would knock you down. Besides, what would we do if we did not have all the blacks on the teams?

L: Or on the faculty.
M: Yes, what few there are. But I do not remember any particular pressure, women or blacks, when I was chairman.

L: That probably comes when Dr. Colburn [became chair].
M: Such harassment as I experienced, as I mentioned to you, were from the faculty themselves, not students particularly, but the faculty themselves who were distressed about how much of the pay cut they got, the pie they got, or tenure or how much they had to teach. In those days I do not believe it had occurred to any students to sue on account of grades or anything like that. I personally never had any disciplinary problem. Some people would come in, maybe, and get a little huffy, but that was about the end of it.

L: So it was mainly keeping the faculty happy that you [concentrated on].
M: That distressed me more than anything else.

L: If we can shift back to the Gainesville scene, were you a member of the Florida Defenders of the Environment?
M:  Sure.

L:  What can you tell me about that organization?

M:  I gave them $1,000 in the beginning and paid them $100 a month. Well, it was founded by Marjorie Carr to fundamentally restore the Oklawaha [River]; that is what it was founded for in the first place. Marjorie Carr has been a lifelong environmentalist around here and a great woman. Now she has emphysema to the point where she is not very active any longer, but Florida Defenders has done a great work and is still struggling there. Means are more limited now to get the dam destroyed over there and the Oklawaha returned to its natural course.

L:  Did you go to meetings of this organization?

M:  Yes, I have, and I am still a member of it. I kick in dues. I have not gone to any meetings latterly. They have not had any that I know of. Maybe they have an annual meeting, and I did not go to it. If I had only one environmental outfit to contribute to and no more, I would pick the Nature Conservancy, so I kick in pretty heavily to the Nature Conservancy. I gave $1,000 to the Katherine Ordway Associates (connected to the Conservancy) out here, and I pay the dues and some money every once in a while because I think that is one of the great things.

L:  They buy land and put it away.

M:  And place it so it can be for public use in perpetuity.

L:  And they do not mess with the politics.

M:  No, they do not.

L:  That is why I like them.

M:  So I believe in it. But the Florida Defenders does not have that kind of means, and its objectives were not the same, but it did a great work and still is effective.

Then there is an outfit known as the Thousand Friends of Florida. I do not know if you are familiar with that. That does a great work too. It is in being, and fundamentally it exists now to try and see that the Growth Management Act gets implemented.

L:  How old is this organization, would you say?

M:  Five years, I guess.
L: And you are a member of that?

M: Yes. Sure. I became a member very early on.

L: You said you were a member of the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society?

M: I have been a member of the Sierra Club for twenty-five years, I guess, and the Audubon Society that much at least.

L: Were these organizations in place when you came to Gainesville? I am wondering about environmental consciousness.

M: Yes, they were. Margie Carr, again, going back to her, founded the Audubon branch here. Of course, Audubon is national, as you know, but she founded this local branch, and my wife and I joined it at her request. Marjorie was one of those people who diligently worked at whatever was driving her, and she was a person who would call you and ask, "Did you do what you said you would do?" She would follow it up and call you whenever she felt like it and talk and push it. That is the way she did. So she organized the Audubon Society that way, by calling people.

The local group of the Sierra Club was founded by [James] Ken Watson and his wife.

L: Who are they?

M: He is professor of electrical engineering. He is in bad shape with Parkinson's disease. But they have been great outdoor people, and they founded the local chapter of the Sierra Club.

L: Can you recall when that was? You said twenty-five years. Were you a founding member?

M: Well, I may have belonged to the Sierra Club when I came here from Washington. I am not sure. I would have to check the records. I do not really know. [I was] pretty nearly a founding member, but I would have to thumb around in the papers.

L: OK. The best way to look at these issues is to look at organizations that are interested in these issues.

M: Well, it would pay you sometime to get a hold of the Watsons and talk to them, Ken Watson and Betty, because they have been a great force here. And it would pay you to get hold of Margie Carr and talk to her if you are interested in this kind of thing. This has nothing to do with the history of the department. I do not care, you understand.
My own theory, and I have a lot of these theories that are unprovable, is that the women of a community do more to save the quality of life in general than the men ever do. The men are too competitive for the world's goods. So we have had a lot of great women around here you never hear of who work in good causes. The League of Women Voters has been a powerful influence around here in that way for good.

Let me mention one you have never even heard of, and nobody else has, because they do not vote women most likely to succeed or women to get accords. Nina Starr. Her husband [Nathan] was professor of English, and his specialty was the legend of King Arthur.

Let me tell you, because these go by anecdotes as far as I am concerned. I do not know when this was, but it was not long after we had been here, and I was mixed up in these housing things and stuff. The blacks lived in dog kennels that were not fit, and some of the most profitable real estate around here was owned by the power elite. You made more money out of these Negro houses than you did out of a superb development, as they collected rent and crowded them in there.

Well, Nina Starr came here, and she was one of those fearless people. She came from New York or somewhere, and she took a look at this housing and thought this was inhuman. So she went around and photographed these dog kennels where people lived and would talk to them. She did this through the League of Women Voters; she finally got the league to agree, though they were pretty uneasy about making a step like this, since you were stepping on the toes of the important local folk. She got photographs of all this stuff, and some way (I do not know how she did it) she got permission to show these slides before the city commission. Sitting on the city commission are two or three of the slum lords--they owned this junk. So she is flashing all of this. "You would not commit rats to live in these damn places, but it is all right for these guys." Howard McKinney is one. He is still around here. He was mayor at one time and one of the dignitaries, and he was an owner [who held to] the old concept of race relations.

Well, they had given her fifteen minutes, but they could not stop it—it was too dramatic. It went on, and those guys were sitting there. They hated every minute of it, but Nina was fearless. She went ahead and pushed. She was the mother of public housing around here. Whoever heard of her? She is eighty-some and lives up in New York. They had means, so it did not bother her.

But she was a great woman who made a great contribution to this community, as did Marjorie Carr. Nobody ever gives her an award as the woman of the year. There are several women that I can think of, if I can remember their names, like this.
L: This is very interesting to me. Can you cite other examples?

M: Well, my memory is rotten, as I say.

L: Dorothy Rainbow?

M: No. Dorothy was active in the Democratic Party. Helen Hood. You have never heard of Helen Hood.

L: No.

M: Well, it was because of her that the San Felasco Hammock was bought, almost single-handedly, and it was because of her that a lot of what has been preserved of the Suwannee River has been preserved.

L: Who was she? Where did she come from?

M: Oh, her husband is [Claude] Ian Hood. He is professor of something [professor emeritus of pathology]. They live around here. But she got involved in this kind of thing. No monetary consideration. She was just interested in the quality of life and the woods and stuff. Now I guess she is not very well. She seems to have dropped out of the scene.

L: She still lives in town.

M: You bet. She is another great person to whom this community owes [a debt of gratitude]. And [concerning] the purchase of Ichetucknee, I think Margie Carr was very much instrumental in getting that purchased, because Margie developed a strong line in with all the legislators. She would call them and tell them, "This is what ought to be done." She would talk to them like a Dutch uncle.

Well, there was a woman named Mildred Hardy. She did not get so much in the forefront. Of course, she is dead too. But these do not have any property interests. They are just interested in the community in which they were living and the hopes it will be better and you can preserve some of what is good about it. They are rare these [days]. Nina Starr was fearless. It did not bother her that these people would get upset about her. They could not hurt her. She was economically invulnerable because they were wealthy.

L: Would someone be economically invulnerable as a tenured faculty member at this time?

M: At that time?
L: Yes.

M: Not necessarily. Let me give you another little anecdote from Al Ring. I have known Al and play tennis with him when he is here and stuff. I may ball this up a little, but I have it in writing somewhere; I wrote it down, and I could find it. Al was a land appraiser, and some of the veterans—and some of them teachers—came to the conclusion that the land appraisals on property they had to buy were too high for what the property was worth, so whenever they came to resell it they could not get their money out of it. I have this garbled a little bit, but anyway, some of the teachers came to Al and pointed this out to him, and he did some investigating and decided that was so, so he began to talk it around here. He appeared before groups and showed these discrepancies.

Well, one of the owners of property that was involved in this was Senator Shands, and Al told me that Shands got a hold of the president of the University and said, "You tell those people over there that if he keeps up this kind of talk we will just cut off the money to the Department of Real Estate." So Al had to quit it. Now, that is a little garbled, but in general that is what happened. The property interest was offended by a position he was taking.

L: It sounds to me over and over again that people who come to Gainesville as a result of being hired or married to someone that is hired by the University have a very different idea of what the community should be like than those who are not [associated directly with the University].

M: Oh, I think so. You know the talk; you read the paper and stuff that goes on now about a greenway. Well, I always have thought that if this community had vision, Hogtown Creek and its tributaries were the aesthetic and ecological focus of the community, and if they had had vision they could have preserved it long ago so there was a corridor there nobody had invaded. Of course, they did not do it. Property interests prevailed, and people bought right up to the creek and so on. Now they are trying to buy a lot of that back and make a greenway, [and there is] violent opposition from people who are right up against the creek, because they do not want things happening in their back yard. That is a case, in my opinion, of lack of vision in the community, because I think anybody looking at this community aesthetically and ecologically could have seen this as the center that it will revolve around for beauty and ecology. But there was not any concept or any attempt to preserve that sort of thing.

Where you and I are sitting right now should never have been built on because in a way it is in the flood plain. But when I came here I did not know Florida. Nobody told me that. We paid $15,500 for this house with seven-eighths of an acre, and nobody in the University suggested to me that there have been times in the past
when all this area here was under water. Of course, the real estate agent did not bother to tell me.

L: Have you been flooded since you have lived here?

M: No, not in the house. We have come damn near it in 1963-64. It has cost this community thousands and thousands of dollars to protect this neighborhood and others like it that should never have been built in the first place. But nobody had that vision. They might not even have had the statistics to know it. You get what I am saying.

L: There was certainly no city planner in Gainesville in the 1940s and 1950s.

M: Well, I suppose not; I was not aware of any. Later I became aware of city planners, and they always had a rough time because they took positions that property owners did not like very well. The present city planner, or whatever he is called, has lasted twenty or thirty years. Sometime when he finally retires I would like to ask him how he has made it, because he is a skillful compromiser. His name is Norman Bowman, and he has been here [for a long time]. This should never have been built, all this.

[Let me tell you about what I consider] one of the failures of my life. There is a wet prairie over here called Sugarfoot. It has been known as that for 150 years. [It consists of] 130 acres of wet prairie, and we called this the Sugarfoot community. We have a little organization. In 1946 some of the botanists and zoologists up at the University--this was undeveloped, all of it down in here--said, "We would like to acquire this as an outdoor laboratory," because there were all kinds of wildlife down here, rare plants, and everything else. "It would be a wonderful outdoor lab." The legislature appropriated something like $10,000 to buy it, and they could have bought the whole damn thing in those days. It fell through along the line somewhere. The comptroller held up the money in the end or something or other. But this would have made a marvelous outdoor lab--or park. On out beyond here you go on a little ways and it is one of the loveliest hammocks you will ever see, or used to be till they cut 62nd through there. I always had dreamed that that would be a park like Morningside is on the other side of the [city], but it is far more interesting than Morningside because it has a varied terrain. It has the wet prairie, it has a real hammock, whereas Morningside is nothing but a pine forest. This had all that.

L: So nobody is protecting this prairie over here.

M: No, it is gone now. It was ruined. When they put 62nd through they cut right through the heart of it. I did not even know they were going to put 62nd through till I stumbled onto it one time. Anyway, I have always felt that this out here ought to have been a nature park run by the city, and I think anybody looking at the city as
anything but property would have taken the same point of view. They could have
looked at it and said, "Gee. As this place grows, this would be beautiful to have on
this side of the community." Nobody looked at it that way. The only people that
looked at it were the property owners.

There was (it is defunct now) a scenic roads board which was advisory to the county
commission, and there are about five scenic roads that are designated around here.
One of them is Millhopper, one of them is Bellamy Road. I was the first chairman of
that board. When we finally discovered that they were putting 62nd Street through
out there we asked to make that a scenic road, because that put restrictions on how
close you could build things and whatnot.

L: Was it successful?

M: Oh, no. Two or three big property owners like Marvin Gresham, the drug person,
and others are all that came to protest it, and the commission turned it down. I went
out there and walked that road with Jack Durrence, who was then commissioner,
and he agreed this is lovely and so on, but in the end he voted not to make it a
scenic road.

L: That is unfortunate.

M: Well, it would still be what it is, but it would have had some restrictions on it. It
seemed, since it was brand new, it was a good time to do it. It had not even been
opened. They did not do it.

L: I guess to go back to the latter part of your career (and this is kind of a sudden
shifting of gears) you cease being the chairman of the department . . .

M: In 1973. Then I took a year and went off and did a year of research somewhere or
other. We were gone, Enid and I. I forgot [where we went] now. Well, we traveled
to several places--DC among others. I figured that, stepping down as chairman, it
would be advisable to get out of the hair of the next chairman. I do not know who
that chairman was.

L: Arthur Funk, I believe.

M: Yes. Funk.

L: Now, this was your decision to step down?

M: I guess so.

L: Had you grown tired of doing it? Did you want to do other things?
M: I really do not know. As I told you, with my particular temperament there always was a certain amount of tension, moving into people's lives as much as you do if you are chairman and determining how much they got, their perquisites and whatnot. Besides, about that time there was getting to be far more paperwork involved in it. We did not have that volume of paperwork earlier, and it was simpler to do it. But then later you had to keep making reports to various people about what was going on, and that got to be burdensome. I am not of the temperament to put up with a lot of that junk, since so much of it was bunk.

For instance, there was something that Secretary of Defense [Robert S.] McNamara introduced in the Defense Department: PPBS, whatever that meant, and it was picked up as a bookkeeping device. It got down here, so we were supposed to demonstrate the apportionment of our funds according to the amount that went to graduate study, the amount that went to undergraduate study, the amount that went to secretarial work. Well, that was not difficult salarywise, but then you also had to divide up the paperwork--how much of the paperwork and the paper consumed and the telephone calls. You had to apportion this: this is for graduate work, this is for [something else], and it was a damn nuisance.

L: What was the point?

M: Well, it did give you a better handle, presumably, if you got where the funds were going, but the actual allocation of some of those funds was enormously difficult. When it came to telephone calls, for instance, how much of it is for that? But we were supposed to carry it on down the line to the last pencil. So while I was still chairman, PPBS (I just cannot remember what that was for) was something we were called on to do, so we had to break all that down. It got to be a damn nuisance.

L: I am sure.

M: Well, when I was chairman I always found time to function as a historian and do research. I would sit in there in the inner office of history, which was in Peabody, and type. Anybody who wanted to come in and see me on public business was welcome to. I would set it [my work] aside. Mrs. McDowell never said, "You cannot see him now." They could always come in. But when I did not have any immediate, pressing business for the department, I typed whatever I was doing at the time, working on the militia or so on. It gave me the release I wanted.

L: On the grounds that . . .

M: Well, what you have written is on the shelves, and it will be there when you are dead, so it is something left of you. Many historians, particularly [those] working in the earlier periods as I have mostly done, forever are using things people wrote 100
years ago, 150, or whatever. So that is more of a goal for me personally than anything else. I never cared whether I was chairman of the department or not. That did not make any difference. That is pretty fleeting. But if I can leave some stuff (and I am frustrated that I have not left half as much as I would like to have left), it is there, and people will be using it. Long after I am dead people will probably be reading that Second Seminole War book. I doubt if anybody will supersede it for a while.

L: The historian you leaned on the most wrote his in 1848. Is that correct?

M: Well, I did not lean on anybody the most, I do not think. Most of what is in that comes out of public records.

L: Oh, OK. I had just read the preface before I came over.

M: I worked extensively in the National Archives.

L: But I think in the preface you said there was only really one history out that had been around since . . .

M: Well, I did not rely on that. I was there. That, along with my history of the militia [The American Militia, Decade of Decision, 1789-1800 and History of the Militia and the National Guard], I think will sit on the shelves a long time, and people will take it down and look at it. Such immortality as I am going to have, that is it, because I do not think I will live after death. When I am dead, I am done. I do not have any belief in life after death. I believe you leave a few traces behind, and I regret that I have left fewer traces than I have, but I guess that is what I could do. You get older and just get resigned to it. This is it. I have written reams of stuff that never got published and never will get published, but I can never throw any of it away; I cannot bring myself to throw it away. I used to try and write fiction when I was in the wholesale grocery business. I never got any of it published, but I still have it. It probably did not deserve to be published. I wrote it because it was something I had a compulsion to do, and still do. Not fiction. I have not tried fiction any longer.

L: So did you go back to teaching and research after you got back from your year, after your chairmanship?

M: Yes, I did. Then the fiscal year 1977-78 I was visiting professor of military history at the U.S. Army Military [History] Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

L: How was that? Was that a good experience?

M: Oh, fascinating. The Army War College is there, and then this U.S. Army Military History Institute has a superb, probably the finest, collection of military history that
exists in this country now, outside of the Library of Congress, and that collection would be scattered all over everyplace. So this was an interesting place to work.

L: And you were teaching there as well?

M: Yes, I taught a little bit. I did whatever they assigned me to do, but I was just the Harold Keith Johnson Professor of Military History. There had been a sequence of them before me and after me.

L: Someone, I guess, had endowed a visiting chair or something.

M: Harold Keith Johnson. He was a four-star general. Or else somebody had done it in his name. I do not know.

L: When did you decide to retire?

M: I retired in 1982. Oh, I do not know. I always had thought that come seventy I ought to get out. That is all. It is the time I had set. Nobody ever told me that I ought to retire, but you . . .

L: There was nothing mandatory?

M: No. Age is not a consideration any longer. I could have gone on and taught. But I had set that time, and I thought it was appropriate--and I think probably it was--to step aside and do something else. I have tried since to function as a historian and have done so. The History of the Militia was published since that plus some other things, but I had worked on them before, of course.

L: What have you been up to since you retired, other than everything we have talked about so far? Certainly you continued in all these civic and environmental organizations.

M: Well, the thing I did that has nothing to do with the public good [is] I have climbed about ten of the 14,000-foot peaks in Colorado. I have probably climbed my last peak, but for recreation that was something that I did. I went off with my son and others, sometimes [with members of] the Wilderness Society and people like this. The mountains. I just happen to love to do it. So you crank that in. My son and I canoed in the boundary waters years ago when he was small.

L: The boundary waters?

M: The boundary waters between Canada and the United States. So I have done a lot of that. Year after year for fifteen or twenty years we would go west or someplace to the wilderness.
L: Were you and your son involved with the Boys Scouts [of America] at all?

M: He was not. I was. I am an Eagle scout.

L: From Ottumwa, Iowa.

M: Yes. I was a scoutmaster too. I was the whole works. I always figured I owed the scouts a great debt as well.

L: How influential was your Boy Scout experience on your life?

M: Very influential to me. My father was dead, and we had a scout executive in Ottumwa who was retired, or rather he had been a first lieutenant in the First World War, and he had been gassed or something, so they told him after the war, "You had better do something outdoors." I guess that is where a lot of my love for the outdoors came from, because we were outdoors scouts. We were not what we referred to as "parlor scouts". So I was introduced to the outdoors--I may have been before, but not with him--and he was a man that laid down hard standards and said, "You can conform to these or you are out as patrol leader," or whatnot. I assumed some leadership in it. So he had a great influence on me in that way. I am a great admirer of his, and I guess he was sort of such father figure as I had. He put a little iron in one's soul.

You may recall the little verse sung by Hamlin Garland:

Do you fear the force of the wind, the slash of the rain
Go face them and fight them, be savage again
Go hungry and cold like the wolf, go wade like the crane
The palm of your hand will thicken
The skin of your cheek will tan
You'll grow ragged and weary and swarthy
But you will walk like a man.

Well, I think that was sort of the model. You faced these things. It was tough. So if he called the hike and it was zero [degree] weather, we hiked. If he called a hike and it was pouring rain, we went.

In those days parents did not place the restrictions on kids. They do now. So he had us do things that were hazardous. Nobody ever sued. I broke my left arm at Boy Scout camp. It never occurred to my mother to sue anybody. It has changed so much. Of course, the world has changed so much. The world I grew up in is different from this world.

L: Yes. I guess your son never took an interest in the scouts.
M: No, he did not, but he did pick up an interest in the outdoors, and he is active in that. He does a lot of hiking.

L: And you also have a daughter?

M: No, I only have that one son.

L: I am sorry. I must have gotten confused. Well, is there anything else that we have overlooked that you would like to add that you feel is important?

M: No.

L: I would like to thank you for talking to me.