

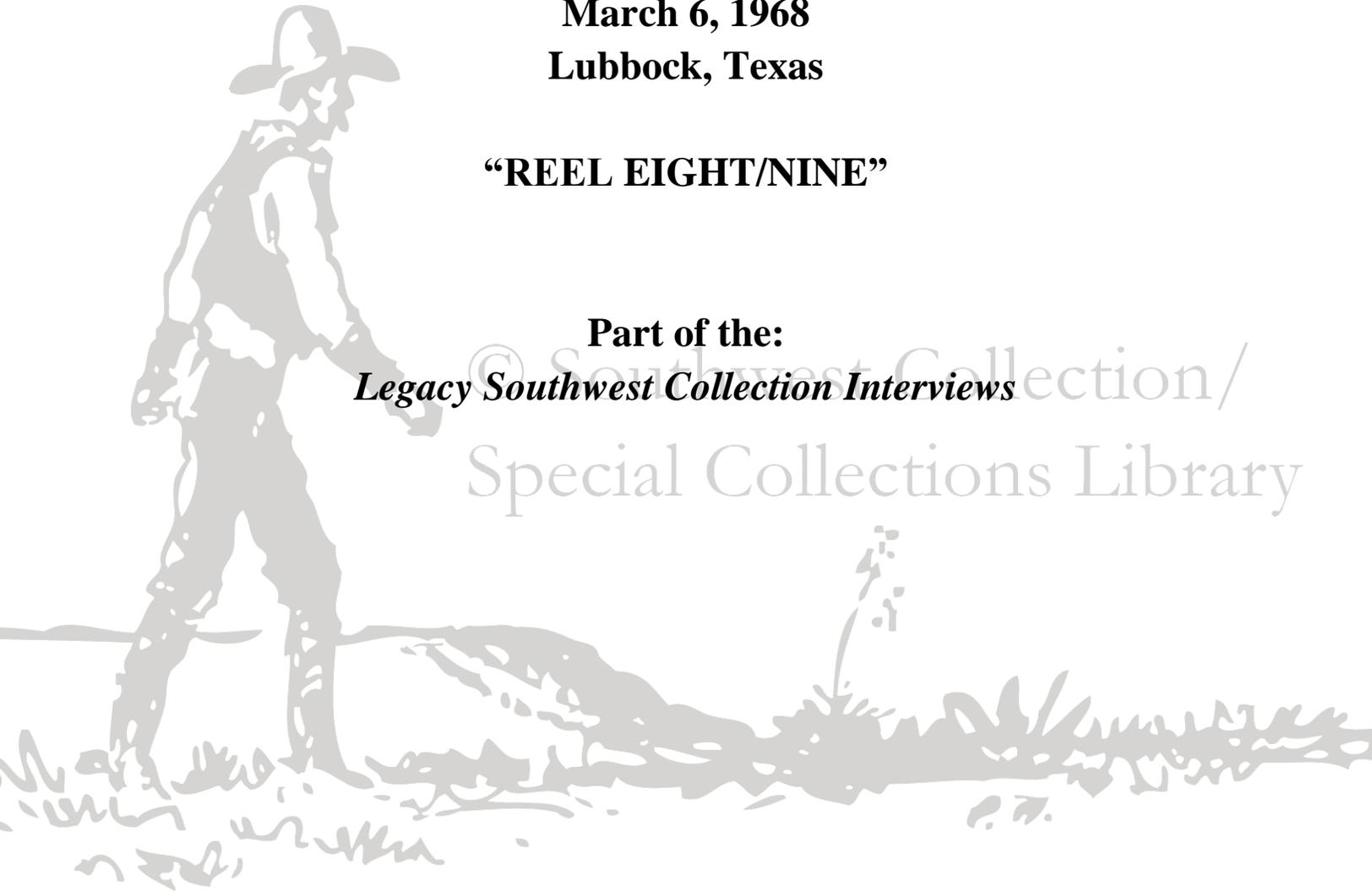
**Oral History Interview of
William Curry Holden**

**Interviewed by: Jimmy M. Skaggs
March 6, 1968
Lubbock, Texas**

“REEL EIGHT/NINE”

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Interview Series Background:

In the process of conservation and digitization, our Audio/Visual department transcribes existing interviews in the Southwest Collection's holdings for a new generation of listeners to rediscover. Such interviews frequently cover topics relating to the founding of Texas Tech and the settlement of Lubbock.

Transcript Overview:

This interview features Dr. William Curry Holden. Holden discusses the presidency of Clifford Jones at Texas Tech University. To this end, Holden talks about Jones' personality, his interest in athletics, and his political views. Holden also talks about H. Bailey Carroll, Paul W. Horn, and James D. Hamlin.

Length of Interview: 01:27:22

| Subject | Transcript Page | Time Stamp |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| Cliff Jones becomes president | 5 | 00:00:00 |
| Cliff Jones and the Board of Regents | 9 | 00:12:22 |
| Jones' personality and interest in athletics | 10 | 00:17:06 |
| Jones' politics | 15 | 00:31:30 |
| H. Bailey Carroll's college days | 17 | 00:38:25 |
| Carroll stealing the dean's chickens | 20 | 00:44:53 |
| Carroll in his later years in Austin | 22 | 00:53:05 |
| Carroll as editor of the <i>Southwestern Historical Quarterly</i> | 24 | 01:00:19 |
| Paul W. Horn | 27 | 01:05:42 |
| Judge James D. Hamlin | 30 | 01:16:28 |

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Jimmy M. Skaggs (JS):

Holden interview, March 6, 1968—Reel nine, side one. Dr. Holden, you were talking about when Dr. Clifford B. Jones became president, I believe.

William Holden (WH):

Well, this was when Dr. [Bradford] Knapp died, and they were looking for a successor. The board had become badly divided over selection of the successor. There were three people on one—in one little party, segment of the board—and six on the other. Dr. Jones, after about the second—I believe he succeeded Amon Carter as chairman of the board—and he was chairman, then, right on down to—this was, I suppose, let me see, about 1934—no, it was much later than that—this must have taken place about 1940—'39 or '40—and there were six people who were holding together, and I'm not sure about whom they were considering, or what about it, but anyway, the division had become very acute, and almost violent. I remember that ole Tom Pollard at Tyler—whom I went to the University of Texas with, incidentally—was on the board, and a man named Steele from Corsicana, and a woman—I can't think of her name. They were sided together, and it seems as if they were trying to promote somebody and railroad her in—and the other members balked. They had a long stormy day, and well on, late in the afternoon, one of the members of the majority suddenly said, "Well I nominate our chairman, Dr. Clifford B. Jones, as the next president," and nobody had ever thought of that, it seems. Somebody else said, "Well, I second the motion," whereupon Clifford was greatly embarrassed, and he called for time out to consider it and to relinquish the chair to somebody else, and they adjourned for an hour. He went out and took a walk and took a smoke—probably took a nip—and I don't know whether he called his wife, Audrey, or not, but it never had occurred to him. But I guess he went out and reflected and said, "Well, they need a businessman more than anything else to run a thing like that," and also, he knew that the business over at Spur was wound up. There'd be no point there. I suppose he'd already considered the fact that they already closed the office. And so, when they reassembled, well he said, "Yes, I'll accept it." So they voted, and there were five that voted for it and three voted against it, whereupon the three that voted against it got up and stomped out. And so we had this very serious, you see, schism there—and he came in as a result, you might say, of this schism. It was all unpremeditated, unrehearsed, un-thought-of beforehand. But incidentally, it seems to me as if—I may be in error on this—that McMurry College had just conferred a honorary degree of Doctor of Laws on him—McMurry College, one of the weakest little colleges in the state, but they'd been very generous with handing out these things to people—especially everybody they thought would give them another hundred dollars. But that it came in was of great value to Clifford, just to have a handle of some kind. Incidentally, in his education, he never went to college a day in his life—he never did matriculate into college.

JS:

That's what I understood.

WH:

He went to an academy, a private academy—equivalent of a high school—in Kansas City. He was so well-informed—his diction, his ability to make a speech, his ability to write a letter, his background in history and literature were so great that he was deemed one of the best-educated men in the country—and was.

JS:

Self-educated.

WH:

Self-educated—after all, college degrees do not make an education.

JS:

No, they certainly don't.

WH:

I think you've heard me say this before, that two of the best-educated men to have ever been in Lubbock never went to high school—one never went to high school, the other one didn't go to college—that's Walter Posey and Clifford Jones. Clifford had a great library in his lodgings there at Spur—incidentally, unfortunately they burned when the Spur Inn burned—but he was an exceedingly well-read man, and he was at home—on equal terms with anybody you could bring up—I don't care how many degrees he had, Clifford Jones could always hold his own.

JS:

Cowboy or educator.

WH:

Either one—and he knew the cowboy language, too. Incidentally, he worked on a ranch two years in his early twenties in Colorado, I guess it was—a real roughneck cowboy.

JS:

He knew what it was all about.

WH:

He was awful tough; he broke horses. When I first knew him, he was just as slender as you are—he was about your size. Now he's quiet rotundish, you know. He's shaped now very much like his father did—I had the pleasure and honor of knowing his father, who was also a very unusual person—a great gentleman—and a very erudite type of person, as Clifford is.

JS:

Getting back to the selection of Dr. Jones as the president of Tech, do you recall—or will you care to say who the three holdouts were on the board?

WH:

Yes, I gave you two of their names—Tom Pollard and a man named Steele from Corsicana—I've forgotten his first name—I know he had one arm, but he had hit oil—you know they had an oil play down there about that time, and he had gotten comfortably wealthy in the oil game—so much so that he felt his oats as being a person that pushed people around—and Clifford Jones was not a person to be pushed around—

JS:

—by anyone—

WH:

—by anyone. The woman, I can't think—that's the reason I wanted that—

JS:

—catalogue—

WH:

—one of those old catalogues.¹

JS:

Do you recall their reasoning for objecting to Dr. Jones? Was it because he was not an educator?

WH:

That's what they said—that he had not—that he didn't have a degree and all of that. They had quite a bit of logic on their side, which left out the human factor in it. Also, I think they had somebody that they were pushing, and so on. Now, as to what kind of a president Clifford made here, he—I would say an average president. He always had the respect of the faculty, but at the same time, it was generally known that he was not a college man, and you know how academic people are—they can be pretty narrow.

JS:

Very snobbish.

WH:

Very snobbish—and so a lot of them never did forget that.

¹ Mrs. W. R. Potter

JS:

Especially some of the younger—

WH:

Yeah, the younger they are, usually, the worse they are.

JS:

And the newer the PhD, the worse, too.

WH:

Yes, that's right. Afterwards, they begin to mellow, and finally they get to the point where they don't think it makes much difference, really.

JS:

They judge a man on his merits.

WH:

Just a man for what he is, usually—that's not always the case, some of them never get over it as long as they'll live. He did not have too good of success working with the legislature for the simple reason that he was—he was restrained when he went before the legislature asking for billion-dollar appropriations that every good president has to—keep up with expansion. Clifford could never forget that he was a taxpayer, and that he always—all of his life—represented the taxpayers when it came to the appropriation of public funds. He could never get on the other side of the table and say "Let's tax these so-and-sos up to the hip," he just couldn't do that. He bled and fought and died for the taxpayers. So, when the legislators, after—always, whenever you start asking for more funds, the legislators, who are very sensitive to the boys back home—that want to lower taxes instead of raise them—when they began to cry and take on about how the dear people were being overtaxed and taxed to death, ole Cliff could understand that pretty good, and he would soften up on how much he was trying to get. For that reason, he was not near as successful as—he was followed by Dr. Whyburn, and Dr. Whyburn went down, and he rolled up his sleeves and went after them and got it—he got the funds—

JS:

—plus money from the government—

WH:

—plus money from the government, he sure did. He wasn't worried about the dear taxpayer because he'd always been a poor boy and never had paid in taxes, much. So he was—he had no, you might say, carried over scruples at all.

JS:

What about Dr. Jones' rapport with the Board once he became president?

WH:

Oh, he was just hand-in-glove with the Board, because the type of people appointed to the board were people that—I don't know that he lobbied to get anybody but invariably, the people appointed either were people that would approve of, or they were the type of people—they were usually oil people, and business people, and people of money, and people of similar interests. So he had no trouble with his board—and being a natural leader, and all being pretty much of the same manner that as soon as they got rid of these other three—he was bothered with them until their terms were up—but they were voted down—as a matter of fact, they didn't come out to very many meetings after that, if any, because they'd just be railroaded out. They were *persona non grata* just like Evetts Haley and ole Tom Lineberry were the last three or four years that they served on the board—they got to where, the final year, I don't think they ever showed up, hardly—they just decided it was no use to go down there and get mad—that's all they were doing.

JS:

What about—invariably, on a college or a university campus, especially one that is growing as rapidly as Tech was during its history—there's always a claim that a president is more sympathetic to one discipline within the university than another, such as some of the conversation that Dr. Murray is too concerned with ICASALS and not enough with some other things—invariably you hear this about an administrator—do you recall conversations [about Dr. Jones]?

WH:

I don't think we had a bit of that with Clifford Jones for the simple reason that he was a man of such varied interest, himself. The Aggies couldn't find fault with him because here was a man who had ranched and branded. By the way, he bought a part of the thing [Spur Ranch]—he bought about forty-five sections of that ranch and ran it during the whole time, I believe, that he was president. I used to go down there with him on Sunday and we'd brand. I'd go down quail hunting and all kinds of things. Hell, we went down there several times to help out on the weekend with him. That's usually when he'd have his little roundups; it's be on Saturday and Sunday—

JS:

When he'd be free.

WH:

Yes, so Fran and I used to go down and help with the calves—she'd bring the branding iron and

Audrey, and we had three or four other fellas—he didn't have a big outfit, and so on. Well, anyway, he talked their language, and also, he had been so identified with the agricultural as president of the bank there—of the problems of the farmers that he had no trouble at all with the Aggie people—and engineering, no trouble there because he could talk their language pretty well—arts and sciences, he could put any English professor to shame with his diction and his prose—home economics, no trouble at all. He was well-balanced in that respect—and so far as running the business of the college, it probably was never better-run, but he had to depend on his deans for the academic matters, because that was in a matter where he had had no contact or training—and did, he depended on his deans. He was a pretty big judge—harshly, so to speak—in selecting deans, and so on. Ask me another question about him.

JS:

Yes. Well, he left his office when, about '44?

WH:

'44.

JS:

1944—and became President Emeritus. Of course, he never lost interest in Tech—he was always around, and I believe one time you talked about the fact that when Dr. Jones and several others would be around, he would hold court—would you care to comment on some of those occasions?

WH:

When Judge Hamlin would come down?

JS:

Yes, Hamlin and that group—and when things would just be more or less relaxed—what Dr. Jones was like in those situations.

WH:

Yes, Dr. Jones could relax—he didn't do so often. He always had his dignity, nearly always. But on occasions, you'd get off with him and good friends, and a nip or two—which he had no aversion to whatever—he would mellow. He was always a wonderful storyteller, and he would relax. But usually, if there'd be one person in there he didn't know, he'd have his guard up—he'd be on his dignity. He would be very considerate about every statement he made, and so on. I remember one time he relaxed; we were having a party over at the president's house. He had over there a number of the faculty that—or, he felt a great deal in common, where they gave dinners together and played bridge together, and sometimes went up in the mountains together to vacation—some four or five, six, seven families would all go up to some lodge up there, and so

on—and it was largely that group that we had in. But they'd had a reception over there at the president's house, and it's the house that's on the campus—that's where he lived. They use it now for the home-ec girls or something to practice or something. They'd had some students there, you know waiting, serving in various capacities—serving, and that kind of thing—and everybody had left—there had been a general reception—everybody left except this little group that stayed behind to kind of finish up. And I know Mr. and Mrs. John Young-Hunter were down here from Taos—it may have been when they were down here painting his portrait—Young-Hunter painted Clifford's portrait, you know—and we were having this party, this after-party, and they had ole "Hi Pockets" Overton [William Elbert "Hi" Overton (1916-1971)] with his musicians—he was an old boy from out—a ranch boy from out in New Mexico, about 6'6" — incidentally, he was on the football team—but also, he was a good fiddler, and he had a little dance orchestra, and he played the fiddle. Ole Hi Pockets was over there fiddling and they had his business, and everybody was feeling very gay, and so this little group left got quite gay, and they got to playing all kinds of games—and I remember, they got to playing follow the leader—and I don't know what that was—anyway, they all took hands, and so they were circling all around, stepping, going over the furniture, hopping over—walking on the settee—doing everything, following the leader—and Clifford was just right in there doing it—and I remember so vividly—he felt quite comfortable with Hi Pockets, because Hi Pockets was an ole ranch boy; they'd sniffed out of the same bottle, I think. But in a little while, some of these little girls—these home-ec girls back in the kitchen—we noticed them looking through the door. And when Clifford saw those seeing him being undignified, he just became a changed man, just like that—as if he'd had cold water thrown on him, because students had seen him being undignified—and boy, that party stopped right there.

JS:

His hair was down at the wrong time.

WH:

Yeah, they had seen him with his hair down. Does that answer your question?

JS:

Yes sir, it sure does.

WH:

It wasn't very often he ever let his hair down, but I've been with him when he did. Charlie Guy was quite a compadre of his, and he would let his hair down with Charlie. Charlie and I used to go down and go hunting on the weekends; we'd all—during quail season. We had wonderful—after, you know, bull sessions, and that kind of thing—and Clifford would let his hair down on those occasions. Clifford, during World War One, was—you know, we had a state draft board [during World War I]—a system of three people—he [Jones] was on that draft board. And

then, when the Depression came in the thirties, we had a statewide Works Progress Administration, with headquarters in Fort Worth—and there were three members on that, and I believe he was on that, and chairman of it.

JS:

Yes sir, he was.

WH:

And I know—

JS:

The draft board that you were talking about was the Northern Judicial District of Texas Selective Service. I believe we have one of the photographs he gave us recently showing this gathering there, and he was chairman of that.

WH:

Yeah, so that's what it was. Northern District of Texas—it was a federal district, and not the state district.

JS:

Yes sir, it was federal.

WH:

Yes, it would have been that. The WPA, I think, was statewide—

JS:

—yes sir, it was—

WH:

—and he was—he was either the chairman of that, or at least he was—I know he lived in Fort Worth about two years, or three while that was going.

JS:

I believe he was chairman. He has given us some of the materials that he had during this period, and I believe he was chairman.

WH:

Well, you have all of that.

JS:

Yes sir, we have some of the papers. Can you think—

WH:

He's been one of the leading lights in the West Texas Chamber of Commerce since its inception. I think he was on the first board of directors that it had when it organized—and incidentally, they're having their fiftieth anniversary tonight in Odessa—and they've moved heaven and Earth—I think he's about the only living person—and they've moved heaven and Earth to get him down there, but he just doesn't feel like making the trip. But he went over this morning to the TV station and made one of those live TV—one of those tape things that has something to do with that.

JS:

Can you think of anything else that you should add on Dr. Jones?

WH:

I will say this for him: he's a man of great loyalties, and he's loyal to his friends. He'll go through hell and high water for his friends. He's—oh, I don't know—if he caught you stealing a bank and he wanted to come in and bail you out—I don't know that he'd do that, but assuming that he had the kind of friends that don't rob banks—or vote wrong, which to him is just as bad as robbing banks—he's a person of terrific loyalties. I think one of the things that he—one of the yardsticks by which he measures people is their degree of gratitude and loyalty to their friends and to their fellow man.

JS:

He's extremely loyal to Tech.

WH:

Yes he is, indeed. I hope that I'm as loyal to him as he's always been to me. His lack of academic training, I think, kind of placed a limitation around him as being an educator—head of a university. This is something that we understand and do not hold against him in the least, because we understand him too well. But since he did not go to college, he never went through being a freshman and getting all of that out of his system—and being a sophomore and being an upper classman, getting that out of his system—and all of these other things, he's still a freshman at heart, with his attitude about—toward Tech and education as a whole. I think this is exemplified a great deal by the fact when he wanted to do something big for the college, he furnished the first hundred thousand dollars to build the stadium. In other words, to him, the outside—the extra-curricular things are the things that mean much to him. Although he will give—express an interest in the academic attainments—and I guess he knows their value—the thing that excites him are the football games and the teams. He knew the players of the teams far

better than he knew the members of the faculty—and followed them, and everything like that. The same thing appeals to him that appeals to an average freshman, not the exceptional freshman at all—the average freshman—the color, the band, the flags, the—

JS:

—size of it all—

WH:

—the size, the pageantry, the color, all of that—to him, that's what university life is. That's the thing that appeals to him greatest.

JS:

It's not the classrooms or that.

WH:

Nope.

JS:

That's quite interesting.

WH:

I would say that he knows these things are important, but the things that he has an abiding interest in are the superficials, really.

JS:

I suspect you're quite right in your—

WH:

Now, of course, he—I think somebody could make out equally as good a case against my unbalance as could be made out against him, because I lean the other way just as far as he leans that way. To me, we'd be better off abolishing competitive athletics completely. It's gotten to where it's semiprofessional and everything—

JS:

I think it always has been.

WH:

No, it hasn't always been that way—

JS:

At least here—

WH:

When I was a student, they just didn't have the money to have scholarships—the ole boys got on the football team just to go out there and knock heads because they liked it. They paid their way as well as everybody else. I can remember—it was not unlike the Depression that they began to wrestle around and get about a hundred dollar fellowships, they called them, or scholarships—to kind of help pay them, and then they began—it's been growing ever since, but I can remember when—there was practically none of that before World War One—after World War One—up until the Depression—or after the Depression.

JS:

It's getting now where it's quite lucrative.

WH:

Yes, now it's a big thing. Oh yes, I'll refer to Dr. Jones' politics. He's an arch-conservative—

JS:

I suspected that.

WH:

—but he has been a Democrat—he was a Democrat all of his life, I think, because—well, I don't know what he was before he came to Texas, but he wasn't too old when he came to Texas—probably in his late twenties, early thirties—I don't know what his people—he was born in Colorado, as you know, and then he was in Kansas City—

JS:

Kansas or Missouri?

WH:

I don't know—it was Kansas City; I don't know which side of the line he was on.

JS:

If he was from Missouri, that could explain the Democratic bias, but Kansas is pretty Republican.

WH:

His people may have been Republican—I don't know—but when he came to Texas, we had a one-party system. It'd take four Indian guides and nine bird dogs looking six months and a half

to find a single Republican back when they came. They just weren't here; they weren't popular in Texas at all—and if they did have leanings, they kept it to themselves. And so I don't know—I'm pretty sure—but he began to kind of lose confidence in the Republican Party during the New Deal days. He has continued to lose confidence ever since. I'm not sure but what he still registers as a Democrat. Up until—I don't know, he and I just never discuss politics—or never have, by kind of mutual understanding, you might say, we never even talked about it—never even talked about not talking about it. We just don't talk about it much. I'm almost sure, though, he voted for Goldwater—I'm sure he voted for Eisenhower, and so on. I think he's one of those who votes Democratic locally, but when it comes to the national politics, he reserves the right to put in his licks where they count.

JS:

Maybe he's an Allan Shivers Democrat.

WH:

Well, that would describe him very well. Yes, I think he was quite a good friend of Shivers, incidentally. I think—who was governor of Texas in 1922, '23?²

JS:

It's not Ferguson—

WH:

Was it ole Jim? No, it may have been Ma.

JS:

Jim was between—yeah, I believe it was Ma, because Jim went out in what, '18, '19?

WH:

Yes, he was booted out—

JS:

We were in the war immediately after—

WH:

And didn't we have Dan Moody in there somewhere?

JS:

Yeah, Dan had a two-year term, didn't he— followed by Ma or was it a four-year term?

² Pat Neff

WH:

It may have been four. I was trying to think who appointed him on the board first—it's either Dan Moody or Ma—incidentally, Ma Ferguson was more generous—I think I mentioned that before—to Tech than anybody else. Dr. Horn just got everything he wanted from Ma Fer, insofar as she could help out with him—of course, that was ole Jim taking a backhanded lick at the University of Texas.

JS:

Yeah, I'm sure it was.

WH:

As Clifford has gotten older, he has become more and more—he has given away more and more to his bias—especially his political bias. I'm pretty sure—he's the president of the board of Lubbock National **[Bank]**—he's not active with running the bank, although he has this beautiful office up there in front, which is Mr. Maedgen's old office—I'm sure, though, that the big applications for loan come before the board—which he's able to attend—and I'm sure that when he looks at all these big applications, that the political philosophy of the man asking for the loan has a lot to do with his decision on whether or not this fella can be trusted. But he's been one of the great forces in West Texas, he has given unstintingly of his time to worthwhile movements of all kinds, and he's a man that has tremendous respect of the people who make things go—who have made things go. I have an idea that, probably, there's been no other person in West Texas that has enjoyed the respect and confidence of the strata of people that run the economic and the political machinery than Clifford Jones.

JS:

I wouldn't be at all surprised if that is true.

WH:

He has his foibles—little foibles and all of that—but when you take it all and average it up, I consider him a great man.

JS:

I think most everyone does, as far as—

WH:

That's about all I can think of about Clifford.

JS:

You've already commented on H. Bailey Carroll quite a bit—I didn't check him off the list because I didn't know whether you wanted to say anything more. You told about his being a

student of yours at McMurry, and coming to Tech, and indeed, even having a hand in you coming to Tech, I believe.

WH:

Yes, he's a—I doubt I'd ever been here if it hadn't been for Bailey Carroll.

JS:

And also, I believe you mentioned the fact that you directed his MA thesis, and had a hand in pointing him towards the University of Texas, and I believe, a bit about his career there.

WH:

Yes. I can say this about Bailey: I knew him when he was wild and—wild doesn't entirely comprehend everything that he was when I first knew him. He—

JS:

It's hard to imagine H. Bailey Carroll as being wild or unsettled.

WH:

It's hard to imagine—did you say it's hard to imagine?

JS:

Yes sir, it's very hard to imagine.

WH:

Well, I'll put it the other way—it's always hard for me to imagine him a settled, stayed person he actually became because I knew him when he was really wild. And let me say he was more interesting—far more interesting in his wild days than he was in his straight days after he became a vestryman in the Episcopal church.

JS:

Well Dr. Carroll to me was always the very staunch, dignified gentleman he was at Barker Center [**Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center**] and the Texas State Historical Association—as far as, you know, I'm concerned—

WH:

Yes. My point is this: I've never known a man to change more—one individual to go from this end of the gauntlet to this end. What went in here came out here—or just as if they were no kin and had no relation. When I knew him as a student at the University of—McMurry College, he came down there in a little ole Model T Roadster. I don't know where he got it; his family was not very wealthy. His mother was rather unhappily married to a stepfather of his, a man named

Collier, who had a little printing shop downtown [**Lubbock**]*—*and Bailey always resented this father-in-law*—*and let's see, this father-in-law had a daughter who was younger than Bailey, and Bailey just hated this stepsister, I guess she was, and so on. Bailey was a person of tantrums*—*he could just fling a tantrum before you'd know it. He liked me and was always very devoted to me, and loyal to me. But when he came down there, he was as wild as he could be; he drank liquor, he shot dice, he did everything*—*came to this church school*—*which is very, very strict*—*and the only thing about Bailey was he was against everything they were for*—*and I had a hard time*—*he and John Knox and Meador*—*Meador boy, who was a very brilliant boy*—*and another chap, we talked about him the other day*—*he came here and worked in the library*—*Fritz Southworth. Those four*—*Fritz was in the academy and these other four were at freshman or sophomore levels*—*and I don't know why, but they associated themselves with me*—*and I liked them. I saw they did have a potential if they'd keep out of the penitentiary. They were stimulating*—*and they were all brilliant*—*and so I took them under my wing. They broke nearly every rule in the college, and the dean was*—*who was a smug old so-and-so*—*was always just ready to throw them out, and I went to bat about once a week to keep him from doing it. Matter of fact, I spent a lot of my time keeping them from being expelled. The unpardonable thing was to drink liquor. I don't know where they got it, but they managed to get a bottle about every Saturday night, and they'd empty it. Sometimes, they get a little unruly; I'd have to go get them, and round them*—*

End of Side A

JS:

Holden interview, reel eight, side two.

WH:

This is reel nine, isn't it?

JS:

Is it reel nine? All right, reel nine*—*and you said that you were talking about*—*

WH:

*—*Bailey Carroll*—*

JS:

Bailey Carroll and family disputes while you were at Lubbock.

WH:

I stayed with Bailey because I found him delightful and fascinating, and he was always tractable with me. There was never a time that I ever tried to do anything with Bailey that he wasn't just

as tractable as he could be. I didn't enter the list when they were having these family businesses; I didn't feel like it was the place of me to intercede. But one thing this group always wanted to do was get even with the dean—Dean McCowan, who was a big ole pompous so-and-so—and the best way they'd get rid of him was to steal his chickens—and he had a milk cow, and had a little ole calf. They stole all his chickens and they decided they'd get the dean's calf—and it was a pretty little ole calf—and they were going to take him down on these creeks and barbecue him. I remember, I entered the list **[interceded]** and persuaded them not to do that. Then they stole the dean's father's chickens—he was an old retired circuit rider, and old Methodist circuit rider—and they stole his chickens—and he was living on a pittance up there, four or five blocks from the college. I knew for sure that they were depending on selling these eggs to buy flour—and when I found that out I entered the list **[interceded]** and—before they'd wrung the chickens' necks—and the next night the chickens all reappeared back on the roost. I could—when I would find out things in time, and so on—I could always get them to do it—to come around. Well, Bailey was a hero worshipper; he always was, and I don't know who had preceded me, but I came in my time, and then, when Tech started in '25, he was—I forgot whether he was a junior or senior—I guess, maybe he was a junior. I believe he finished his sophomore year down there. But he came here—and Dr. Granbery was on the first faculty. Dr. Granbery was a very brilliant person—the type of person that would appeal to Bailey—and so Bailey attached himself to Dr. Granbery, and Dr. Granbery became the object of his worship. That's the reason that he—and Dr. Granbery was susceptible to having that—so Bailey had no trouble at all selling Dr. Granbery on the idea of offering me this job sight unseen. I'd never seen Granbery, nor had I heard about him when I got this offer to come here, and so on. Well, Bailey then, being an A student—when he would apply—incidentally, as he went along, he got a little more stable, and by the time he got to be a senior, he had buckled down to where he was a good student, making straight A's—and that's what appealed to Dr. Granbery—not only his mind, but the fact—he had a good mind, but also, he was using it. Dr. Granbery, then, appointed him—I believe I got here in time to direct Bailey's dissertation—and then he got his master's, and the Dr. Granbery appointed him instructor here for a couple of years. And then Dr. Granbery got in trouble with the board and got fired, and Dean **[J. M.]** Gordon of the arts and sciences had never liked Bailey—all he could hear about was his episodes—about his episodes with women and drinking bouts and his gambling and everything—all of which were true.

JS:

And he was doing this while he was an instructor, I suppose?

WH:

Well, no, it was back in his student days that Dean Gordon would hear these things, and I think Dean Gordon had him on probation part of the time that first year or two there at Tech. But anyway, Bailey went away and spent a year at the University **[of Texas]**—and he was to come back, and Dean Gordon wouldn't let him come back—and that's what soured Bailey on Texas

Tech—Dean Gordon would not let him come back. I didn't become head of the department until 1935. Dean Gordon was—they fired him in '33 and then they appointed Gus Ford as head of the department for a couple years, and then the Texas centennial came along. The legislature set up three-million-dollar appropriation to celebrate it—and the year '35-'36 Dean [W. L.] Stangel was put in charge of the animal husbandry business of the big business at Dallas—the big centennial thing was going to be at Dallas. And Stangel, in turn, thought it'd be wonderful to have a big exhibition of cattle brands. So he offered Gus Ford, who had been his neighbor here from the beginning, the job of taking the year off and spending the whole year going over the country, collecting these cattle brands, and trying to get some history on them, which Gus did. Then he wrote this business up, and it was published in this book—you have the book.

JS:

Texas Cattle Brands, yes.

WH:

Yes. Well that's when he did it. That year that Gus was gone, I was appointed acting head of the department. Then, when Gus got ready to come back—incidentally, it was generally thought that Gus was a homosexual—there was a lot of talk around—

JS:

Yes, I've heard that story.

WH:

I don't know—this news got to Dean Gordon, and Dean Gordon wouldn't let him come back. He blocked his coming back, and when he did, well then they made me permanent head of the department. But the dean went on, lived several years after that, and I could never get Bailey back here because of Dean Gordon—he blocked me. And because of that, Bailey soured on Texas Tech. In the meanwhile, he had managed to go on to the University of Texas; he married Mary Joe [Durning]—wonderful gal who became a great stabilizer for him—and at the university, [W. P.] Webb became his god, and he turned all of his hero worshipping to Webb. It was Webb, then, who realized his genius and his value, who worked him in to this director of the [Southwestern Historical] Quarterly—and also of the Texas State Historical Association. This love affair went on for a good long while—this platonic love affair—but that finally soured—in the end, Webb and Bailey—I never did know. I lost contact with Bailey, really—after he soured on Tech I lost contact with him. Then, I know, about—when did Bailey die? About three years ago, or four?

JS:

1966.

WH:

'66 —I'd say about 1960, I was at Austin and I—I don't know whether I called him or went to see him—but anyway, he invited me to have lunch with him. And so he and Mary Joe picked me up and we went to some place over at the south of Austin, over there, and had lunch. It was one of the most dreary things I'd ever had, almost. It was—the old Bailey that I had known was dead. This was another Bailey. All of the flash, the verve was gone. He sat through the lunch as if he were thinking about something else. We had very little conversation. It was an ordeal that you just—one that you'd hope would hurry up and be over. And I understand that he had—he became—when I knew him, he was anti-religious, he was anti-practically everything—anti-prohibitionist—and he took no stock with sectarianism of any kind whatsoever—I understand that he became a vestryman—never missed a Sunday—and he'd pass the plate to get the collection—all of this together, with this person that I had lunch with—not the same person, at all. That's what I mean when I say that he changed more from what he was in his youth—now he was no good and a lot of things—and a lot of things he shouldn't have done—he did a lot of things he shouldn't have done, and all of that—but he had the charm about him in those days. He could be tremendously interesting and entertaining, and never a dull moment.

JS:

That something electric in the same way it was about Evetts?

WH:

Yes, but Evetts hasn't lost his.

JS:

Yes, that's what I mean.

WH:

He's still got it. That's the thing that I don't understand, is what happened to him. I kind of kept up with him through Ike—Ike knew him down there, and he took Ike under his wing, as you know. Incidentally, Evetts [**sic, Carroll**] became quite—in his later days—quite intimate with the group at Canyon. He went to all their meetings and everything, but he never came to Lubbock—oh, he did come to Lubbock one time, too—Mary has a big trial going on here—big trial—and that infernal lawyer that Mary Jo [**Carroll**] was connected with were in this trial, and I understand from Ike that Bailey had become exceedingly jealous. Now when I knew him, Bailey's job was to make a lot of other people jealous, which he did. But here, he had become exceedingly jealous, and it was one of those unstable times. He had these unstable periods—one time he quit and went up to the little farm they bought up there in the sand, somewhere up there around Hico or someplace—had a section of land, and he spent a whole year up there plowing and clearing and grubbing and bringing brush and all that kind of thing, trying to pull himself together again—and did—went back and had a good job back in the *Quarterly* again, and all of

that. Well anyway, Bailey was in another one of those crises—psychological crises—and so he just showed up here and spent about three or four days at Ike's house while that trial was going on—and just waited there all day until Mary Jo got through with the courthouse, and then he yanked her out there, too, so she wouldn't be with these other lawyers. And Ike told me that he would just sit there in the room all day long—wouldn't read anything, just sit there waiting until the day was gone.

JS:

Huh. That's real strange.

WH:

Yes, it was. He was always—he had these tantrums when I knew him, and he would rave and rant—in his older days, he would go into these—

JS:

—withdrawn periods?

WH:

—withdrawn periods, and you wondered what was going to happen. In other words, he had his black periods. Ike, probably, would know more about this—the last few years of his life—than anybody. And when he would come see Ike, he would never call me, at all. I wouldn't even know he was here unless Ike would tell me—and it was usually after he left.

JS:

That's real strange.

WH:

In other words—he turned on Dr. Granbery, too—he would have these great attachments, and then when he turned, he would swing way back the other way.

JS:

Nothing more to do with—

WH:

Yes. He was just unexplainable and unaccountable—you couldn't account for those—certainly Dr. Granbery never did anything to alienate him; I never did anything to alienate him—always helped him when I could. He was usually under the sway of somebody close at hand, and when he got attached to this person, he'd—you know, he'd alienated him from these others in the past.

JS:

Just one of those inexplicable things about people.

WH:

Yeah. Sure is. Bailey filled a—I think a very important notch in the history profession, though, as editor of the *Quarterly*. He was criticized by having—not running enough articles and running so much of this other business—often that was half the quarterly.

JS:

Texas Collection?

WH:

Yeah, Texas Collection and reviews and a lot of stuff—almost—

JS:

Documents in some.

WH:

Yes, and a lot of keeping up with folks and quoting folks and that kind of thing. He always had a little flair for journalism, you know, and keeping up with the personals—that kind of thing.

JS:

Frantz has almost completely and totally reversed this, if you'd noticed the recent issues of the *Quarterly*.

WH:

I would think he would—he would be after filling it full of articles, rather than so much editorializing and what you might call just professional reporting—what this stuff was that Bailey did.

JS:

As you go back through some of the old issues of the *Quarterly* and find out who was excavating where and what they hoped to find, and who was researching what—

WH:

Yes, it was just a lot of keeping up with the gossip—professional gossip—and it had some value.

JS:

I think so.

WH:

Yes. It has some value. Often, he wouldn't have more than two or three articles, and then the rest of it, maybe a hundred pages of that various kind of hash that he would put together. But it'll have its place, I think—I think it'll have its value for people who, a hundred years from now, are trying to unravel things—it's a record.

JS:

It certainly is.

WH:

What did—do you remember what Bailey has published, himself?

JS:

I was trying to think about—think of that—

WH:

The Handbook [of Texas]—he and Webb, back during the days of their—no I don't think they ever feuded much, when they were having their big platonic love affair—that's when they got *The Handbook* out.

JS:

Of course, he did the volume on Texas—

WH:

But that's largely Bailey's business—he's the one that really did that [**activated it**].

JS:

And then this volume he brought out—Texas History Theses and Dissertations—which, of course, is one of the best things he ever did, in my opinion—one of the most valuable. And of course, *The Handbook*—and I don't even know what he did his dissertation on.

WH:

I was trying to think—down there, at the university—

JS:

His thesis here was social life in West Texas, or something like—

WH:

Yes, a kind of continuation of what I had him working on when we were at McMurry.

JS:

Uh-huh, kind of an extension of *Alkali Trails*—

WH:

He was in on all of the business I got together for *Alkali Trails*—he was in on all of that. That's where he got his first induction into historical technique—heavens knows it was accidental. We invented our own technique—I had not had anything on technique at the time we were doing all that business. We worked it out as we went, but that's where he got his introduction into that kind of thing—that year at McMurry with me.

JS:

Apparently it was quite profitable.

WH:

Well, at least it got him interested in something. Though, in his young days, he could have landed in the penitentiary just as easy as he could land at the University of Texas. It was just which way the ball bounced with him.

JS:

Fortunately for him, you were around him in Abilene when he was bouncing there.

WH:

Well, I did help, I think, to stimulate his interest—the thing which finally predominated and made an old straight man out of him.

JS:

History?

WH:

Yeah. He became just almost puritanical in his later days, I understand, which is wild—he chased—oh, he chased women, he chased—there was nothing in the book he didn't do.

JS:

Strange how the profession affects some people—some become straight-laced, and others enjoy themselves.

WH:

Well, others become—some people start straight-laced and end up, you know, with a much more cosmopolitan point of view—and so it does, it works both ways.

JS:

It certainly does.

WH:

That's about all I can think of about Bailey.

JS:

All right. Well—

WH:

Paul W. Horn?

JS:

Yes. We've got about, oh, fifteen or so minutes, if you'd like to talk about him.

WH:

I don't know too much about Dr. Horn. Probably the best revelation of Dr. Horn is revealed directly and indirectly in Ruth Horn's book, *The First Thirty Years*. Dr. Horn was—oh, what is the term for one of these people that can be two or three different things? The term doesn't come to me at the moment. Dr. Horn first came to my attention as a churchman—I don't think he was an ordained priest, but I think he did a lot of preaching from the pulpits of the Methodist Church—he was a great layman. When I was growing up, my family were all Methodists and took it rather seriously, and insisted on our going to Sunday school, and all that kind of thing. And I remember that Dr. Horn, in these—they used to call them—the literature that they gave out to Sunday school—having the lessons and everything—kind of plan-like—planned academic matters—they have another word for those things—Dr. Horn wrote those things for the Sunday schools, they called them in those days. I think today they call them church schools, since they joined the Yankees and changed up—they call the residing elders superintendents, and they call the Sunday schools church schools—those are about the only things I've been able to notice that they've changed. Dr. P—it was just P. W. Horn—He did the adult quarterlies—I believe they call those things quarterlies—and they are always done, I guess, along in advance because the next quarter was always ready long before that quarter started. And so, as I—my first—I remember that name, P. W. Horn—I thought it was kind of funny-looking initials and a funny-looking name. Then I was rather surprised when they elected president of Tech—that he was named the first president of Tech—and I believe he was the superintendent of schools at Houston when that happened—and Rice University had been built, I think, while he was superintendent down there, and no doubt, he had been quite interested in Rice and had watched it grow and break ground and build the buildings. And I know that he had a great deal to do [**with his views**]**]**—when they elected him president, he came here and opened an office downtown, up over the second floor of a store. I remember the outside stairs went up to the office—went up to the

upper side. That year that he was down there working with architects long before they broke ground out here—for some reason—I can't think now what it was—I was in Lubbock and had occasion to go by his office. I wasn't trying to get a job or anything like that—had nothing to do with that—but I do remember going into his office, and it was a little ole room about twelve by twelve feet up over this store—and shelves and books and table there for plans and things like that—it was rather meagerly and cheaply furnished. Whatever it was—talked to him about whatever it was I wanted to talk about—it probably had something to do with my collecting the material—the newspapers and that kind of thing—

JS:

For your dissertation?

WH:

I was after nearly everything, and it probably had something to do with that. I can't think of anything else. That was the first time I ever saw Dr. Horn. Then, after I came here due to Dr. Granbery, well Dr. Granbery carried me down to his office—and at that time, the only classroom building we had for arts and sciences was the front of the administration building—the two wings had not been added to it. When I came here, there was only that, the chemistry building, the textile building, and the first home economics building in that old gym—that's all there was on the campus. And all of the arts and sciences were—oh yes, they had a shack over there for the aggie school. It's still there.

JS:

And they had the dairy, too, I believe.

WH:

Yes, they had the dairy barn—the dairy barn is the first thing—not the dairy barn, but what we call the—that little ol'—pavilion—that was it, and they did have the dairy barn. That was finished when I was here. And the aggie was where the speech department is, now—that was the whole aggie school. Well anyway, the history department had one little office up on the third floor of that building, down at that end. There was a classroom right in the corner, and then there was some offices on the third floor. And all of the history staff was in one little ole office, which was about ten feet wide, and probably eighteen, twenty feet long—and there we were, all stashed in there. So Dr. Granbery marched me down to meet Dr. Horn—and Dr. Horn was kind of a gracious kind of a person, and he wondered about his sincerity, but he, you know, said the proper thing, and he could bow and scrape—which he did. Then, I was never very close to Dr. Horn at all—more than—well, a few social functions and things like that, you would say “How do you do?” Then he got into something—sick over at his house, and about two days later, he's dead. It was a great shock to everybody. Dr. Granbery was already getting on thin ice when Dr. Horn died. Dr. Horn had managed to keep the board quiet—the board was worried about Dr.

Granbery's liberalism, and they thought he was teaching socialism—about the meanest thing you could say in those days was socialism—now you say communism. So they were worried about it, and then discussed it a few times, and that just meant Granbery was a liberal—and scattered heresy among students. When Dr. Horn died, Dr. Granbery didn't have a friend at court any more, and about the next time the board met, well they just didn't renew his contract. That's the way they got him out. So I never knew Dr. Horn too well. Dr. Murray, I know, when he came here—obviously he'd got *The First Thirty Years*, and read it very carefully. In talking with him and in the few speeches I've heard him make, I think he is more impressed by Dr. Horn than any other president. He quotes Dr. Horn very often. Dr. Horn was a sort of philosopher—he engaged in beautiful—

JS:
—rhetoric—

WH:
—proverbs and rhetoric and that kind of thing. Dr. Murray thinks that he had a very broad vision, and was a man of great depth, and so on. I suppose that Dr. Horn did as good a job as could have been done, probably, starting Texas Tech. Although he was a church man—wrote the Sunday school lessons—from what I have gathered, he was not as straight-laced as one would gather just on the surface.

JS:
Something of a human being, too.

WH:
Yes. He was a man who was a little difficult to know. He was always on his dignity, and it seemed to me that he always kept people pretty much at arm's length. He would never get—he was not a man you could ever get in close to—that is, that was my impression. And that's about all I can say about him.

JS:
Well, it's just almost five, and the next—

WH:
Well—

Break in Recording

JS:
This is Skaggs, May 13, 1968, Dr. William Curry Holden interview.

Break in recording

JS:

It's all ready to go.

WH:

With respect to Judge James D. Hamlin—first in regard to the title “Judge” —that's purely, as I recall, an honorary title. As far as I can recall, he was never judge of anything—not even a JP.

JS:

Wasn't he a judge for—

WH:

I once knew the story of where he got the title—

JS:

I was thinking that for a short time, he held the position of judge at Farwell—county court or something like that.

WH:

It may have been a very temporary something.

JS:

I think so, just while they were forming the county, or something.

WH:

But it was strictly a temporary thing, and I don't know how he came about it—nor was it applicable to him—they should have called him colonel, because, if I ever saw—as a matter of fact, I believe he was a native of Kentucky—

JS:

Yes he was.

WH:

—and if I ever saw a person who personified in every aspect—physical, appearance, temperament, appearance—every bearing—every physical and psychological aspect about him was the epitome of the symbol of the Kentucky colonel. I don't know if there ever was a Kentucky colonel like a Kentucky colonel is supposed to be, but Judge Hamlin came nearer being, I think, that thing. He was a very tall man—probably 6'3”—well-proportioned—had a wonderful—he had a large—his head was in proportion to his body, very erect—carried himself

like an aristocrat, and to the end of his life, he had this wonderful shock of gray hair. It was always gray when I knew him—I guess maybe prematurely—but obviously he never lost his hair. His features were even, and his manners were impeccable—his voice was most pleasing, he was most articulate, his diction was something that you have never encountered before, and it was simply a joy to be around the judge. He had a wonderful sense of humor, he was a raconteur storyteller—inexhaustible amount of—number of—amount of stories. He was a man of very fine sensitivity. He was a great patron of the arts—music, the visual arts, the dance—there was no realm of cultural interest that this man did not have. He collected one of the finest private collections of visual art paintings in all of West Texas in his day.

JS:

These were donated to the Panhandle Plains—

WH:

These went to the Panhandle Plains, yes, which he helped start and fathered along and everything. He was very friendly toward us and our museum, but he had made out his will, in which he made provisions for all these things before we ever got to know him very well—and obviously, he never changed the will. I noticed the Canyon people were scared to death of us because they knew of our friendship—in fact, in the latter part of his life—the last five or six years—the judge would come down here every—oh, at least once a month and spend a weekend—and he never went to Canyon.

JS:

Who'd he stay with when he came to Lubbock?

WH:

With us—he'd stay here with us. When he would come in, well, he had a favorite chair on the sunporch, and he'd come in on Friday and stay until Monday—and court was in session. I don't mean county court; I mean the king's court. And people came—his selected bunch of people that he enjoyed—and every once in a while Evetts was included—always when he could be here—Clifford Jones, Clark Mulligan—Judge Mulligan—Walter Posey, and on rare occasions, we'd have Mrs. [Georgia W.] Dingus up here for a little bit because she was a great advocate and fan for Latin—and the old judge could speak Latin. He could speak Greek—he was a classical scholar. In his home at Farwell, he had a room much bigger than this with bookcases to the very top of the ceiling all the way around, filled with priceless editions of books in both Greek and Latin. He read both Greek and Latin every night before he went to sleep just to keep in practice. He could read either of them as easily as he reads English—or read English. He was a great admirer of the classical architecture, and also of the philosophy of the Greeks, of which he was most familiar. He knew all of this, but he never did flaunt it around. He could go out with a bunch of cowboys and be with them a week and they never—they'd think he was just another

old country boy from Kentucky. He never used this to impress people at all. You had to know him awfully well to get into the depths of the man. Well, he had all these wonderful qualities—and along with all of these things, he had a great taste for and, I'm afraid, weakness for John Barleycorn [**alcohol**], and he became an alcoholic twice in his life, and went on, took the Keeley Cure—I believe I mentioned that—and the latter few years of his life, he was—he disciplined himself very rigidly. He would take one drink, and then he would just say “No, no more.” Sometimes, he wouldn't even risk that.

JS:

Was he, then, a true alcoholic?

WH:

He was for a while—at least two times early in his life, before we knew him—and he said he was.

JS:

Well this is what he says in his memoirs.

WH:

Yes, this is what he says.

JS:

I'm just curious, you know, it's so unusual for anyone to really be an alcoholic and to ever get back to the point where they can stop.

WH:

Well, he used great discipline on himself—

JS:

This takes a great amount of willpower.

WH:

—once in a while, he'd break over, but just—he would yank himself out. It would just last for a day or two, and he'd yank himself out of it just by his willpower. I know at Santa Fe, one time, I was over there when he went overboard, one night, and he must have gotten pretty lit up—and the next afternoon, I saw him, and he was most apologetic. He said, “Well, I sure slipped last night. I've got to make up for it,” and he just gritted his teeth and did. I told you about the time—he was a great ladies' man, too. He liked the ladies, and I suppose he may have been quite a playboy earlier in his life. He was a good friend of Temple Houston, incidentally, and he and

Temple—Temple, you know, was a rounder—and he and Temple went on a lot of binges together, and they—a lot of parties.

JS:

Temple was frequently in his cups, too, I believe.

WH:

Oh yes—more so, probably, than Judge Hamlin was. But they were both [**drinkers**], I'm sure—Temple—I never saw Temple, but he must have been, also, a very handsome man, and a very brilliant man. The two must have made a pair in the early days of Amarillo and Woodward, Oklahoma, and so on.

JS:

Yes, he tells—about the time his memoir—or the judge does, where he and Temple were sharing a good jug in some hotel room and Mrs. Houston came up and really gave them both a severe tongue lashing over their activity, so to speak.

WH:

Well, the judge finally married, and I'm sure his wife gave him many a lecture—and finally they separated.

JS:

Yes, I was going to ask you what the story was there—do you know?

WH:

Well, they finally separated—by agreement—and the judge, I think, had some rent houses or apartments over in Texico, just across the line. The judge's house was on a farm about a mile from that little town on this side—

JS:

—Farwell—

WH:

—Farwell—but they had some—so she took one of his apartments over in Texico. But after they separated, they were on the most friendly terms, and I know one time George Dupree and I went up there to see the judge about something or other—at that time he was not keeping any hard liquor in his house, and he said all he could offer us was some homemade wine which, he brought it out, and it was pretty good—and we sipped around.

End of recording