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## Arkansas Memories Project

Interview with:

George Haley  
Haley Residence  
Silver Spring, Maryland  
March 16, 2006

Interviewer: Scott Lunsford

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: The first thing that I feel like I need to do is identify this session, this videotaping, at the—under the auspices of the Barbara and David Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History.

Franklin Evarts: We're picking you up through the other mic, so I . . .

SL: Oh.

FE: I don't know that your transmitter is on.

SL: Well, I think it is. It's on standby.

FE: Yeah.

SL: Okay. So this tape—all these tapes will reside in the special collections department at Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas. Part of this project is also to produce a ten- to twelve-minute video piece for the Silas Hunt Legacy Award

Dinner—it will be shown at that dinner at the University of Arkansas, as experience from the ten awardees at the dinner that night. So that's what we're doing, and I feel like I've told you that now and I've got videotape of me telling you that, and I'm—I don't know how that works as a legal document, but I just don't want you to be surprised.

FE: You're dealing with a lawyer.

SL: [Laughs] I don't know if this is—it's not quite the same as a signed release, but this is what we're trying to do.

FE: Name and spelling please first thing.

SL: Okay. Also, as a process, we ask that whoever I'm interviewing to say their name and to spell it—their whole name—so that when we're in the edit suite there's no mistaking how we spell your name at the bottom of the screen and we know exactly who we're talking with. So, Mr. Ambassador, if I could have your name, your full name, and you could spell it for us, that'd be great.

George Haley: My full name is George Williford Boyce Haley. And it is spelled G-E-O-R-G-E. W-I-L-L-I-F-O-R-D. B-O-Y-C-E. H-A-L-E-Y.

SL: Thank you.

FE: Speed.

SL: Boyce comes from a benefactor that helped your father—actually, the story is, is that he provided the funding for your father's college education. Is that the way that goes?

GH: He provided it for the final, final senior year [of college].

SL: Okay.

GH: Dad had been a Pullman porter in the summer, and R.S.M. Boyce was very impressed with him as a Pullman porter and, to Dad's surprise and, of course, great pleasure, was the fact that when he got back to school in the fall at A & T College [currently North Carolina A & T State College] in Greensboro, North Carolina, his—his tuition, room and board were all paid for the year.

SL: What a great gift.

GH: What an excellent gift.

SL: But your father had been working and paying for his own education up to that point? Is that . . . ?

GH: Pretty much so. Yes. And he had had as many as four or five jobs to kind of keep himself going. He hadn't really been doing too well in school because he had so many other things going to try to keep him there. And of course, when the senior year came with this funding, he came out pretty much at the top of the class.

SL: Big difference.

GH: Oh, yes, no doubt about it.

SL: So, now, what year was that?

GH: That, I believe, was 1918. During the time of the First World War, Dad enlisted after finishing A & T and, and was eventually wounded—was gassed in the Argonne [Meuse-Argonne Offensive] in Paris, in—in France. But that was—that's when it was, after he finished college . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and of course when he got back home he was able to start at—doing his graduate work at Cornell University.

SL: Mhmm. Did that injury in the war, did that give him health problems the rest of his life?

GH: Not, not seriously.

SL: Uh huh.

GH: He certainly was able to maintain his—himself . . .

SL: Uh huh.

GH: . . . his family, and to produce—become the father of four children. And we knew it, of course, and I think he had some—I'm sure he had some disability . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but it was rather—rather minor.

SL: Well, you know, I'd—had heard—now I've not read this, but I had—it seemed like someone told me that that was part of Silas Hunt's illness was some—something that he had been—some gas that he had been exposed to during the war.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: I don't know that for a fact.

GH: Yeah. I've heard that, too, but I'm not—I'm like you. I'm certainly not sure about what did happen where Silas is concerned.

[00:05:48] SL: Well, let's talk about your dad a little more. He was born in North Carolina, is . . .?

GH: No, no. He was born in a small town in Tennessee. Savannah . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Tennessee. His father was a ferryman—Tennessee River runs right through

Savannah . . .

SL: Savannah.

GH: . . . Tennessee, and—and his father had a farm and was a ferryman for across the Tennessee River.

SL: Well, it was—it wasn't really commonplace for an African-American to be in college at that time, was it?



GH: Oh, very much not so. My—my grandmother just was able, somehow, to get her husband—Dad's dad—Dad's father—to—to let him go to—go to Lane College . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . which is in Jackson, Tennessee . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and—and after some persuasion, they—he let him go. He was the youngest member of the family. There were four children. He was—Simon was the youngest.

SL: Uh huh.

GH: They let him go. He tells the story that he gave him \$50 and he said, "This is it." You know, I mean, "You—you do what you can with this because I can't send you any more money."

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And Dad went. And, of course, he started then at Lane getting jobs in various places to keep himself in school.

[00:07:46] SL: That's a great story. So his older siblings didn't have that opportunity,

it sounds like.

GH: Didn't have it. And I won't—I wouldn't suggest that we say that they didn't want it, but, it was because Grandma Haley decided that—that at least one of the children ought to have an opportunity to do this kind of thing that he was able to go

SL: You know, it seems like when I'm doing the other interviews that the mother did play a role in trying to get her children out of the circumstances that they were in currently and did seem to always encourage some kind of education or some way to better themselves. Is that—I mean . . . ?

GH: I think that is possibly true. Certainly in that generation, and it still exists, but certainly during that time the—the man was the head of the house who felt his responsibility of bringing in the funds to keep the family going, and certainly when we're talking in terms of—of sharecroppers, or whatever . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . [clears throat] the idea, of course, particularly with males—and females—was that when you get old enough, you come . . .

SL: And work.

GH: . . . and help—help yourself and your family by helping to pick cotton or shuck, you know, corn or whatever is necessary. So, I—I believe that—that that is the way that the philosophy existed then. Not that the mother didn't understand this, but it was the father's responsibility to see that there was enough money or harvesting or whatnot . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . to keep the family going.

SL: And also, really, until relatively recently, children didn't have to go to school, even high school. I mean, once they got to junior high—done with junior high, for all intents and purposes the legal requirements for education were done.

GH: Well that's true.

SL: And also it seems like I'm hearing that there is a great history of children actually, or schools actually letting our early so that the children could work.

GH: I was—I was certainly thinking that, and it's true. In many of the Southern states, in particular when there was time for, say, the harvesting, picking cotton, you know . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . during—what is it, August, September, generally school time . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . school was not—was recessed so that you could help with the farm work.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Yeah.

[00:11:26] SL: So, your father was at—your mom and dad, were they—did they come out of a rural setting? Were they raised in a rural agricultural setting, or was it more urban?

GH: They both came from fairly rural settings, certainly my father more so than my mother.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: They were both small towns.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Savannah, Tennessee, is where Dad came from. Now, my mother came from a smaller town called Henning, Tennessee. They were both centers, that is, small centers where farming was going in and around, you understand?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: As I said, cotton was the chief product of—of both of those areas.

SL: Were they predominantly black communities?

GH: Not—I wouldn't say they were *black* communities, but the blacks certainly did most of the picking of the cotton and . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know, the work like that.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But, I would say—I wouldn't—wouldn't say—maybe they would have been about sixty percent black . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . to forty white, you know.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I'm just giving you an idea . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . as to how I recall it. But, [clears throat] [00:13:06] my—my mother's family was different from my dad's. My mother was an only child.

SL: Okay.

GH: And she's come from the little—the little town of Henning . . .

SL: Mhmm.



GH: . . . Tennessee. She was very, very much the family pride of her—her father and mother. When she was growing up, whatever they had, she had, if you know what I mean.

SL: Sure.

GH: [Laughs] And she went off to college at Lane College, where Dad met her.

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. Here comes this lady who actually has—has a lot of things going for her. I mean, even considering money—money-wise—is over against this poor, poor young man . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . who's struggling like everything . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but they fall in love and, and then Mother goes back to Henning for—after two years, I believe, and Dad goes to A & T. She done—in his junior/senior year, he was at A & T, and he was a junior—the summer after his junior year is when he met R.S.M. Boyce.

SL: Okay. Okay.

GH: And so that's how that came about, from the standpoint of there—his being there. But they maintained—that is, my father and mother maintained their relationship, during the time of his service after—it was after college . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . he went to the service and came back. And shortly thereafter they were married in Henning.

SL: Okay.

GH: And the two of them were able to go to Ithaca, New York, which is where Cornell University is located . . .

SL: Mhmm. Mhmm.

GH: . . . and also, the Ithaca Conservatory of Music.

SL: Okay.

GH: When my mother was at Lane, she had not only taken piano, she'd majored in piano, and so when they got up to Ithaca, she did her [study] work at the Ithaca Conservatory [of Music] while Dad was at Cornell. He got—eventually got his master's in horticulture and, and Alex was born while they were there. Alex was born August 11, 1921, in Ithaca. And shortly thereafter, they came back south, I think, when Alex was like, I think, four or five months [old].

SL: Oh, okay. So they moved back to . . . ?

GH: To Henning.

SL: Henning.

GH: Yes.

[00:16:35] SL: And so, what happened in Henning? What did they do in Henning?

GH: Okay. My grandfather, who had this lumber business, a fairly . . .

SL: Now, this is your mother's father.

GH: Mother's father . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . yeah—really wanted his new son-in-law—now very much educated and whatnot—to come into his business, you understand . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and start running the lumber company.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Dad actually did not want that. He had the feeling that he had been now trained from the standpoint of his education with eventually a master's degree, and he wanted to help other people.

SL: Right.

GH: He felt that he would help them more by teaching . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and that was his—that's—that's what he set out to do. He stayed just a short time in Henning, but within—I—I—as I remember it now, it must have been a year or less, that he got a position in—at Langston University in Oklahoma.

SL: Wow.

GH: And that's where he and his family—well now, actually, he might have stayed a little longer come to think of it, because I was already in existence. I was born in 1925.

SL: Uh-huh. In Henning?

GH: In Henning.

SL: So . . .

GH: I was born in Henning.

SL: Yeah. That would put them there at least three years.

GH: Yes.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And, so he—he went to—he and my mother, Bertha, went to Langston with Alex and me. Okay?

[00:18:33] SL: Do you remember much about Oklahoma?

GH: I remember . . .

SL: Because—no, okay, now, this is—is this during the Dust Bowl? Has the drought happened? And isn't Oklahoma, wasn't it part of the Dust Bowl?

GH: Dust Bowl. I remember, really more good things as a youngster. Of course, you know, now, say, when I'm say, three—two, three and four . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . I'm now remembering what's going on in our lives.

SL: Yeah. Okay.

GH: And one of the—one of the things that I remember most about Oklahoma is the real love that existed within our—our family . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . how Dad and my mother were so fond of their two young sons.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: We did just a lot of things together. And well, one kind of—I mean, it was a sad incident. Alex and I were going to school—Alex is four years older—was four years older than I.

SL: Mhmm.

[00:20:05] GH: And, we were coming home from school one day, and that was a time when there was Tarzan, you under—I mean Tarzan was a big, big, big hero . . .

SL: Yeah, you bet.

GH: . . . for all of our youngsters.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: One of the guys who was with us had gotten on one of these transformers.

SL: Uh oh. Up on a pole.

GH: He'd got up—yeah, up on a pole.

SL: Oh.

GH: And he—and he got up there and he said, “I’m Tarzan!” Now I must be three—three or four, not more than four—and he fell. He—he lost his balance, and he—and he started falling, and—and he captured one of those wires—you know the live wires? And he fell to the ground. But, the skin on both of his hands was just rolled up, you could see the—the flesh.

SL: Ahh.

GH: Both [instance?]. And I remember that so well. Alex put me on his back; you saw a picture of me on his back?

SL: Yes. Uh-huh.

GH: And we ran—ran—he ran home with me on his back to tell my mother what had happened. And of course, I don’t know all of the incidents, but I remember that so well.

SL: Well, sure. You would.

GH: And, and that young man lived. He did—he didn’t—didn’t kill him, but they amputated his—his arms and all that, so he learned to do a lot of things. He eventually had a restaurant and whatnot—learned to write with his feet, you know. And so we stayed in touch with him on some occasions. Now, the good things that

happened about Langston: I remember so well one Christmas. We were getting ready for Santa Claus.

SL: Of course.

GH: You know? We—they—we had a long driveway, and, and our mother and father were telling us, “Now, if you’re good boys, Santa will—will, you know, he’ll remember that, and he’ll take care of you.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So, sure enough, we were doing the best we could to be good boys [laughter] and we had this long driveway and we had rest stops—I mean we had, they had had us help make “Santa’s Rest Stop” [signs], you know, up and down the driveway, you understand. So, Mama had made a couple of cakes—at least a couple—one coconut cake, which I liked, and Alex liked chocolate cake, you understand?

SL: Mhmm. I do the German chocolate.

GH: Oh yes.

SL: I do like that.

GH: Dad was doing things, just all of this business, and I’m just starry-eyed, as was Alex, although he’s—let’s say we’re seven and three [years old].

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. But anyway, “Santa, Santa, Santa!” Well, I remember so well that on Christmas Day, coming down from upstairs, it just looked like the living room and all was overrun with things, just, you know, just so much stuff.

SL: [Laughs]

GH: But, what I remember most, was the fact that there at the dining room table were

three coffee cups . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . and—and—and this was Mama, this was Daddy, and this was Santa's cup.

And there was about three, you know, just a little bit of coffee still in it—three coffee cups and then a saucer where he had eaten . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . both some of my cake and my brother's cake, you understand?

SL: Yes.

GH: I'm just so fascinated that Santa, with all of the places that he had to go, would use our house as a rest stop. He was there at least fifteen minutes.

SL: [Laughs] And he left all that stuff.

GH: I'm telling you, I mean, that's—but he'd stayed there that long. But the thing that capped it all was that it had snowed and Dad had gotten out and put some sleigh tracks . . .

SL: Aww.

GH: . . . on the roof up to the chimney, you understand . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . to see Santa coming down the chimney.

SL: Oh, man.

GH: Isn't that something?

SL: What a great dad.

GH: Oh, my! And Mother.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

GH: They were working together.

SL: Conspirators.

GH: Oh, my goodness. And . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . that was really, really something, one of the main, main things that I remember.

[00:25:13] SL: Well now, did you all have a piano in the house?

GH: Had a piano.

SL: So, was there always music, or a lot of music in your house?

GH: A lot of music there, everywhere we were, since my mother was a musician, and Dad loved music. Dad sang well.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: As a matter of fact, he would do solos. He was a baritone, and he would do solos at the . . .

SL: At the church?

GH: . . . at they colleges.

SL: Oh, at the colleges.

GH: At the *colleges*. I don't know—don't recall his doing any in . . .

SL: At the church?

GH: . . . in churches, although we went to church.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: But, he did a lot of—of—he'd do—and sometimes, at most of the colleges where



we were, it would not necessarily be one person, say the faculty, several people, who may have been able to sing or play or . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . do something, would—would give concerts, and Dad would do that.

SL: So at the house, did—were you all encouraged to pick up on the music, you and Alex?

GH: Oh, yes. Yes.

SL: Did you . . . ?

GH: Alex—Alex started out with the violin . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and—and eventually the trumpet. I was playing the piano.

SL: Okay.

GH: And so I started playing the piano.

SL: Did you all have a favorite music that you liked to do?

GH: Mmm . . . you know what, I don't recall what music we did then, other than my playing. Oh now, favorite through the years was "Danny Boy."

SL: Mhmm.

GH: My father sang "Danny Boy," . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . and he had a good voice, there's no doubt about it. And that became kind of like the family . . .

[00:27:19] SL: So, did your mother teach you to play the piano, or did you have piano lessons?

GH: Eventually I had piano lessons. She started a little bit . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but she didn't teach me. [00:27:31] I guess we've moved pretty much to, really, the saddest thing in my life, and I still think that that's probably true, is when my mother died. My mother didn't do too well. I don't know what her real problems were 'cause I'm still very young.

SL: [Laughs]

GH: But we went to—we go back to Henning.

SL: Yes.

GH: And when we went back to Henning, my brother, Julius was born, in Henning.

SL: So now, are you—did you move back to Henning, or were you just visiting?

GH: I guess we had gone back and forth, but we didn't really move back to Henning, as such, because Dad was trying to get another place that seemingly would be better for my mother's health.

SL: Oh, okay.

GH: And we went from there to—to Huntsville, Alabama—A & M College in Huntsville, Alabama . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but we were back and forth to Henning.

SL: Were her folks still alive?

GH: Oh, yes. No, no, Grandma was still alive . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but my grandfather died.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: My maternal grandfather died. So Grandma actually lived in this fairly huge house . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . by herself.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, then we went to—we went to Huntsville.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And shortly thereafter, Mother—Mother was not well, and she died.

SL: Oh, man.

GH: She died when I was six. Alex was ten, and Julius was just fourteen months.

And, as I said, it was one of those things: a six-year-old—it's—it's—it's—of course, it's difficult any time.

SL: Right.

GH: But, I just couldn't understand what happened to my mother, you know. Well, telling you all of these kinds of things: one of Dad's students, whose name was Seaman Thompson came down to my school . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and—and told the a—told my teacher, “Well, Professor Haley wants me to bring his son George home”—I'm in—in the first grade—“right away because his—his mother is not well at all.” So, sure enough, they got me out. I remember Seaman because he was a tall guy and he was running me along on the campus.

Our schools were prep schools on the university campuses, you see, on college campuses . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and he was carrying me along. I'm almost running, you know, to keep up with him. Well, we got home because Mama was—they'd—she'd been in the hospital, but she was back at home. And they—I was the last one to get there. Alex was there. I'm not certain that Julius was there. I think he may still have been with my grandmother . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . in Henning.

SL: Okay.

GH: But at any rate, the doctor and various people were there, and so, in a few minutes—after I got there, the doctor said, “Well, I'm sorry, but she's gone.”

SL: Hmm.

GH: Nobody said a thing until the six-year-old pipes up . . .

SL: Mmm.

GH: . . . and I said, “Well, Dad, how can she be dead when her eyes are open?”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And when I said that, my dad came over and he just, almost—he crushed me and he just started crying, crying . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . crying, you understand. He was just crushing me . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and so, well, that had happened. And then people would tell me—Dad and my grandmother and others—“Well, she’s gone to live with God.” And, so, I couldn’t understand, why would God take my mother?

SL: Yeah.

GH: You know? Why would he do that? I went down to my class after I got enough together on it, and I checked around, and nobody else’s mother was dead. And I figured out, “Why would he do that?” You know? But it was one of those things, and, as I say, when—and we’re a religious family, very religious family—and when I que[stion]—and I do question God. I question him, “Why would you do this?” You understand?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But other kinds of things, of course, have taken over. There’s no doubt about that. But it’s not like I have not thought about people who take for granted—I find then as we’ve gone along that generally we take certain things for granted.

SL: You bet.

GH: Yes, mhmm. Parents or whatnot, you understand?

SL: You bet.

GH: . . . but this is—this is the kind of thing that happend. And in this instance, I just really, really, missed my mom. But Grandma took over. Our mother was—was Grandma’s only child.

SL: Mhmm.

[00:34:12] GH: So, this was 1932.

SL: Okay.

GH: And she literally lived for her three grandchildren for the rest of her life, and that was a good long time afterwards.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Because we'd go there in the summer, and, of course, here Aunt Liz, Elizabeth Murray, who had taught in Oklahoma, came home to Henning to live with Grandma.

SL: Okay, now, that's your grandmother's . . . ?

GH: Sister.

SL: Sister.

GH: Yes.

SL: Okay.

GH: Yes. And she started teaching in the little town of—of Henning so that Grandma wouldn't be there [alone]. So, the two of them were—the grandmother and the great aunt, of course, were the ones that we would come and visit from wherever we were in the summer.

[00:35:13] SL: Let's talk about what you do remember of your mother. You didn't have much time with her 'cause you lost her when you were six . . .

GH: Six.

SL: . . . but you're already telling me some stuff that you could—that impressed you as early as three, which is quite remarkable that you can . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . pull that out. Do you—was your . . . your mother—was your mother also a teacher? She taught?

GH: She taught.

SL: Taught music . . .

GH: Yes. Yes.

SL: . . . is that right?

GH: Yes.

[00:35:42] SL: So, when it came to the house and the household stuff, how did that work out? What—your mom and dad were both teaching . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . and—and they'd come home from work and then they'd just put the meal together together and, I mean . . .?

GH: Well, to the best of my knowledge, that—that was it. And actually the—the mother had most of the work to do.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: She did, 'cause Dad was in—as I said, he was in agriculture . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . even teaching agriculture, which meant that in many instances, and that time, you know, a teacher had the responsibilities of doing a lot of other things with his agricultural students.

SL: Right.

GH: The—the—the colleges had their own farms.

SL: You bet.

GH: Seeing the cows got milked and the pigs were fed—all that . . .

SL: Mhmm. Yeah.

GH: . . . because the colleges *used* those farms to help feed the students. And Dad was responsible for that. At Langston, I don't—well, I just don't remember how many other instructors there were when he was there. I just know that he—he was very busy along those lines.

SL: Now, where in Oklahoma is Langston?

GH: It's near Guthrie.

SL: And Guthrie is . . . ?

GH: [Laughs] It's not too far from Oklahoma City.

SL: Okay. So it's kind of in Central Oklahoma.

GH: Yes, it's [not far] from Oklahoma City. But I want to tell you—back to—I guess, surely, I just remember my—my mother as being one that, that—well you—I wouldn't expect to give up, if you know what I mean?

SL: Yeah.

GH: She was there . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and all of a sudden she wasn't. So whatever I [laughs] wanted, pretty much, Mother was there to do. Since it *has* been so long, it's been like, when people were telling me that she's gone to live with God, that I . . . have felt that that's where—I know that's where she is. And the second—the—the next year, after my mother died, I'm still in Alabama—we are—the—the next teacher who didn't really realize about my mother's death, necessarily, had me in a school operetta. Every year that was a big deal, toward the end of the school year, you know, many, many of the schools would have these operettas.



SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and she had me playing an orphan . . .

SL: Oh.

GH: . . . and I had a song to sing: “Mother, are you looking down from Heaven’s window high? Can you see your little boy? Or can you hear me cry? Sometimes it’s so hard to be unselfish, brave and true. Do you think that God would care if I should come to you?” I’m in Alabama, as I said, and a lot of times, I’d go out and I’d look in the skies, I’d say, “I can see my mother up there.” You understand what I’m saying?

SL: Yes. Absolutely.

GH: And it was—it was something that has caused me, at least through the years, to at least, not only think about, but—but cause me to feel comfortable, if you please [laughs] knowing that I’ve got that support up there. And—and things have—things have happened. The grandmother was there.

SL: Yeah.

[00:40:12] GH: And Dad married a stepmother. Dad married a wife . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . who was our stepmother, who actually was not that nice to her three grand—her three . . .

SL: Stepsons.

GH: . . . stepsons. Very, very intelligent woman . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . master’s [degree] from Ohio State in Columbus, Ohio. She’d come from Co-

lumbus. And—and you talk about a—a family. It was something. She—she was just hard on her three stepsons. Now, they had, Dad and my stepmother, had a daughter, Lois Ann, who was [laughs] the doll in the family. And not that her three brothers didn't love her very much . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand, 'cause, I mean let's face it, boys and then we get a girl.

SL: Right.

GH: She was a pretty little girl.

SL: Yeah.

GH: But Mother gave us a hard way to go. And—and you were talking earlier; I don't recall so much about the father—father/mother relationship from the standpoint of how the house ran.

SL: Right.

GH: When Dad married my stepmother, the house ran *very* well . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . from the standpoint of [laughs] *everybody* had responsible positions. I mean, you did—you did your work: set the table, wash the dishes, do other kinds of things. And it was uniformly run. Now I don't want to—to say to you that all was negative . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . by any means. Mother taught us a lot of things. For instance, we had bad manners [game] at the table [with each meal]. We used cloth napkins all the time.

SL: Exclusively. Uh-huh

GH: We had ducks with different colors of the bill, you understand, so you knew whose napkin it was and all of that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . kind of stuff. And—and we learned that we're supposed to wipe our mouths before we take a drink of water, and wipe it again afterwards; to put the silver properly on the table; I mean, you know, all of that kind of stuff. And it was bad manners—you—you watched what everybody else was doing, and if somebody didn't do what he or she was supposed to do, that was bad manners. And the one who got least bad manners at the end of the week would get a prize. And at the end of the month, you may get something that was even more so, like, skates or, not necessarily, but you understand what I'm saying?

[00:43:19] SL: Yeah. I do. So, was she—do you know much about her upbringing and her parents? What—how she got to be that way and how she was able to bring that sort of discipline to the house?

GH: I don't know, really, too much about her upbringing.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Her—her mother still was living [in Ohio] when we lived in Alabama. We did not visit her family very much, aside from one sister who lived in New York with her family, on occasion, because every summer, as I said, we went to—to Henning.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: There were the two things; there was Grandma there . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . who just engulfed her three grandsons, you see?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And so it was something that wanted as much as possible and certainly we wanted it, as well.

SL: Sure.

GH: I remem[ber] . . .

SL: It was like the great vacation for you.

GH: Oh, yes. I remember when we'd get to the little town, Covington . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . which is next to [town south of (IA)] Henning, Alex would get so excited, he'd tell Dad, "Stop the car. I can—I can run faster than the car can get me there" [laughter]. You know, I mean, it was that kind of thing. Grandma was so much—she was—yeah. Back to my mother's death just a minute, how Grandma fit into the picture: I hardly remember her from a standpoint of open emotion. After my mother died . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . when she came to Alabama, when she got there, they pulled Mama out [at the morgue] and Grandma looked and she said [GH makes the faint sniffing sound of someone crying to herself], kind of like that, and that was it. I never saw her . . .

SL: Grieve.

GH: . . .grieve openly, you understand. And at the funeral, how you feel like—I really didn't think too much about this at all—people, of course, had come from various places for the funeral, and the funeral—the procession was ready to go from the

house to the church. And somehow, they had forgotten about the six-year-old—I'm the six year old. And I pulled on Grandma's skirt. She's got on all of this stuff, you know.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and I said, "Grandma, I'm hungry." Well, now, everybody had been fed, but somehow they—they'd missed me. Of course Julius, the baby, they'd taken care of, and Alex was old enough to take care of [himself], but—but I hadn't . . .

SL: You got skipped over.

GH: . . . had anything to—to eat.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Grandma said, "What? What?" And so she—she took her skirts—one of these long skirts and started—'cause one of the fires was just about out, but she started getting the fire going together, got a skillet [laughs] and fried a couple of eggs for me. And—and she said "This child—" then she started fussing at people. "This child hasn't had anything to eat!" You know. And . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . so I held up the whole funeral procession [laughter] because I hadn't had anything. But that was, what I'm saying, that was the grandmother, you understand?

SL: She was already taken over.

GH: Always taking over. Okay. I just thought about that 'cause, as you said, you—you reflect on things, and—and that was some experience in my life.

SL: Didn't—probably didn't realize at the time what that really was saying . . .

GH: No, no.

SL: . . .what really was happening there.

GH: And that's why . . .

SL: Your mother was now gone, and there was no one else that was going to look after that six-year-old at this particular time.

GH: Exactly.

SL: A lot of stuff going on all around and . . .

GH: That's exactly it. As of course, I didn't realize it. I just knew [laughs] that I hadn't had anything to eat. And I . . .

SL: Right.

GH: And Grandma was there and she—she took a . . .

SL: Well do you remember much about how your dad held up during that time? I'm sure any sign of weakness was not really, you know, I mean there was probably some latitude but . . .

FE: Hold on one second before you answer. That's the garage door.

SL: Okay.

GH: Now you know what it is.

FE: That's right. I knew—I'm going to pause for a second.

SL: Okay.

[Tape Stopped]

FE: Speed.

[00:48:22] SL: So, you lose your mom early. Your grandmother and your great aunt kind of fill that void . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . for the family. Your father—you're living in Alabama . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . your father meets another woman and marries her. Is she—was she a teacher at the school in Alabama?

GH: Taught—taught, yes, she taught education at Alabama A & M.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: So the academic lineage is continuing. I mean, you are surrounded—you continue to be surrounded by the benefits . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . of, all the cultural benefits an education brings . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . all the, I would assume, the somewhat liberal thought that is available by being exposed to—to a broad education.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: But I'm also hearing that there was probably some friction, that there was—that there was a change in your routines in your life that, although you were young . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . apparently there was some routine that was established that was being disrupted now . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . and replaced with a much more—sounds like authoritarian discipline . . .

GH: Right. Very . . .

SL: . . . that was happening at the house.

GH: It was really discipline from the standpoint of—of “This is the way the house runs.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Not that it wasn't running differently, I mean, running well the other way . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . but actually there was certainly not anything like the affection, if you want to say . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . from the standpoint of the mother/son relationship for any of us. But, I keep saying that other things were definitely moving along from the standpoint of how we might do things that would be of benefit to ourselves and to other people that we would deal with. For instance, and I'm not saying—I don't know what my—my real mother would have done, but, we learned, as I said, to do everything from the standpoint of the house and the outside. We had—we had chickens, and I guess we had a pig, I'm sure, and a cow. You understand?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So we did that between Alex and me. But we also had family in—indoors activities. We learned to—to wash, to iron—I can iron a shirt—done a lot of those myself—but I'm talking about this is the kind of things that we did—and to clean house, all of those things. Everybody had responsibilities. We also did other things. We had other activities. When I got, I guess, in the sixth grade or so—I—I don't—sixth and seventh—I started running track. Alex wanted to do football.



So we were able to do things like that. I took music again. I was taking piano. Mother—my stepmother encouraged this kind of activity as well, and she was very, very, let's say, disciplined about how she wanted things. I remember, again, I was the second—second [performer]—had a recital, you understand?

SL: Mhmm.

[00:52:29] GH: And—and she was really anxious about how *her* children—we were her children—looked to other people. I had on short linen pants, white, with a navy jacket and one of those Little Lord Fauntleroy collars, you know . . .

SL: Yeah, mhmm.

GH: . . . with a bowtie and all of that and white shoes and socks. Mother had checked it out—stepmother—Mother had checked it out, that I was the second one to perform.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: She wanted to make sure that my creases were . . .

SL: Crisp.

GH: . . . crisp, and—and so going to the—to the performance, I couldn't sit down in the car. I was in the backseat, so I had to stand up—stand up so that my—the creases would stay that way, *and* when we got there, I didn't sit down. I was not expected to sit down until I was called out. So when I came out on the platform, here I am all crisp, you understand, everything.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And that's what mother—that's—that was—that was like mother was, you know. You say, "That's ridiculous." Maybe it is, but that's the way she was. She want-

ed to make sure that people looked on her children as being as near perfect as possible [laughs].

SL: So for you and Alex—and I don't . . .

GH: [Laughs]

SL: . . . I don't know about your younger brother, but for you and Alex, and especially Alex, I would—I would think, because he had more time . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . and knew—had just spent more time with your . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . mom.

GH: Right.

SL: So, you all lose a mother that, obviously, you were both crazy about . . .

GH: Mhmm. Right.

SL: . . . and loved and everyone was happy. It was a happy household and all that.

Now so, now not only do you lose that; now you're dealing with an entirely different set of values that were crossways with you guys.

GH: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: So you kind of had double indemnity there for a while.

GH: Yeah. Well, there's no doubt about it, I mean, it was more than just a major adjustment for—for us, Alex perhaps more so than me. We had difficulty getting Alex to call my stepmother "Mother" for a while. I mean, he was just, really, really in bad shape at ten years [old] . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. And, I mean, it finally came around, but it was—it was a real adjustment for . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . for us.

[00:55:37] SL: Well so, it sounds like, to me, your father never really intervened. It sounds like he pretty much gave her free reign of—of the house management . . .

GH: Yes, yes.

SL: . . . let's say.

GH: I guess that's . . . you could say that's—that's true. I mean, he was very concerned about his boys . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but he also wanted to keep his family going.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Now he had another—he had a daughter . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . understand, and he was—he was interested in trying to keep the family together. It wasn't easy. She had—they had difficulties, too . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but—eventually, they were divorced.

SL: Oh.

GH: When I was in law school.

SL: Here in, or in Fayetteville?

GH: In—when I was at—in Fayetteville. So they were eventually divorced.

[00:56:39] SL: Man, that's another piece of trauma for you. I mean, I know law school—we'll get to law school in a little bit. I know how hard law school was and *is* because I've got a son that's in it now, but—so . . .

GH: Well, it didn't—it didn't necessarily trouble me too much at that point.

SL: Yeah. Well, was it—were they separated—or—it didn't come to a surprise to you? You kind of knew it was headed that way?

GH: I kind of—well they were living apart.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Now, not all of that is—is the—occasion for the divorce. You see—we'll—we'll back up now from . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . from Alabama A & M to, say Dad went to Alcorn [College]; taught one year in Alcorn . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . in Mississippi.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and Mother went to Elizabeth City State Teachers College in North Carolina.

SL: Okay.

GH: The understanding was, that I would go with her and Lois Ann . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . principally because I was in the position to, let's say—not baby-sit, but the older brother for Lois Ann at that time . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand, and Mother was teaching there. And, then the next year, they were able to get Dad a job up there . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . so we're now all together in Elizabeth City: my father, mother, now Alex, myself, Julius and Lois Ann. During that time, we're talking now about 1938— [19]37-[19]38. Those were [Great] Depression years, and anytime you were able to get \$10 more [per month] on a salary, it would be almost worth it to move, you understand, so that was part of the reason for the moves that at least our family was making.

SL: Just a second.

[Tape Change]

[00:59:07] SL: So \$10 more a month was reason enough . . .

GH: Exactly.

SL: . . . to pull up stakes and move on.

GH: Right. Right. And that's what I know our family did, and I would imagine other families would do that if they had opportunities. For instance, there, with both my parents teaching, that would be \$20 more which was enough to buy groceries for—\$5 may buy groceries for even all of us for a . . .

SL: A week.

GH: . . . a week.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Plus, what we were able to bring in, you understand.

SL: You bet. [00:59:48] So, that's—that's an interesting—we hadn't talked about

*that.* Did the children also have jobs going through—growing up? Did they . . . ?

GH: Not—we didn't have any jobs.

SL: You didn't?

GH: Hm-mm. No, we didn't have any jobs. We lived, in every instance, on college campuses.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Not that we couldn't have had jobs, but, we didn't have any. As I said, the times when you might have had jobs would be the summertime.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: We would—we would then be—particularly in Alabama—we would be going over to Grandma's house [in Henning].

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And Alex in particular, when he was getting a little—little older, I mean he might go out and cut some grass for some—some of the people . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand, but I don't recall ever having had a summer job, until—now let me see, where was I? I was kind of like sixteen.

SL: Mhmm.

[01:01:02] GH: Dad came to be on loan—this is after—well, maybe I'm a little bit ahead of myself, course this—this here is—we—after a couple of years, Dad got a position at AM&N College in Pine Bluff [Arkansas].

SL: Mhmm.

GH: That, I think, was like 1939. And—poor me, I'm thinking now—you talk about

reflections, I'm the one [laughs] who's going with him now. I went with Dad to AM&N . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . College, just the two of us. And, it was, I guess after that first year, we—I was back at Grandma's and he got to be on loan to the U.S. Employment Service, taking him to Bordentown, New Jersey, during the second [World] War.

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. There were possibilities of summer work.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I and three other boys from Henning, Dad selected to be—to go to work as—oh, picking peaches and potatoes up in New Jersey.

SL: Okay.

GH: That—I forgot what you call it, the crop, you know, whatever it is, but we picked peaches and—and—and that was really, really good work for us. I mean, you'd make \$8 a day for picking peaches. And, and—and then let's see, what else? There was something else. You could—if you—you got over 100 baskets you could do—you picked more than 100 baskets you got a little bit more. But anyway, I worked up there.

[01:03:06] SL: Well, you know, it sounds kind of like—but, you know—I'm thinking and—I guess it was Gerald Alley, was talking about his father's service station in Pine Bluff and how the children were expected to work at the service station and it sounds like to me that your all's job when your stepmother came on the picture became the housework. That . . .

GH: Well that.

SL: . . . that—that she probably came along and said, “These guys aren’t doing anything . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . they don’t have any jobs anywhere. They’re not bringing in any income. They’re—yeah they’re . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . getting a good education, and we’ve got a nice place, but they might need,” you know, “Number one, I probably”—being your stepmother—“I need the help around the house. Number two, they’re not doing anything; I’m going to put them to work.”

GH: Yeah. Well, that—that was a part of it. And, again, I want to say the positive ends of it. There were things that—that we were learning. We were certainly doing the work that was necessary, but also learning for the benefit of the kinds of things that—that were being helpful to us.

SL: Later in life.

GH: Exactly. There’s no doubt about that. For instance, right now I am as much concerned about what happens in this house from the standpoint of how it looks and what—not only am I concerned, but I help with it . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. People talk in terms of, “Oh, you and Doris don’t have a— [laughs]—have a housekeeper or something?” We don’t because we don’t—we really don’t *need* one. And I do the work [laughs] better than a housekeeper. You



understand what I'm saying?

SL: Absolutely.

GH: That's—that's the way we feel about it.

SL: And you can thank your stepmother for that.

GH: And, exactly, exactly. Of course, my wife comes from a different kind of background. I mean, she didn't come from the same kind of [strict discipline (IA)] educational culture, but the—but the [her] family is one that is very, very interested in, you know, keeping the house looking good . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and that sort of stuff.

SL: Yeah.

GH: So, now, if I get to the place where I feel like I can't, or we can't do it, then, *of course*, we will have somebody to come in, but right now we don't—we don't need it. We take pride in it.

SL: You guys might be kind of hard to work for.

GH: That may be true. [Laughter]

SL: Because you know how to do it right.

GH: Exactly.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And, incidentally, when we were in Alabama, not only did we have ourselves, but my father's niece lived with us at the same time, who stayed and helped at the house to cook dinner—now we didn't do *that*. We didn't cook hardly anything.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But I was just talking about the other kinds of things . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . making the beds and whatever . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. But my father's niece was in college, and she came to live with us and also help my—my mother with other kinds of things that were necessary . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . like the cooking and washing and all of that.

SL: Right. So that's a house of six folks, I guess.

GH: Let's see. Well, it would be seven.

SL: I guess it's . . .

GH: My father and mother . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and the four children . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and—seven.

SL: Yeah. Big household.

GH: Yeah, it was—it was. Mhmm.

[01:07:05] SL: So the dinners were—it sounds like the dinners were pretty “proper,” I would say.

GH: You could say that the dinners were proper.

SL: And timely—were they always at the same time? And were you expected to be in

position?

GH: Yes. [Laughter]

SL: There was no horsing around. You . . .

GH: You were—you were there.

SL: You showed up at the right time.

GH: You were there.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: Yeah. And Dad was a problem sometimes because . . .

SL: ‘Cause he was working . . .

GH: Maybe at the barns . . .

SL: Because of the . . .

GH: . . . or somewhere else.

SL: Yeah, because of the—his career interests, they—his hours weren’t probably  
as . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . exacting . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . depending on the season and . . .

[01:07:47] GH: And Dad, on Sunday mornings, pretty much he would—he would  
cook. He would do French toast.

SL: Okay.

GH: He loved—we loved Dad’s French toast.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He had learned it—some lady had taught him to do French toast when he was in Paris, in France. [Laughter] So she taught him well [laughter].

SL: Yes. Yes. And I'm sure he had fond memories of those lessons [laughter].

GH: And—and we still like French toast. I make French toast based on what Dad made.

SL: Yeah. Isn't— isn't it great how things get passed on?

GH: Mhmm.

SL: And the things that you love, you continue to love.

GH: Yes.

SL: I mean, it's just—it's just a wonderful part of . . .

GH: That's right. He was . . .

GH: . . . a family.

GH: Dad—there were two—two things, of course, that he loved. He loved his family and work. Even after he retired—he was finally Dean of Agriculture . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . at AM&N College in Pine Bluff when he retired, but thereafter he stayed there for a while, he got up and put his clothes on, his tie and all that sort of stuff, you know. And actually it was kind of bad because nobody had time for the—for the old man. I don't mean it that way, but the families were growing and . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . he'd visit Alex and family in New York or come to Kansas City where we were and visit us . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. And Julius, my brother Julius lived here in Washington. He was in school and finally stayed here. But, it was kind of bad in a way. I went to the Veterans Administration and told—asked them if he couldn't just teach there for no compensation . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but really to give him something to do. And I—you know what? I guess—you and I were talking earlier about this business of retirement . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . maybe that had something—that has something to do with how I feel about retirement. Dad retired and his whole business, as I said, was his family and work.

SL: Right.

GH: And once he didn't—once he wasn't going to work, he still had that desire to teach . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and—and—but there was nobody there to teach. [Laughs]

SL: Right.

GH: And we in the family [laughs]—you know, we didn't have time to listen to Dad and all of the kinds of things he was saying, as such. But his family—Alex received many honorary doctorates. The first one or two were before *Roots* [*The Saga of an American Family*].

SL: [*The*] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

GH: *Autobiography*—Exactly.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And we laugh about it so much about—about Dad. Unfortunately, he wasn't here when *Roots* came. He'd already died before *Roots* came.

SL: I think I knew that at the time.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: I think that may have come out at the time, yeah.

[01:11:22] GH: But, he was, Alex was receiving an honorary doctorate at Howard University [Washington, DC] for *Malcolm X*.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So Dr. Cheek, Jim Cheek, who's really a good friend, as well, and is very eloquent, you know, in his presentations and all. Here Dad was—I mean, here Alex was and my—my dad and Julius, and others in the thing [ceremony (IA)] just before, you know how they have various . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . families there.

SL: Yeah, little receptions.

GH: So, Jim Cheek was just talking about [and saying (IA)], "Professor Haley, you must be *very* proud of your son, Alex. He's done this, and he's always—" [kept continuously (IA)] just running, running, running [with compliments (IA)]. Dad's there with his cane. And so he interrupted Dr. Cheek . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . mid-sentence [pounding his cane (IA)] and he says, "Now, just a minute, Dr. Cheek. I want you to know, I don't have *one* fine son; I have three fine sons!"

[Laughter] You know?

SL: Yeah.

GH: Well, the thing is, the way he was saying it, and with all of this emphasis, it kind of just cut. Cheek just said, “I don’t know what else to say now,” [laughter]. And I said—I said, “Dad, Dad, come on, come on,” you know [laughter]. But that’s the way he was about his—his children, you understand?

SL: Yeah.

GH: I mean he loved them all. And whatever you had done, hopefully, something that was something that was—was good, he—he appreciated his children, you understand. And “Every tub stands on its own bottom,” you understand. And that’s the way he was. But he loved his children; loved his family. [Laughs]

SL: That’s a good story. Sounds like . . . well, first of all, your dad’s accomplishments are quite remarkable . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . in itself. So, he pretty much gave you guys a pretty good bar. He set a pretty good bar for his sons.

GH: Mhmm.

[01:13:53] SL: Were you all, as son—as—as brothers—now, I don’t know much about your—your sister, but, as brothers were you all pretty competitive, or was there enough distance between your ages where it was more the older looking after the younger or the younger looking after the youngest? Was it . . .?

GH: I wouldn’t say that we were necessarily competitive.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: There's four years between Alex and me and five years . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . between myself and my baby brother. And then there's actually less space, although my mother died, less years between him and Lois Ann than between Julius and me . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . you see. And Alex and I really got along very well. When he was seventeen—by the way, Alex was a poor student. I mean, not that he didn't have it, but he had—I should say, he had no interest in school.

SL: Okay.

GH: He finished high school at fifteen, which was so unusual [laughs] then. And then two years later, he went two years in college and then went to the U.S. Coast Guard.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The idea being of course—Dad was very upset.

SL: That he didn't finish college.

GH: Mhmm. That he was going to do three years in the Coast Guard and come back and go to college and finish his college. But what happened was the—the war came on, the second war [WWII], and Alex eventually decided to stay in the Coast Guard for twenty years.

SL: Twenty years, yeah.

GH: Yes, which he did. And, but Dad was still not happy, even if he got those honorary degrees. He wanted his firstborn, as all of us [the others of us (IA)] . . .



SL: Sure.

GH: . . . to—to have an earned at least a B.[A.] or B.S. degree. But, at any rate, we were close. Alex and I were close. I was closer to Dad, I guess, because I was there, if you know what I mean . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and Alex was gone on around over the places. I did become a lawyer.

SL: Yeah. You continued the academic path.

GH: And—and then I mean, doing family-wise, helped family and all that stuff.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And Julius, now, was the family baby—I'm—you know I mean—I mean, you know how the sympathies are.

SL: Yeah.

GH: He's the baby—he died when his mother was—he was still a baby when she [our mother] died . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . and the family has pretty much looked after him in spite of Stepmother . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . and I in particular.

[01:17:17] SL: Well, how did he do growing up? I mean, was he—everyone was looking after him. I mean . . .

GH: Oh no, he . . .

SL: Did he become—end up—did he end up an architect, or . . .?

GH: He's an architect.

SL: Yeah. Mhmm.

GH: He was in the Korean War . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and he did very well.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He spent maybe a couple of years at J.C. Corbin. Are you familiar with it?

SL: Hmm-mm.

GH: J.C. Corbin is the prep school at—at the college there in—in Pine Bluff on campus.

SL: Okay. Okay.

GH: And I spent one year there . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . too. Mhmm. But—but he—he—he went there and then, we were at LeMoyne in Memphis. I didn't—I forgot to tell you that. After . . .

SL: Hmm-mm.

[01:18:11] GH: . . . after a year in Pine Bluff, Mother didn't like Pine Bluff—didn't like the school—my stepmother.

SL: Hmm. Yeah.

GH: So she got a position at LeMoyne College in Memphis. Now it's LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And all of us then moved to LeMoyne—that is, Mother and the three children.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Dad stayed at . . .

SL: AM&N.

GH: . . . Arkansas, yeah, and would come over on the weekends, to Memphis. So, we were—we were there until, really, Mother went to Winston-Salem, North Carolina from there.

SL: Wow!

GH: And then she went from there—Dad's all—still at Pine Bluff. And then she went from there to Storer College, [Harpers Ferry, West Virginia] and finally to West Virginia State, in Charleston, which is where she generally—where she retired from. So you can see, we were all over.

SL: Yeah, but once your dad got to Pine Bluff, he stayed.

GH: He stayed there.

[01:19:31] SL: You know, let's talk a little bit about the . . . cultures around—I mean, it sounds to me like you were moving around a lot.

GH: Quite a lot.

SL: And you had small-town, rural America that you grew up with.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: You spent some time in Ithaca.

GH: I never spent time in Ithaca.

SL: Oh, you never did there.

GH: I've been there but . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . but I've—didn't spend any, see . . .

SL: That was before your time.

GH: Before—before my time.

SL: Okay.

GH: Alex was born there.

SL: Right. Okay.

GH: But they came back shortly there—within four or five months after he was born.

SL: Well so, what was the biggest town that you experienced before—was Pine Bluff the largest town that you were in?

GH: No. Memphis.

SL: Memphis. Okay. But . . . now, this—this is what—my understanding of Pine Bluff—and it may still be this way; I—I doubt that it is, but, at that time Pine Bluff was probably the largest, black, entrepreneurial community in the state of Arkansas.

GH: Okay.

SL: I mean, you had black restaurants. You had black gas stations. You had a black college . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . there.

GH: And, like, Wiley Branton's—I say Wiley—the Branton—there was a Branton taxicab company [“Cab 98” owned by Wiley's grandfather and father, James and Leo Branton].

SL: Yeah.

GH: Mhmm.

[01:21:01] SL: Yeah. So, how doe[s]—how did Pine Bluff compare to Memphis in that regard?

GH: Okay. All right. You know . . . I think it com—compared, if you want to say, very well, from the standpoint of the kinds of things that it was doing where blacks were concerned.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: We were removed, however, from the city, as such. I told you that—that Corbin, J.C. Corbin, was the prep school on the campus . . .

SL: Yes.

GH: . . . which—which meant that you were, not confined, but that's where all of your life was . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . with the exception of you going downtown to, say, the movies maybe . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . or somewhere to the restaurants. I think that Pine Bluff, of course, was very, not only very active where African—blacks were concerned, it would compare very well with what was going on at that time.

SL: Right.

GH: Now, in Memphis, I was there for a couple of years, my sophomore and junior years of high school, and—and though we lived on the campus, I went to school—public school—Booker T. Washington High . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . which had me a little more exposed to the city as such . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but, Stepmother was *very* disciplined from the standpoint of my not getting out too much. We didn't—we went to school . . .

SL: And came home.

GH: . . . and came home.

SL: Yeah. Well, still, even up through Memphis, your experience was basically Afro-American. I mean, you didn't—you didn't have much interaction with the Caucasian community.

GH: Oh, no, very, very little. As I said, it was even *less* because we lived on college campuses.

SL: Right.

GH: No. We—our exposure [laughs] was—was minimal . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . very minimal.

[01:23:35] SL: But at the same time, you—you had to have experienced that separate but equal doctrine, or that—that segregation of where you were—could go.

GH: Please be assured, we were well aware of that.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: No doubt about that. If going downtown, Memphis, Pine Bluff, wherever, we were aware of it to the extent of—well, wherever—*Henning* . . .

SL: Yes.

GH: . . .where I was born. You know, it was all over. I mean, many places, if you were on a sidewalk, whites would expect you to get off the sidewalk, you under-

stand.

SL: Until they passed.

GH: Until they passed.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Yeah. And you—you just—that was a way of life. I don't care how you say it.

[Laughs] That—that's—that's what life was. [Laughs]

SL: You didn't have the sense, though, that you were be—being denied much of anything, did you? At that time, I mean, it seems to me that what—what I've heard from most of the others, it wasn't like it was—it was so much just “the way it was” . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . that you didn't think that you were being denied much of anything. It was just the way it was. It was the way you were brought into it and the way it had been for a while and it just didn't—there—there wasn't much . . .

GH: Friction.

SL: . . . friction happening.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: And people were still, just trying to get by and get along . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . and take care of what was right in front of them. There wasn't this friction going on while . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . you were growing up, or was there? I mean, I'm sure you must have had

some instances where . . .

GH: Well, no, there was not that much friction . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . as such. Well, for instance, going from Langston back to Memphis and then by bus to Henning, you went in the—the—the train, if you were going on the train, you sat where colored folks sat.

SL: Right.

GH: Okay. Up there where [laughs] the engines were, and the smoke would come out . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and all of that sort of stuff. You'd have to close the windows if you—if it was summertime, and all that sort of stuff. But that was, that was one of those things that we knew existed, and it existed. In the certainly the buses going from Memphis to Henning, you sat in the back until you got to Henning, you understand. And, so those things . . .

SL: Movie theaters.

GH: Oh, yes.

SL: Or the balcony.

GH: Exactly. Exactly.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So those things just really existed. Now, moving ahead just a bit . . .

SL: Okay.

[01:26:49] GH: . . . I was drafted two months after I was eighteen.



SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. I had finished college—finished high school at Bordentown in New Jersey. One year, at least—I don't know whether it was one or two years, when I told you my father was on loan to the U.S. Employment Service . . .

SL: Yes. Mhmm.

GH: . . . where they had him sent was to a school in Bordentown, New Jersey.

SL: Okay.

GH: He was doing some things for agriculture—U.S.—U.S. things that he supposedly had some knowledge of in—not supposedly he *had* knowledge in horticulture. So I liked the school, and Dad let me come up there and finish my senior year at Bordentown, and, a way to get away from Mother, anyway, and all that sort of stuff my senior year. And, I was drafted two months after my eighteenth year, went to Fort Dix [New Jersey]—completely segregated, you understand, then BTC10, Basic Training Center Ten, in Greensboro. On the way from there to Williams Field, Arizona, which is close to Chandler, I was on a train, a Southern Pacific train, with three other young blacks. We were stopped at El Paso, Texas, going to the restaurant. Now, in the South, principally, of course, you'd have colored here, white here—restaurants and whatnot.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: When we got there, we went into the first part of the restaurant that we saw. No signs up at all. We sat down at a table, and a young white waitress came up to us and said, "I'm sorry, you soldiers can't eat here." All of us are fully uni—uniformed—just out of basic training.

SL: Right.

GH: Just out of basic training.

SL: Fit. Beautiful.

GH: You know?

SL: Yeah.

GH: And—and, so, when you're talking about how you grew up [clears throat]—these things happened. Here we were. And . . . you—I almost say now, “Well, this isn't the first time that this has happened to me.” But it's almost like, you obediently got up. Some—something in your system isn't right, but you obediently get up . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and go to the other part where the blacks are sitting.

SL: Yeah. Supposed to be.

GH: Yeah. Okay. And, so we then sit over there. Now, it was one of those restaurants where, a lot of them that way, where there was a partition between you . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . so you could see what was going on in the other side . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . as well. So that's the way this restaurant was. And so, within a very few minutes, another train had come in, on which there were some German prisoners [of war from WWII] under guard, and—and they were ushered into the white part of the restaurant from which we had just been asked to move and, ironically enough, sat at the same table where we had been. Now, this really is the first time

in my young adult life that I started questioning what's happening in this country. Here we are—the German prisoners, of course—I mean, the Germans are the enemy, you understand? And here they're getting this kind of service, even though under guard, but they are being able to sit where we can't sit. And yet we are here to fight for the country, you understand. So it—it starts the thinking of a young mind—black mind, whatever kind of mind, but—but what—what's *wrong* with this country? You understand what I'm saying?

SL: Yeah.

GH: And we have to at least start doing something about this kind of thing happening to its citizens who are, maybe some—many of them gave their life for the country. And you let some *prisoners* come in here and sit where they [black soldiers] can't sit? So, I—I say that because that was my first real feeling about what had—what we had been through, were going through, and, unfortunately, still have some problems along those lines *now*. But when you're growing up, you certainly accept things. We were talking earlier about taking for granted situations.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And then you find a time when you feel like you've hopefully been able to help things move ahead. And I guess I jump further, further ahead now, even after Morehouse [College, Atlanta, Georgia] and the kinds of things that we met at the University of Arkansas [Fayetteville]. At least there is now the kind of thinking on both parts, "Hey look, I ain't as bad as you think I am. I mean, I've got abilities. I can play Chopin and Beethoven." [Laughs] And some of the folks

thought, “Where in the world did he learn that?” [Laughs] You understand what I mean?

SL: Yeah.

GH: [Laughs]

SL: I do. I do understand that.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Well let—okay, so let’s not get too far ahead yet.

GH: Okay.

[01:34:00] SL: But, I guess what—what I—the—what I was getting to was you had pretty much, until you got to the service, pretty much had a segregated experience . . .

GH: Oh, oh, no.

SLS: . . . with your culture.

GH: Oh no doubt about it.

SL: And . . . what’s interesting about your life that I’m finding is that—that you moved around so much, that you had many places that you laid your hat . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . before you ever got out of high school.

GH: That’s true.

SL: I mean, you were on the road a lot.

GH: That’s—that is true, even to the extent that I got *two* high school diplomas.

SL: Is that right?

GH: [Laughs] No. Let me tell you, since you’re talking about moving around.

SL: Okay.

GH: I was at the Booker T. Washington . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . coming up for my senior year. Well, when Dad was in—in New Jersey and I wanted to stay up there, he let me stay. And, so, it came the year-end. I had done well—no problems with my grades and all.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But the State of New Jersey said that they could not issue me a diploma because the school—it was a boarding school—required two years, you see . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . of being there, and I, of course, had been there just the one.

SL: The one. Mhmm.

GH: And then Dad said, “Well, we have to *try* to do something about that.” In the meantime, they talked in terms of sending my grades back to Booker Washington in Memphis.

SL: Right. Mhmm.

GH: Both of those things were going on: a waiver request in New Jersey and hopefully . . .

SL: Transcripts.

GH: . . . transcripts.

SL: Yeah. Mhmm.

GH: The long and short of it is I got both—two diplomas, [one] from each school.

SL: They rec—one recognized the other’s credentials . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . in both instances so . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: Well, that's good.

GH: So I *did* move around. There's no doubt about it.

[01:36:20] SL: Well, let me ask you *this*. In your moving around and in your traveling, you had to move through different communities to get to where you were going, and you had to experience—surely, you became—maybe that's how you became very aware of the segregated policies that the country was under at the time. I mean, did you ever—did you ever feel threatened, or at least concerned for your welfare or your fam—any member of your family while you—your dad and your mom were—were hauling you all around to these different places?

GH: Mhmm. Well, we were—we were certainly concerned. We—I'm not sure that I ever felt really threatened as such . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but we were very concerned and—and most black families, however they went, were concerned about various places. In Arkansas, for instance, there was one called Marked Tree. You've heard of—do you know Marked Tree?

SL: Sure. Yes.

GH: Okay. You know why they got that name?

SL: Yes.

GH: Okay. So those things happened in almost any place. The Scottsboro case . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . in Alabama, this was where some young black boys supposedly—I'm not exactly sure what they did, but—but the whole area is where we lived, really. I mean, they came across . . .

SL: Mhmm

GH: . . . on the college campus, thinking that perhaps those Scottsboro boys . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . were hidden on the campus, you understand. So the—the—I guess you could call that concern [laughs] . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and, had they found them, some of the others perhaps may—may have been—I don't know, what—mutilated, I don't know. But those things were ones that, as we said earlier, you kind of lived with. When you were driving, for instance, you—you would be concerned because you—you really didn't—didn't know what was going to happen.

SL: What was around the bend?

GH: Exactly. Exactly.

[01:39:02] SL: Well, you know—I don't mean to step on you here, but it occurs to me that being an Afro-American family and moving about as much as you all did, that it took a certain amount of courage that I don't think you all realized you had.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: It sounds like to me most of the motivation was—was dollars and cents . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . and that you would go where, like anyone else, you—you want to get paid as

much money as you can make.

GH: Right.

SL: But maybe—maybe because it was just so ingrained that that's the way it was, that you all just didn't see the courage that you were displaying . . .

GH: Well . . .

SL: . . . by facing these unknowns and . . .

GH: . . . I can't begin to even try to take credit for that. It was *Dad*.

SL: Exactly.

GH: Dad and—and my stepmother, pretty much, because, you know, we were pretty much under their control.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Though we knew, as I said, as we moved along, what was going on . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . the concern, for instance, at—at a service station if we stopped there, that if there was a white and colored, if there was no colored, we didn't—we didn't drink any water there . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. And, it—it really did, it took—it took courage on the part of families who did that. And, going from place to place, for instance, if you did it by car you would make sure that if you were going, say, from Savannah to—to Henning or Memphis . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . the places where you'd stop and not stop, because there were some nasty peo-



ple, no doubt about that, you know. So it was their courage.

[01:41:15] SL: Still, I think they passed that on to you all.

GH: Oh, well . . .

SL: Whether you realized it or not at the time . . .

GH: No, no.

SL: . . . just by seeing it happen before you.

GH: Well exactly. This is what I was—I didn't get that over fully to you. We saw these things happening, and of course, they were coming through to us . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know, and—and—and stayed with us; there's no doubt about that. And sometimes how ridiculous things come to be. Another story, I'm in law school now. We're much ahead of myself, or ourselves. Dad had been to St. Louis; there was another lady he had finally gotten interested in after his divorce. I'm driving with him back—I'm really, taking him to Pine Bluff and then back to law school cause I'm still in law school. So this would have been 1951. I—before you were born. I—[laughs]—I stopped at a little service station where—many of them, you know, they have the restaurant and the service station outside where they have these big windows and you can look outside and see what's going on.

SL: Mhmm. Yeah.

GH: And that's the kind this was.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But I had my cap on, and Dad, as I told you, was one who always had his suit and tie on. He had—had been asleep in the backseat. So I pulled into this service sta-

tion and when we got there, he sat up, asked where we were, and I told him, “I don’t know. Some place. Some place.” He said, “Well, I think I’ll go inside and get me a hamburger and a milkshake.” And I said, “Well, you go ahead, and when I get the car serviced and all, I’ll come on in,” you know. And, so it took a little longer perhaps, and we—we got the car serviced, and I went inside. And—and the guy in there said, “Your chauffeur can’t eat in here,” you know. But Dad—Dad—Dad is—was really rather fair complexioned . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . as a matter of fact. I can tell you a little about that, too, but anyway, he just, you know, it just caught him when he said—the both—both of us, because we didn’t realize that. So I said, “Well, Sir, when you—will—will you order me a milkshake and a hamburger?” you know. And he kind of, Dad kind of mumbled something, you know. Now I walked outside, and I thought, “My goodness!” You know, “All of this still going on.” Well, he stayed there, and the guy did the hamburger and the milkshake. And when he came, when I saw him come out with it, hand it to Dad, I walked back in. And there was lot of—several folk in there . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . and I said, “Dad,”—very loud, boy—I said, “Will you please hurry up? We’ve got a lot of miles to go, you know, before the sun sets,” or something like that. And Dad said, “Very well, Son.” [Laughter] Now, the man—the man looked up, and he turned as red as two beets because now he’s looking—“I’ve been serving this Negro.”

SL: Yeah.

GH: But you see how silly things are sometimes [laughs] and that was it.

SL: Did they—did you—were you able to get out of there with the food?

GH: [Laughs] Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

SL: Because that might not have happened if he'd bowed up enough.

GH: Mhmm. I know. We paid for it and went on.

SL: Hmm.

GH: But I'm just showing you how ridiculous things are. Which, incidentally, Dad—  
Dad was sometimes mistaken for a white Southerner, particularly the suntans and  
all, after he lost his hair and all. His mother was the offspring of a white colonel  
and a slave. Her name was Queen, and she was very much mistaken in many in-  
stances as being white, you understand.

SL: Huh!

GH: Yeah. There was an article—I mean, there's a book that we did, *Queen*, that Alex  
pretty much had finished, and a movie was done on it and Halle Berry played  
Queen.

SL: Gosh, I can't believe I haven't seen that. It was called *Queen*?

GH: *Queen*.

SL: Well, that's on my list.

GH: Okay.

SL: I—I do like movies.

GH: [Laughs] I do, too.

SL: I try to see as many as possible.

GH: Yeah.

[01:46:46] SL: Well—well, maybe—I mean, I’m all—I’m always reluctant to leave the childhood years . . .

GH: [Laughs]

SL: . . . because I still feel like that the way you are now has everything in the world to do with what happened to you in your growing up. I think there are places that—there are stages in life where you’re kind of forged, put to the test, and—and you come out and—and you gain strength as you grow.

GH: Well, that’s—there’s no doubt about that. And, I guess I didn’t say too much about it, but after my mother died—we called God “The Old Man Upstairs.”

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. There were many things that were happening to me. Grandma on that end, for instance, she was a very religious woman, and Aunt Liz—Grandma more religious, of course, than Aunt Liz.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And we learned things that certainly have stayed with me, like things from the Bible. And incidentally, my stepmother encouraged some of that, too. She was not like Grandma by any means . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but, for instance, there—there are some of the things in the Bible that—that are part of my life as we’ve grown up. The—the twenty-fourth Psalm: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall

ascend into the hills of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place?” Those are the two questions that are right there. Then the answers: “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” Somehow, that means so much as a part of—of my life. “The earth is the Lord’s.” “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord.” “All ye lands serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing.” “Know ye that the Lord, He is God. It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and be thankful unto Him for the Lord is good. His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endureth to all generations,” okay. Now, on the—say, the Christmas and on Thanksgiving scene, my stepmother was into that—Luke: “And they were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field keeping . . .”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: “. . . watch over their flocks by night. Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them. The glory of the Lord shone ‘round about them. They were sore afraid. The angel said, ‘Fear not . . .’”

SL: Fear not.

GH: “. . . for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord. This shall be a sign unto you, the baby in swaddling clothes. Glory to God in the highest and on Earth peace, goodwill toward men.” Now, I say those because somehow, they’ve fit so much into my life, you understand. [Telephone rings] When I was at—I hope my wife will get that.

[01:50:42] SL: Well, maybe we should wait just a minute [telephone rings] and make sure that happens. Don't lose your thought now. I can edit out [telephone rings] the phone when it's by itself, but if you're talking while the phone is ringing, then I have to keep [telephone rings] the phone so.

GH: Maybe she is asleep. [Phone continues ringing.]

SL: You want me to answer it?

GH: You can go ahead. Right—it's right there. [Phone stops ringing.] I guess she got it.

SL: Okay.

GH: Or if—if—if she didn't it picked up on the answering . . .

SL: Okay. Okay.

GH: . . . service. I'm surprised—well, what were we saying? Just all these kind of things.

SL: Well, you were saying that the Bible—these passages in the Bible have stuck with you in your life.

GH: Right. Right.

[01:51:31] SL: And you were also saying that your stepmother, particularly at

Thanksgiving and Christmas . . .

GH: Christmas.

SL: . . . you were—you were talking about her role in that a little bit. I think you were rolling around to that.

GH: Yeah. Well, that's true, 'cause we would *always* be in some kinds of Christmas programs or . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . or sometimes when—when things weren't right at home, Mother would make us write. You might have to do 100 sentences . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand.

SL: And were they Biblical?

GH: Some might be.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: There might be something else, you understand.

SL: Were there—did you all *study* the Bible at home?

GH: No. Not as such.

SL: But you were expected to go to Sunday school.

GH: Oh, yes, we went.

SL: Whether you wanted to or not.

[01:52:26] GH: Right. And, again, back in Henning, particularly in the summers, we were there, and I'd play for church sometimes when—Mrs. Jones—somehow if she was gone or something . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . either I'd play myself or I'd sing in the choir . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and all.

SL: Now, was that organ? You'd play organ, at the church?

GH: No, no, it was . . .

SL: It'd be piano.

GH: . . . a piano, not the organ. I didn't learn too much the—the organ, very much.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But, that set a stage, there's no doubt about that, for me. And a . . .

[01:53:10] SL: Was your father as enthusiastic as your grandmother and your step-mother?

GH: I don't . . . I wouldn't say . . . yes. I wouldn't say that he was as enthusiastic.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Now, he went to church, there's no doubt about it, and he sang from the congregation. [Laughs] He didn't sing in the choirs or anything.

SL: But I bet you could hear him in the congregation . . .

GH: Oh, oh, oh yes.

SL: . . . from the congregation.

GH: He expected you to hear [laughter]. You—I won't say turn around, but he had a very, very good voice . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and one that people appreciated. And, I guess, that, as much as anything, set the stage for—for me, even as a child. I mean, when I look at what The Old Man Upstairs has done, He set—He set places for me as I've moved along. In service, there was a family that took to me out in Williams Field, Arizona. I—I came to date their daughter. And they were military and religious . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. Then I came from—from service, and I went to Morehouse.



Now, that family that I lived with, in Atlanta, came to be family. They were closer to me than some other members of my family.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: A story about them: when I came out of service, it was the year when—[19]40—  
[19]46—when everybody was out, you understand, trying to get to school, GI Bill  
and whatnot.

SL: You bet.

GH: Okay. I wanted to—I had applications at Morehouse and Hampton University.  
And both of those schools said, “September. Try us next year. We just don’t  
have room right now.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: [Laughs] Well Dad, back in Pine Bluff, talked to Mrs. Watson. The president’s  
name was Watson, John Watson, his—and his wife was on the board of trustees  
at—at Spellman, which is the sister institute to Morehouse. So, Mrs. Watson  
called Dean Brazeal, who was the president—the dean of Morehouse, and she  
said, “I have a fine young man who’s just out of service,” you know how they do  
all . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . this kinds of stuff, “and I’m wondering if by chance, you would consider let-  
ting him come this year.” Well, the dean said, “We just don’t have any space on  
the campus. Now, if you can find a place for him to stay in the city, next year,  
probably, he can come on campus.” Okay. All right. She got that information  
and then the librarian at the University—at Pine Bluff—is from Atlanta, her name

was Julia Howard. And, so she says, “Oh, I think maybe he can stay at my house in Atlanta.” So, she called, and they said, “Well, we think we can work it out for him.” So, based on those two long-distance telephone conversations, I packed my trunk and went to Atlanta to Morehouse.

SL: Okay. Just a minute—do you need to change tapes?

FE: Yep.

[Tape Change]

[01:57:49] SL: . . . segregated campus.

GH: Well yes.

SL: So you’re still basically in the Afro-American world. You’re—I mean it’s—you’re still—I just want—I just want to say at this point in time we’re still dealing with a strictured—a strictured existence.

GH: Oh, yes.

SL: You’re still in—it’s—due to no one’s—you’re—no one’s real fault. It’s just the way it is at the time.

GH: Mhmm. Even—even the military.

SL: Yeah.

GH: All of that, all the way through, and now to Morehouse.

SL: Mhmm.

[01:58:28] GH: I was going to share with you the family . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . in Atlanta. Going by train, the train was, say, due in about 10:00 in the evening, but the train was late.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, before I'm there, my new family has begun to worry about me. They've called back to Pine Bluff, "Where is he?" so and so and so and so, you know. Talk about a family, that is not family, but family . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . is what I came to at Morehouse at—at—in Atlanta. The family was a—a very well to do family, considering Black Americans, African-Americans.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: They owned one of the two black hospitals.

FE: I'm sorry. I'm going to cut you real quick. I think I'd better change the batteries.

[Tape Stopped]

[01:59:35] SL: So you are on a train, on your way to Atlanta, and your family-to-be is already worried about you.

GH: Already worried. And—and that continued. I became the family nephew. All of the people in the family were women but me, older and—and younger. It—it was just a beautiful experience. They were concerned about—about me—feeding—I won't say clothing, but the whole thing, you know. They . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . they set up many things in—in the family, for me, to the extent that—I'm moving over now to graduation. Dad came, of course, for my graduation, and my aunts—my Atlanta aunts—were so—had me so engulfed that he could not—he could hardly get to his son [laughter]. I had graduated with high honors . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . and they were just so thrilled, you understand. And—and Dad said, “I *am* your *father*.” [Laughter] I said, “Okay, Dad. Okay.” But they were—they were just really, really a beautiful family.

SL: And so did you live with them all four years?

GH: I—I—well, three years.

SL: Three.

[02:01:11] GH: I finished Morehouse in three years and two summers because—you know, that was another thing that—that happened. At the time when—my generation was such that, we felt like that we had to move ahead. Back to high school—I told you about my diplomas and all that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . kind of stuff. There were two girls who were seniors with me at Bordentown . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and we were competitors. And—and, here it really, really worried me that they were going to be able to go on to college and I’ve got to go into the service. And—and I just thought, “Now, they’re going to be ahead of me, and I’ll never catch up.” You understand . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . what I’m talking about?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But, at any rate, that was the kind of feeling that I still had, particularly when I came out of service and . . .

SL: You had to catch up.

GH: I had to catch up. So I was able to do it by the three years and the two summers. That's how I—how I got out of Morehouse in those—that time, understand? Now, when I look back on it, the three years of experience that I had in the military were as good, if not better, from the standpoint of . . .

SL: Of education

GH: . . . of education. Of—of . . .

SL: Of the real world.

GH: Exactly.

[02:02:57] SL: Mhmm. Now—okay, now let's—let's—before we dive deeper into Morehouse, let's talk a little bit about the military because we just kind of—we were on a train, you know . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . just out of boot camp or basic training, but, now, for *some* Afro-Americans, the military was really their first exposure to a white world or to Caucasians. Even though there was this segregation that happened . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . you were still a part of a bigger picture, and—and there was some interaction. Did—did you experience any of that while you were in the military?

GH: Really, some.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: As I said, all of the—well, this—in—I was in the Air—Air Force . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . all of the squadrons were black. We had white officers . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but the squadrons themselves were black. And, it—again, it was—a lot of it was separate. We had a separate PX, separate everything. Even within the base itself . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . was—was—was separate. Once in a while we might go to the main PX . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but we had our own PX, Post Exchange, and, as I say, swimming pool—everything was still . . .

SL: Still segregated.

GH: Still segregated.

[02:04:38] SL: Let me—let me ask you *this*. Now, I'm pretty certain I can say that school-wise, education-wise, the separate but equal thing was nowhere close to equal.

GH: Oh, no.

SL: That the white schools pretty much got all the dollars, and the black schools were always . . .

GH: And the new—new textbooks and everything.

SL: Yes, yes, yes. Well, how was it in the military? Did—were you all second-class citizens in the military as well, or . . .?

GH: We felt so, anyway.

SL: Yeah.

GH: We got the same *uniforms* . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . all of that kind of stuff, but, sometimes they'd say, even at the post exchange, certain things they may not have wanted at the—the main post exchange would be brought down to—to *our* post exchange, which was much smaller.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But . . . it was completely segregated. Somewhere—I'm—I don't know whether I'll find a picture or not for me to show you, but the USO . . .

SL: Dances and . . .

GH: Oh, yeah. I've got one up there that says, "Colored Military—Colored USO here" you understand? So all of that still existed.

SL: Wow!

GH: [Laughs] Yeah. Mhmm.

[02:06:07] SL: So you were saying that the three years in the military, though, as far as educating you in the ways of the world, or giving you a—another kind of education, was just as valuable to you.

GH: Oh, yes. Yes.

SL: So tell me a little bit about that. What do you think the military did give you? I mean, you already had some discipline from your stepmother [laughs].

GH: I had that, and I had other military discipline.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: When I went to my—my senior year [of high school]—that was a military school. I wore a uniform at Bordentown.

SL: Oh, okay. Now see, I didn't know that.

GH: So when I went to the service, I knew the drilling and a lot of things. I was in—in pretty, pretty decent shape for knowing the basics . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . of—of military life.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The experience there was just—just very good. I went into my squadron—by the way, all of the Air Force, wherever it was, where blacks were concerned was Squadron F, whether you [laughs], whether you were there in Arizona or New York or wherever, you were all Squadron F.

SL: Squadron F

GH: You understand? I—I learned a lot. As I said, I was eighteen, and in the military the drafting was from eighteen to thirty-seven.

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. So the guys who were, like, thirty-six, thirty-five and all—they were old enough to be my father. Some of them had children . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . pretty much, my age.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, some of them got so they would look after the youngsters, if you know what I mean.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: When you say, nobody would take advantage of you if—if they felt like that



somebody was doing something, you know. In squadron and out of squadron, I had two or three father or big brother types. And I was able, of course, to do some things for some of them. For instance, I—I was a good typist.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Backing up again: when I was in tenth grade, my father *and* stepmother wanted me to take typing. I resisted taking typing . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . but I went on and did it. I was the only male in the typing class; thirty-nine girls and then me.

SL: [Laughs] That could have worked to your advantage.

GH: That—that's the reason I mention it right now. When I came out of the class, I was—was a good typist, so when I went to the service, I was able to use my typing skills not only to be an adminis—[clerk (IA)]—in administration, but also to help some of my guys who didn't have a lot of training, you understand . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . some hadn't—had hardly finished grammar school, and all.

SL: Right.

GH: So it was—it was an exchange that way, as well. And, they taught me a—a lot of things. For instance, I went out—would go out with some of the guys in the evening . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . when we were on break. They let me drink some. I learned how—somebody got me a zombie. Never heard of a zombie drink.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Oh, you know about zombies?

SL: I know about zombies. I don't think I've ever had one.

GH: Well, it was—it was just so good, I remember . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know, sweet and all of that sort of stuff.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And I drank that one so fast, they gave me another one.

SL: Oh!

GH: And by the time I got the second one—when we got ready to leave, they had to take me out. [Laughter] You know.

SL: You were a zombie [laughs].

GH: But, there were kind of things like that, but big, good things, and bad ones, just—just knowing a little about the growing up experience . . .

SL: Well, I also think that you probably got familiar with chain of command . . .

GH: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: . . . in the military.

GH: I finally became a sergeant.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I was a sergeant when—when—I say retired—when I . . .

SL: Discharged.

GH: . . . when I was discharged. But the army [air force] was—was a good experience. Whenever there was an opportunity, I'd go back to Henning to see Grand-

ma.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And we had another couple in Kansas City—I—another family in Kansas City. I don't know there's so much—back to Atlanta—so much I could tell you about Atlanta that . . . that was there. I mean, in other words, it's family. My son came to—to Morehouse.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: *He* stayed with the family.

SL: Same family.

GH: Same family.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Same family. I have watched and been a part of many things that have—have happened, and they, of course, have come here. Now, they're all—all of them—every one of them is deceased in that family.

SL: Oh.

GH: They—they were all older than I am. [Laughs]

SL: Right.

GH: But every one of them is deceased. And, just . . . I don't know, all kinds of things. They've come here on occasion when things have happened—when I've been sworn in to something.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: One or more of them would come. When I was sworn in to the State Senate in Kansas [in 1964], one of the—one of them came there. And it's just been that

kind of family for me. Okay. Now—and that’s why I said to you earlier, when The Old Man Upstairs took my, my mother, He has provided other family for me. I couldn’t have had a better family than that one. I could tell you a lot more about them, the individuals in it, the concern they had about me, and I for them. It wasn’t a one-sided thing, by any means.

[02:13:28] SL: Mhmm. Oh, we can talk about them a little bit, if you want to. I mean—what is interesting to me about that is—well, first of all, that there is this willingness to take you on . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . by—sounds like—connection over a telephone.

GH: Oh, it—oh, it was.

SL: A few calls, and—and you were at Morehouse.

GH: Mhmm.

[02:13:53] SL: The other thing that is interesting to me is that it was all women . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . and how that became an influence on you.

GH: Mmm. Hmm.

SL: I mean, how many were there in the house?

GH: Well, let’s see. There was Auntie Maude, who was pretty much the housekeeper. She was the oldest member in the family who kept the house and cooked the foods and all. It was Auntie Florence [Rose], who was the head nurse at the hospital—I told you they owned this hospital.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And then, there was Auntie Nellie and Auntie Mary, they both taught school. And then there was Wynelle, who was Auntie Nellie's daughter, who was the chief—no the, I guess you'd call her the assistant financier at the hospital. Now, the person who *owned* the hospital didn't live in the house, and the youngest sister, that was—we called her “Tita,” Mrs. Sadie Powell, and Florence. Florence Harris—they lived in a—in a house next to the hospital.

[02:15:13] SL: Okay, now. So wait a minute. I don't think I heard, and I don't—I didn't understand that they, that this family had ownership of a hospital?

GH: They *owned* the hospital.

SL: My gosh! And, it was all *women*?

GH: Yes. Mrs. . . . Powell, the one—Tita—the one we called Tita . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . actually was the widow of a Dr. Powell, who established the hospital.

SL: Okay

GH: He died.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Okay, so, and—and it was named for his wife's family, the Harris Memorial Hospital, and that was their family name.

SL: Okay.

GH: So they *ran* it. They literally ran the hospital. And it was one of the—it was really, really . . . well, there were two: McLendon and the Harris Hospital. They both were considered very, very good, good hospitals.

SL: Okay.

GH: But that's how that came about.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The lead doctor/founder was now deceased, and Tita ran it, and she was a very able administrator . . .

SL: In her own right

GH: . . . of the hospital. Yeah. And, I did things, on occasion, that were necessary. I would go—I've been over there—and mop some of the floors in the hospital, but Tita would do that, too, the owner of it. You understand . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . it was that kind of thing. Mainly, I would drive her around when I had time. She had one of these big Packard cars, you know.

SL: Mhmm. [Laughs]

GH: And, I was really something at—at Morehouse. I mean, I could drive up this, you know, this car sometimes, and all of that. But the family was just a good family. I went to church with them.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The youngest one that we talked about, Florence Harris, was the organist at Friendship Baptist Church, which is one of the really major, black churches in Atlanta. It was, it was much more so than Ebenezer, Martin Luther King's father's church.

SL: Right.

GH: Maynard Jackson [first African-American mayor of Atlanta, Georgia]'s father was pastor of Friendship, where I attended. I was active in the young men—in

the young adult organization, sang in the choir . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and a, and just was very, very active. We're talking about Martin Luther King and me . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Martin Luther, of course was active in his father's church at that time . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Ebenezer, and they had a young adult group, too . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . so their group and our group would have exchanges . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . now and then.

SL: Probably co-oped on different projects . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . I would assume. Yeah.

GH: Right. Mhmm.

SL: Knew what each other were doing . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . in the community.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Yeah. And we were both then, of course, city students . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. We didn't live on campus. And, and we, we knew things—I—you talk about Martin Luther on the campus. Every Morehouse man had to take a course in Bible.

SL: Okay.

GH: And—and Dr. George Kelsey was the Bible teacher that we had, and so—though, Martin Luther was a year ahead of me, we—several of the classes would work—would—would, let's say have certain kinds of things together. We were in Bible class, and taking the exam.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, so in the—in the auditorium they had us, so what they had us doing is to—each student would sit—there would be a seat between you and the next student. You understand what I'm saying?

SL: Okay.

GH: Do you understand what . . . ?

SL: No, I don't.

GH: Well, if there were, say, twelve seats . . .

SL: Okay

GH: . . . you would sit, \one person would sit in one, the next one would be in three, and the next one would be in five.

SL: Okay.

GH: So there would be a . . .

SL: A space.

GH: . . . a space. That's what I'm talking about.



SL: Okay, all right.

GH: That's what I mean: a space between you.

SL: And why would you do that?

GH: Well . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . to—to—so that the—you couldn't look on the other paper. I mean . . .

SL: Oh!

GH: That—that was the only thing, because there were so many—anyway . . .

SL: I see. Okay.

GH: Dr. Kelsey would say—and we just *laughed* about this—he said, “Now, you gentlemen must remember this is a course in Bible. Don't depend on your neighbor, depend on the Lord.” [Laughter] And so we used to say that all the time, “Yes. Depend on the Lord.” [Laughter]

SL: That is good.

GH: Mhmm. But Morehouse—Morehouse was quite an experience. There's no doubt about that. It's one of the better schools, African-American schools, then and now.

SL: Now. So did you continue with athletics at Morehouse? You were done with that?

[02:21:22] GH: When I came to Morehouse, as I said before, the—the only thing that I had in mind was to . . .

SL: Catch up.

GH: . . . catch up.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Catch up. And—and in—in the formal training, you understand.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So I didn't—I actually was not involved in much of the student activity. And as a matter of fact, some would say—well, you know, won't say he was—I don't know how to say, but . . . but I was busy. I was . . .

SL: Right.

GH: I was studying.

SL: Maybe folks thought you were antisocial or just not civic-minded, or . . .

GH: Whatever.

SL: . . . extra curricular activities just didn't . . .

GH: I didn't—I really didn't—I won't say I didn't care, but I was basically recognized and appreciated as a good student.

SL: Right.

GH: And, of course, that came out cause I—I came out with high honors . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . you understand.

SL: Right. Now what was it that you got your degree in there?

GH: History and political science with a minor . . .

SL: You did a dual [degree].

GH: . . . with a minor in economics.

SL: Wow!

GH: Mhmm. Yeah.

SL: You worked hard.

GH: Mhmm. Yeah.

[02:22:36] SL: Was there . . . so what do you think the best thing about Morehouse was at the time? Or looking back on it now, was there a moment at Morehouse that you felt like you had broken through or, you had come into your own. I mean, if you graduated with high honors, then you had to be basically on fire there.

GH: Well, Morehouse is a, is a school that is very fervent from the standpoint of, of vision, making things better for the—the men at Morehouse—we men of Morehouse—and, and others as well.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Benjamin Elijah Mays was president of Morehouse when I was there . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and I've said in many instances second only to my father, is the gentleman who influenced my life. He was fantastic: theologian, educator, philosopher—however you want to say it. And he was interested. He had no children, but all of the guys at Morehouse were his—his sons. And you don't leave Morehouse. We didn't then, and they still use what Benny Mays was saying to us. He started out telling, "It must be born in mind that the tragedy in life does not lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It is not a disaster not to capture your dream, but it is a disaster not to have a dream to capture." And there's more to it, but that's basically it.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And he starts—finishes . . . “Not,” . . . “Not low,”—“Sin is not the low aim.” I mean—I—I’m supposed to know this. In other words, the sin is having low aim, you understand.

SL: Yeah.

GH: That’s the sin that he talks about.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: That basically is what the men who come out of Morehouse, come out with: the vision of making things better for himself, for his family, for his race, for the nation and the world. In other words, we come back to—I get to Winston Churchill—“What is the use in living unless it is to make the world better for those who come after you.” And, and, I came to—came out of that experience, of course, with so much of that Morehouse in me, and it’s still—it—it—it stays with me. I guess, you know, when we reflect on—when I reflect on my life, it has been a very interesting kind of existence. I mean, as you—as you are seeing, the kind of the growing up years, the kinds of things that we’ve talked about.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The places we were, the kinds of things that we’ve been able to do and experience. Alabama—get back to Alabama, for instance. I first heard Marian Anderson when I was a youngster at—as a contralto, and she was, of course, a youngster then, but she performed . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. Dad taking us to—to Tuskegee to see George Washington Carver, you see. You’ve [laughs] caused me to think of a lot of things. George

Washington Carver came to—to speak to us at Alabama A & M. And everybody, “Oh, here’s Dr. Carver!” You understand? So, he comes out on stage and he has these—just a rubber band. And he—and he starts pulling it. Everybody’s looking, and he said, “Nobody really knows what makes these—what—what makes this operate like that.” Understand? So that’s about all I knew. I got back home—smart me, I said, “He’s doing all that; *I* can pull a rubber band!” [Laughter] You know. And Dad was on my case, “That’s your problem. You think you know this, that and the other.”

SL: Yeah.

GH: But, you know, but at least to be able to—to hear and see those scientists and Marian Anderson and other people. Those things happened because we were in a situation where we could see them, you understand, growing up in—*on* college campuses. Even though they were small, we got a lot of things happening. So by the time I finished Morehouse, with that kind of background, in particular, and my military, I was ready for the University of Arkansas [laughs].

SL: Okay.

GH: [Laughs]

[02:29:02] SL: So why—why—why did you choose University of Arkansas, because you probably could have gone anywhere?

GH: Yes. And there was discussion about the possibility of the Harvard [GH dramatically pronounces Harvard “Hah-vaad”] . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . a possibility . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and some other places. But, Dad was as much as anything responsible for that as well.

SL: Okay.

GH: And, of course, Benny Mays, I talked to him about it on that end, president of Morehouse.

SL: Yeah. So let's—let's get a little perspective here. What's happening with the country right now? You just—you just got out of Morehouse. What's going on politically across the landscape?

GH: In—in—in the South, in particular . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . there are many things that are happening from the standpoint of, some we've not necessarily discussed, but an *awareness* of what we were talking about at—what I experienced in the military.

SL: On your way to Arizona.

GH: Exactly.

SL: Yes.

GH: Exactly. And particularly the kind of thing that stuck so in my mind about the German prisoners, you understand.

SL: Yes. Mhmm.

GH: Not only—not—not only that, but, across the—across the South, in particular . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . those things are beginning to have an impact in the minds of people, at least.

You understand? And that's what was happening. Benjamin Mays and the people at Morehouse were saying, "Things *will* change. We have to help make them change."

SL: Mhmm.

[02:31:06] GH: And that's part of this whole business of—of education, of—of dealing with situations, you understand. And . . . there were lawsuits that had been filed. There was one, the *Sweatt* [*v. Painter*] case in Texas. I don't know that you're aware of that one. The *Sweatt* case where Herman Sweatt had filed a lawsuit, which came to the Supreme Court, about having Ne—Negroes in separate institutions, you understand. That one actually was decided in 1950 while I was there. [Editor's note: The Supreme Court ruled that if Sweatt attended the black law school, he would not receive an education equal to the one he would receive at the University of Texas Law School, thus Texas was in violation of the separate but equal clause of the 14th Amendment.] The *McLaurin* [*v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education*] case, which said you couldn't have separate but—separate facilities couldn't be equal facilities in Oklahoma.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Now, the University of Arkansas decided, that is the state, I won't say—the State of Arkansas and principally the university, decided to admit its first black student without court action. There were—there were certainly pressures being put to have—have uni—blacks—African-Americans—admitted to the university. Heretofore, university—I mean, Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama—all of those southern states, would, on occasion, at least, pay for some tuition of its black students to

some of the northern universities.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Indiana University, where my wife is from, she's from Indiana—had several black southern students come to Indiana. Other schools . . .

[02:33:09] SL: So the southern universities would foot the bill to place the black students in a different university. Is that right?

GH: In—in other states that would admit black students. Yes.

SL: Okay.

GH: Now, that, of course, was becoming a problem once more students were making requests. The economic problems existed because the southern states began, pretty much, as the poorer . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . states, anyway, now trying to foot the bill for people going out of state, which, certainly would have been less cost to them if they'd stayed in state . . .

SL: Sure.



GH: . . . you understand, but that was the kind of thing that was happening. The University of Arkansas decided to admit its first black, Silas Hunt, under the circumstances that we have, I think, talked about already . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . the basement, the professors coming to teach him and all that.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Okay. So that's—that's what happened. Now, the next one admitted was Jackie Shropshire under the same circumstances. That was happening, of course, at the



time, as you know, that I was at Morehouse. Dad wrote me and—and said, “I think you have what it takes to—to come to the university law school here.” And later I was—of course, I was kidding him—I said, “I know why you’re doing that; because it cost you lest money.” [Laughter]

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

GH: Since it was—I was domiciled in Arkansas . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . because he was there.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And all of that, you understand?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But I spoke to—to him and—and Benny Mays, and—and they said, “Well, we think you ought to do it.” And that’s—that’s pretty much it.

[02:35:35] SL: Well, but were you headed—when you decided to head to Arkansas, were you prepared to be taught in a basement? I mean, it seemed like to me that . . . well, I don’t know. I mean . . .

GH: No. I was—I—it’s almost like, if necessary,

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But that did not happen, you know.

SL: Right.

GH: Because Jackie had been moved to the regular classroom.

SL: And it was almost a . . . did the students prompt that?

GH: Yes.

SL: And, the argument was it was a reverse discrimination: they were get—he was getting better schooling than they were.

GH: That's right.

SL: One-on-one attention.

GH: Right.

SL: Student to teacher ratio, one-to-one.

GH: That's right. That's right.

SL: So, of course, he *had* to be getting better.

GH: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: I mean, realistically.

GH: And, again, [of] course we say, not being pessimistic about it, but assuming that they were doing the same thing.

SL: Yeah.

GH: I mean, the teachers were doing the same thing.

SL: Yeah. Well, I . . .

GH: Okay.

SL: . . . of course I may be naïve, but I—I want to believe that they . . .

GH: Well let's—let's say . . .

SL: . . . were and then some. I . . .

GH: Okay, all right. All right.

SL: . . . but I don't know that.

GH: No, no *you* don't know that.

SL: I don't. I would—placing myself in that role; I would think that if I had an oppor-

tunity to be with a student one-on-one that it would also help me, you know.

GH: Yeah.

SL: You see what I'm saying?

GH: Oh, yes. I see what you're saying. Whatever the circumstances . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . he was brought up to a regular classroom with a chair apart from the others.

And, as I said, they had this railing built between them and Wiley Davis—did you know Wiley Davis?

SL: I did not.



GH: Wiley Davis was the constitutional law teacher. More, I'd say, liberal perhaps, than some of the others.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He, as I understand it, was the first of the faculty to go to Dean Leflar . . .

SL: Mhmm

GH: . . . and say, "We've, at least we've got to, at least remove the *rail*." If he stays over there, you know . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but that's just utterly ridiculous that you have a rail there too. So that is the condition that existed when I came to the university. They put another chair over next to Jackie's and then yet another because C. C. [Christopher Columbus] Mercer and I came together. C. C., unfortunately, had to leave after his first year for some reasons. He came back later, of course . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and finished. But things, again, that you remember.

[02:38:40] SL: Do—do you think the same sorts of things . . .

FE: [Sneeze off camera] Excuse me. Sorry.

GH: Bless you.

SL: . . . were happening across the country, across the southern schools? Were they doing—were they teaching the black students in basements? Were they putting rails up? Were they starting . . .?

GH: Well most—most of the schools were not even doing anything.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Most of the states were not doing anything at that time.

SL: So Arkansas was avoiding a trial.

GH: Exactly.

SL: They were avoiding litigation.

GH: Exactly. Mhmm.

SL: So they were a little—a step ahead.



GH: In that regard. As I said, now, there were at least two other states where entries were—were being sought: Texas and Oklahoma. Now, I can't tell you, at this point, about others. There were considerations. There's no doubt about it. The *Gaines* [*Gaines v. Canada*, 1938] case—I've forgotten exactly what the—in Missouri. And at that time in Mississippi, and Alabama, Georgia, they had not begun what we were doing in Arkansas at that time. But Arkansas certainly stands out to that extent of being the first state to admit Negro students, under any circumstances, without court action. Okay. So it—that—that is—that is true, in spite of

what, [chuckles] what we were going through. Dad, once—once I was admitted to the university law school, Dad took me to Little Rock to meet Jackie, Jackie Shropshire. And I remember so well when I first met Jackie. He was a—a handsome youngster and a—just the most ingratiating smile.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And when we first met, he just threw his arms out and said, “My brother.” You know, I mean, he was just so thrilled that another black brother was going to come . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . and—and be with him.

SL: Of course he was.

GH: Oh, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Because he was up there.

SL: I bet you were glad to have him, too.

GH: Oh, no doubt about it.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And, I look at that and I think, “My goodness! I don’t know”—well, I guess I—I would have made it, but it certainly made it a lot easier that he had, he had stuck it out the first year by himself. ‘Cause it was tough enough for the others of us when—when we came on. Various kinds of things had happened. Dad, of course, drove me on up to Fayetteville, and, first meeting I had with Dean Leflar—did you know him, of him?

SL: Yes. I didn't know him very well, but I—I knew him. I—I—I know—I know his sons.

GH: Oh, yes.

SL: And, his son is married to a girl that was the daughter of someone I went to high school with, so I know them a little bit. I don't know them very well, but I'm pretty familiar with his career and . . .

[02:42:20] GH: Okay. Well, it was a very trying time, there's no doubt about that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . for Dean Leflar. He and I, if you want to say, got to be fairly close.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I guess a part of it is, as I moved along I was able to see the . . . the troubles, I could call them that, that he was having trying to play this whole business, because it was not—not easy, you know . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . for him. But, in the early stages, the dean was telling me, when it was just Dad and me because Jackie was already experienced with all of that, the kinds of things that we were expected to do and not to do. Of course, none of us lived on campus.

SL: Buchanan House.

GH: Hm-hm.

SL: You lived in Buchanan . . .?

GH: No, no, no, no.

SL: No? Okay

GH: We didn't live on campus. Each of us . . .

SL: Okay

GH: . . . we lived in the black community. I lived [at] 532 South Washington . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . with the Funkhouser family.

SL: Okay

GH: And Jackie lived in a really black community. I've forgotten exactly where it was.

SL: Well . . . there behind the courthouse.

GH: Yeah. Way up in there.

SL: Well . . . Margaret lived with—Margaret Clark lived with the Morgans, Sherman Morgan . . .

GH: Oh, Okay.

SL: . . . the bar owner.

GH: Oh, okay.

SL: Sherman's. I don't know if you remember Sherman's.

GH: No, I remember. I remember.

SL: Yeah. So I guess that was typical.

GH: Yes. Yes. No—we were not permitted to live on the campus.

SL: Okay.

GH: And I would, of course walk back and forth up and down that hill by the courthouse . . .

SL: Yes.



GH: . . . to get there. [02:44:29] But the dean said that . . . we could not . . . we could not, let's say, [sit down and] study in the library.

SL: Oh!

GH: It was two—two floors up. What we would have to do is to check out, if—if we needed a book and we could. We couldn't use . . . the restroom. Somebody complained about our using the—the student restroom, so the beginning was that we used the dean's private restroom, which meant that we had to come through his office, get the key from his secretary, and go through his office to his restroom. Okay. That, of course, was not working too well . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . because of a lot of things. Not from *our* standpoint. [02:45:31] But then, it was decided that we would use the faculty restroom, which meant that we would go through the students' restroom to get into the faculty restroom, just utterly ridiculous! But that's the kind of thing that happened. And, just many, many experiences like, for instance, you know law school, you were talking about your son is there. When—there'd be a clatter, clatter, clatter going on. Open the door. I would come in, or Mercer. And then all of a sudden, it was just *completely* quiet. You'd have problems trying to make it to your chair over here. You understand me? It was just that kind of stuff. [Beeping sound heard in the background. GH addresses someone.] Mom, you gone?

Mrs. Doris Haley: Oh, yea. Bye.

GH: Okay. Okay.

SL: You want to wait for the garage door?



FE: Garage door's going to open.

[Tape Stopped]

SL: I never, I never learned to play.

GH: Is that right?

SL: Never learned to play.

GH: You just wanted to fish.

SL: I *did* want to fish.

FE: It's not past tense either.

SL: I *do* want to fish. [Laughter]

FE: Present tense. We've got speed.

[02:46:53] SL: Okay. So, you or Mercer would walk in, room would fall silent.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: And would students actually obstruct your path to your seats? I mean, were the students—do you think the students just didn't know *how* to act? Or and also, you all were breaking ground.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: I mean, *really* breaking ground. Not only in the public view, but in your own personal life experience, you were doing things that hadn't been done before . . .

GH: Oh, yeah.

SL: . . . by anybody.

GH: Well, that's true.

SL: And, of course, all the students, your fellow classmates, were also doing things that had never been done by anybody.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: I mean, this was all new stuff. So I—so you enter the classroom, were—did you feel . . . any real *physical* intimidation? Was there, what—did they make it . . .

GH: Actually . . .

SL: . . . difficult for you?

GH: . . . actually, I didn't feel physical intimidation, but, you know, other kinds of intimidation—intimidation can almost be as bad, if not worse, than physical intimidation.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: It really, really can. I'll move to another area from Arkansas. When I—I was doing some lecturing in Africa—I'm thinking now, like, 1983 or [198]4.

SL: Mhmm.

[02:48:34] GH: I had gone from [Harare] Zimbabwe on my way to [Maseru] Lesotho, to do another lecture there. In Johannesburg, South Africa, *Roots* was banned. Now, the State Department knew that, but some—and they had given me a couple—given me another pass[port] to pass through. I was supposedly a transitory person there . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . just going through—passenger there. But, they decided that they were going to keep me in Johannesburg and, excuse me, and it made it—[they] kept me overnight, and it was one of the worst experiences, at least, in my life because they were doing a lot of things. They wouldn't let me call the U.S. Embassy. I had no rand [currency]. As I said, I was just, supposedly, passing through one plane to the other, but they decided that they were going to keep me. And, and it was a

terrible thing. They rang bells on me all night, you understand. And I was very—you talk about *fear*. I was very fearful that I may not get—you may not be able to talk to me now [laughs].

SL: Yeah.

[02:50:08] GH: So, back to—to us at the university. [Coughs] Excuse me. There were pretty much those kinds of things, not that severe, that were happening from the standpoint of—of the *minds* of people. And you are so right; that was a breaking ground for them, to some extent, and certainly breaking ground for us. That was one of the reasons, I think, that whoever was making these decisions decided that here are *mature* African-Americans; all of us—all of whom had been in the military . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . able to, let's say, deal with, I won't even say "accept," deal with these kinds of situations, you see, knowing how some of the—I won't—I almost said "white brothers"—knowing how they felt about us. For instance, after we got to know some of the guys, it was a matter of being able to *communicate*. One of the guys came up to me and said, "I've never seen anybody like you,"—no "blacks," that's what he's talking—"no blacks like you." He said, "The only persons that I've been dealing with, from the standpoint of blacks, have been my father's sharecroppers." He came from a very well to do plantation . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you see. And, he was one who somehow heard me playing [laughs] Chopin over—and the Beethoven—over there. "How in the world did he learn that?"

[Laughs] But you understand, this was a *new* experience for *him*.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And a *new* one for *me* because I knew what I was doing. I mean, from the standpoint of being able to—to do that. And then another, I told you about my—my business of typing. Another guy came in, and I was just whipping up—then—typewriter on one when he said, “*You* can type faster than *I* can!” You know, I mean, it was *then* one of those things where—more of *amazement* than, well, just, you know, black/white, if you want to say it that way . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . they could think that I could *do* that. Mhmm. But the . . . the coming to *know* each other came to be so, so important, you understand. And, surely, I—or *we*—developed first communication and then friends. I have—not only Lee, but there were some others that I came to meet, to know and—and became friends with. For instance, one or two of my guys—one of them, Gene Banks, is—is deceased and several others are gone, but, when I finished law school, if they came to Kansas City on some matter, they’d be in touch, and we’d exchange *clients*. Well, now what more can you [laughs]—I won’t say—it—but it was something that showed not only respect, but appreciation . . .

SL: Trust.

GH: . . . for one another. Trust. Exactly. Mhmm. So, law school, as I said, it—it started out rough . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . but it—but before I—we—ended, it was certainly one where we were, I’d say,

certainly respected and appreciated. The fact that we were able to . . . to make things happen for the good of the law school.

[02:54:37] SL: Well . . . law school is so difficult, anyway.

GH: Oh, yeah. And . . .

SL: And, you know, I've always heard first year . . .

GH: It is.

SL: . . . they—they really weed people out . . .

GH: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . anyway.

GH: No—no—no doubt about it.

SL: If—if they can't—if they can't take the stress, if they can't take the onslaught of . . .

GH: Yeah. No. All of us were fairly good students . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . if you want to say it that way. I mean, to the extent of being able to pull it out, you understand.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: We were—and I don't care how you say it, the military was at least a part of—of the common sense knowledge—law, among other things, is one where you have to use common sense to it, you understand?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and, so each of us, certainly Jackie was military, Wiley, myself, C. C. and George Howard, all of us had been in the military, you understand. And, had, I

guess, good training. I've told you about mine at Morehouse. Of course, I think, having come from that school it was the better of all [laughs].

SL: Yeah. Well, of course.

GH: It was—it was a good school. [02:56:01] But, just a lot of things happened at law school. And some—really things that were, disturbing. I was either a—I don't know whether I was a junior, second year or third year—but George Howard and I were walking on the street by Razorback Hall. Football players were in there. And—and so it was a fairly mild day. They had the windows up, and—and so before we got to the—to the dormitory, somebody inside said, “There come a couple of those nigger students!” You understand. And—and so, George—George Howard has a—he's—he's really got a temper. He's “What! What's going on?” You understand? I said, “Listen,” I said, “George, we are going to walk by as if we don't even know they are there,” in spite of all that, you understand? So we *did*. Walked right on by. Well, when we got by, somebody threw a golf ball and, it bounced on the—on the sidewalk, on the side—George's side—it just bounced and on. And—and somebody said, “You missed 'em!” And they laughed. You understand. I said, “George”—[laughs] I was telling myself as well as him—I said, “We will continue walking. We're not going to run. We're just going to continue walking as we are.”

FE: Sorry.

SL: You got to change the tape?

FE: Yes.

[Tape Change]

[02:58:02] SL: . . . practicing what would later become the credo of the movement.

GH: Right. Right. In this experience I was telling you about, with George and me . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . the—the—the guy—somebody said, “You missed ‘em!” and they just started laughing. I said, “We’re just going to continue walking as we are.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I was ready to move ahead, too, but, we decided—decided we were just going to do that.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And George was saying, “Well, all of this going on,” said, “we better have somebody call out the militia or something,” . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know. Then they threw a Coke bottle . . .

SL: Uh-O.

GH: . . . and the Coke bottle burst between us, but it—that was it. It just burst, and we was getting further away. We didn’t run. We didn’t do anything but continue to walk. And by that time, I guess, we were far enough [laughs] with their having their fun as they did. We went, immediately—or well, *I* went immediately to Dean Leflar’s office to tell him about this. I said, “George, you just”—he’s, he was [laughs] really . . .

SL: Too angry.

GH: Yeah. I said, “Let me go.”

SL: Mhmm.

[02:59:29] GH: And I went and told the dean what had happened. And—and, so the dean—I went up to the library and I saw the dean, after I had finished, ease out of the back part of the—the law school, and I knew he was going then to see the chancellor, the president, to tell him about it. And, he was—I'm sure they discussed it, but, nothing ever really happened to—that we knew about, other than the fact that that was an incident that—that *did* happen.

[03:00:12] SL: Where did you eat lunch?

GH: We brought our lunch . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . for the most part. Now, my third year, I stayed on campus. We were now able to come to the campus.

SL: Okay.

GH: And . . .

SL: You know, that's remarkably pretty quick, to have that change happen . . .

GH: Yeah.

SL: . . . after it not ever being in existence.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: A span of three years, you're now living on campus.

GH: Living on campus, in the quonset Huts. I don't know whether you know those were little huts—not—not in the—in the dormitories, but all of the—us lived in what'd they call those—the military things.

SL: Yeah. It was done for the GI Bill, really, for the influx . . .

GH: Yeah. Yeah.



SL: . . . of students that entered on GI Bill. Yeah.

GH: So that's—that's where we—we lived. Myself—now George Howard, I believe, was the first black on campus. He may have come the se—the—the second year.

SL: Okay.

GH: But I—well, we go from one thing to another.

SL: That's all right.

[03:01:30] GH: I didn't really tell you about my family.

SL: In Fayetteville?

GH: My Fayetteville family.

SL: Okay. This is your third family now.

GH: My third family.

SL: All right. Let's talk about them.

GH: Cashmere. C-A-H . . . C-A-S-H-M-E-R-E. That was his name. Cashmere and Crystal Funkhouser.

SL: Those are great names! [Laughs]

GH: Incidentally—no, it would be one of their grandchildren . . . played either basketball or football for the university, and they've done well.

SL: Funkhouser?

GH: No, no. No, no. That—that was *their* name. Mmm, I can't think of . . .

SL: Oh, well—would it—you mean right *now*?

GH: Hmm?

SL: Playing *now*?

GH: Oh, no, no, no.

SL: Oh.

GH: No, no, no, no. But the—the mother—the mother's married to somebody, and I can't remember the maiden name.

SL: That would be, I'm trying to think of black basketball players—early black basketball players.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: Could have been—oh!

GH: Well I don't know.

SL: I'll think of it. When I'm not trying to think of it, it'll come to me.

GH: Yeah, yeah. Anyway, they knew that they had to find—find a place for me to stay.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and so, somehow, I think had mentioned this as a possibility. And, they, again, were just a beautiful family. They even built a *room*. That became my room, on their house, because it was kind of upstairs—[I mean?] built it kind of upstairs where . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know, “Well, he's—he's going to law school. He's going to have to do this, that and the other so.” That was my family. They had one daughter, Carolyn, who still lives in the same house. Whatever her name is—I'm trying to think it's Davis, but I—I have it somewhere.

SL: Okay.

GH: Mhmm. But they—they were a family. Not nearly as—as—I don't—I'm saying

“cultured” or “well to do” as my Atlanta family, but just as loving. And . . .

[03:04:00] SL: You know, someone else has mentioned that they—when they came to Fayetteville there *was* this . . . there was this prevailing condition with the Fayetteville black community.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: There was even some—there was a distance between the undergraduate blacks—this is later—undergraduate blacks coming in and the—the local black community, it initially didn’t really relate to black students coming to the University of Arkansas.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: And the—the black students—or the black population in Fayetteville *generally* did not *try* to go to the University of Arkansas. You know they weren’t . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . admitted for so long, but it set a precedent where they didn’t even *think* about going to the University of Arkansas, and, all of a sudden, there were black students attending the University of Arkansas before the *local* students were attending the University of Arkansas. It was . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . an unusual difference in . . .

GH: Well, you can . . .

SL: . . . perception, I guess.

GH: . . . you can, again, understand a little of that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . because it goes back to what we were saying earlier from the standpoint of—  
it's almost like an acceptance. “Well, I can't go to the university; I'll have to go  
down to Philander Smith [College, Little Rock] . . .”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: “. . . to Pine Bluff,” you understand?

SL: Mhmm

GH: “And other places because I can't go here.”

SL: Right.

GH: And that becomes almost like a mind- . . .

SL: Mhmm. Mhmm.

GH: . . . -set that had to be readjusted. And I could see the feeling of some of the peo-  
ple. And there was almost, I won't call it *resentment* about other blacks who  
coming in and going to the university.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But you understand what I'm saying?

SL: Yeah, well, I think there *was* almost resentment . . .

GH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . there—or not—you're right, I can't really say it's resentment, but [sigh] . . .

GH: Yeah, whatever.

SL: I don't know. It was confounding, at least . . .

GH: Yes. Yes.

SL: . . . to both parties, I think. Both parties. Okay, so just as loving. Not as academ-  
ically involved as the families that you had come from before you got to Fayette-

ville, but the Fayetteville family was just as loving, just as supportive.

GH: Oh, oh yes. I mean I was the son.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: They had the one daughter . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . much younger than I, but she—Crystal called me her son . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and Cashmere. They fed me, and . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . whatever I wanted, as much as they could, they provided it.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I went to church with them.

[03:06:50] SL: Did—I was—I was wondering. You continued with the church . . .

GH: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . all the way through college and law school?

GH: Right. Right. Went to church.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The Methodist Church. The black Methodist Church.

SL: Saint James Methodist.

GH: Mhmm. Yeah.

SL: I go there now.

GH: Yeah. Okay. And, Crystal, of course, played the piano and sang.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I did not get in the choir or anything cause I was *really* busy. And they knew I was busy with my—with my law, and . . . I—I didn't do very much but study. . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you know? Yeah. And when I got on the *Law Review* staff, it was just kind of like more studying, although, at least getting an article done, a case note or a comment, you'd get one credit or maybe two, if you got it *published*. And I remember, we did have Thanksgiving—at Thanksgiving I would take a bus and go to Kansas City, which was six—maybe six hours from Fayetteville.

[03:08:08] SL: Mhmm. Now, what took you to Kansas City?

GH: I had some—I had relatives there—another family. After I finished law school—I tell you all—all about my families. But, I would go there. I really, I'd go there to get a haircut [laughs] but also to see the family . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . there. And, one Thanksgiving, I went on Wednesday, and I was working on one of my case notes, and I was so, it—it was just hitting me in my mind so much that I spent Thanksgiving, and Friday I came back to law school. That's the kind of *student* I was at that time. I—you know, we had the weekend off.

SL: Right.

GH: But . . .

SL: But you had to get back.

GH: . . . I had to get back to—to . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . do my work . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and—and got my case note done—or worked on it, I don't say I got it done.

But that was my involvement in law school.

[03:09:26] SL: Who were your favorite—did you have favorite teachers in law school?

GH: Mmm . . . yes. [Coughs] Excuse me. Of course, one of them was Leflar. He taught conflicts of laws law.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And I liked Wiley Davis. I mentioned him, too . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . constitutional law. Ed Dunaway. Do you know the name Ed Dunaway?

SL: I know the family.

GH: Mhmm. He's deceased now.

SL: Yes.

GH: Oh, Meriwether I liked.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Meriwether, he was our real property instructor. I didn't have any difficulties with any of my instructors. I thought they were—they seemed fair. Of course you'd sometimes have some concern. Levy . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . taught me agency. We were still—we had our separate study room. When I say, "We"—the blacks . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . had the separate—‘cause we couldn’t stay in the library in the early stages and we—we—that separate—that room was my study room for the three years that I was there. It generally kind of became a part of the law review but . . . Levy had taught us agency. And, when the grades are finished . . .

SL: Posted, mhmm.

GH: . . . posted, then people, of course, come and look to see whether you passed or what you made . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . and all of that. And Levy didn’t call on *us* very much. Sometimes we said that he really, really didn’t, for whatever the reasons.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I got—on the agency grades were posted, and somebody said, “Oh! Who is number 212?” And I said, “C.C.,”—to C.C. Mercer I said, “That’s my number.” I said, “That doggone Levy has flunked me.” And—and I said, you know, I—I—well, anyway, that was my thought. Well, of course, after the grades are posted, then you can go upstairs and find out whose name is to the number.

SL: The number. Mhmm.

GH: It didn’t take too long, but that a guy came down and said to me, “Congratulations! You made the highest A in the class.” I didn’t, I—I didn’t know what to s—to think . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . but anyway, I said, “Gee, thank you.” And—and so after the whole shebang had gone [laughs], then C.C. and I went out and looked at the posted grades, and,



sure enough, there was 212 - A, and then it had in parentheses, “Highest A in class.” I, actually didn’t know what to do or say about that, but I tell you what happened: one of the guys came back to tell me, “I want you to know, that you wrote a damn good paper.” One of the other students came and told me, “You wrote a damn good paper.” He said that they had demanded—some of them had demanded to the dean . . .

SL: To see your work.

GH: . . . to see—to see my paper. And—and that’s what had happened. So, by the way, now, for whatever the reasons, Dean Leflar [Editors note: was actually Professor Levy] was gone the next year. And—because I had said something to him about it afterwards, and he said—oh, and they did—they really did it in on him, to some extent. He [Mr. Levy] said, “Well, I was doing what I was told to do—what I was expected to do. I looked at the papers’ numbers, and this was the best paper, and that’s how you happened to get it.” I felt bad in a way, quite frankly, about it because I sometimes felt that maybe he might have been released because of that. Because there was quite a storm about this black guy [laughs] . . .

SL: Hmm.

GH: . . . getting the highest—highest grade.

SL: Well, now, but he continued at the law school, forever. Well, he came back and . . .

GH: Maybe. [Professor Levy was gone from the law school during my senior year (IA).]

SL: Oh, yeah.

GH: Okay.

SL: Yeah, he was—I mean, he may have been relieved as dean.

GH: No, no. He was not dean.

SL: Oh, he was not dean.

GH: No, no. He was not dean.

SL: Oh, okay.

GH: Hm-mm. I don't—I—did you think I said, “Leflar”?

SL: Yes.

GH: Oh, no, no, no, no.

SL: Levy.

GH: Levy.

SL: Levy. Oh, okay, that's different.

GH: Oh, no, no, no, no.

SL: Oh, okay. Okay. Okay.

GH: Now, you know they wouldn't have done that, in a way, to the *dean*.

SL: Right. Right. No. I was thinking . . .

GH: Hm-mm. Levy.

SL: Oh, okay. Hmm.

[03:15:33] GH: Now, another thing happened, to, another one of the in—in—  
instructors. As we know, once the, once the grades are in, the students start talk-  
ing about it. “What—what—how'd you handle this? And how'd you handle  
that?”

SL: Mhmm

GH: And we were there in—in talking to the professor. And, he said—in an audience of several of us—he said, “Mr. Haley, I don’t know how you could have done well on your paper,” said, “your notebook is so well done.” You know, and all that, he said—“You spent so much time doing that.” Then, he let out, “But I haven’t graded your paper yet.” And it just got *really* quiet, because he forgot he shouldn’t have said that. If he hadn’t graded the paper, how’s he know? You know. But I got a passing grade. I got a C [laughs].

SL: Mhmm. Hmmm. That’s interesting.

GH: It *was* interesting.

SL: So, did that—I mean, it had to be upsetting, too.

GH: Yeah.

SL: And you just walked on by, kept walking, or . . . ?

GH: Oh, yeah. No, well, that was it. I mean, as I said, it wasn’t just *my* hearing and seeing what he said . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but others as well.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And he—after he said it, he said, “Oh, my goodness!” But nobody said anything.

SL: Mhmm

GH: Okay.

SL: Wow!

[03:17:32] GH: But, law school, as I said, was—was *really* very interesting. And I have said to other people—you talk in terms of University of Arkansas, of Co-

lumbia, or Harvard, or places like that. I feel very, very comfortable with the—  
with the training we got in—in law at the University of—of Arkansas. I've never  
really felt inferior, by any means . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . for the training that we got there.

[03:18:14] SL: You know, I've heard the same thing forever. I've never heard anyone  
feel defensive about their law degree from the University of Arkansas.

GH: No, no. And I use, a lot of times, when I talk to people, when I *finally* came to—  
to Washington [DC] from Kansas, of course, I'd had other kinds of training,  
legally . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . before I came.

SL: Between the two, yeah.

GH: Yeah. I was chief counsel—as appointed in Nixon's Administration as chief  
counsel to UMTA, Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

SL: Yes. Mhmm.

GH: And, my *deputy* was a *white* Harvard guy who was in service—in government  
service—thinking that he was going to stay there for a while, but, you know,  
sometimes it gets good to you. [Laughs]

SL: Right.

GH: You know how these careers are.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And he stayed. But, at least our dealing with legal matters were such that I never,

never felt at—anything like inferior—if anything, *he* was the one. Not just because I was boss.

SL: Right.

GH: But because of the kinds of things that we did together. And I, of course, respected him. He was a good lawyer.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He's dead now.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I eventually moved and became—from there, I was general counsel and congressional liaison at USIA.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I brought him over there . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . you see.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And, then after a while, I came into private practice. He had been in government, by that time, long enough to retire . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and he came out of private practice and became my associate—a Harvard man.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Okay.

SL: That's good.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Well, and, you know, the bottom line is, you all were able to work together.

GH: Oh, sure.

SL: And he was able to do the work.

GH: Oh, oh yeah.

SL: And you were able to do the work.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Whatever your rank is, whatever your school is, it—it's really based—it has to be based on what you're doing right now, what the performance and how you're . . .

GH: Ex—exactly

SL: . . . able to work with what is in front of you.

GH: Mhmm. Mhmm.

SL: What's—what's behind you is behind you.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: I mean, it carries weight, but if you can't perform, if you can't do the work . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . you're not going to do well. You're going to be stuck . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . somewhere. So that's a good story. That's good.

GH: Yes.

[03:21:06] SL: All right. So . . . before we leave the University of Arkansas, you—your last year, you're on campus. Do you, *participate* in any way, or are you just so buried in law school and the *Law Review*? Is there any activity—are there—

are you engaged *any way* in campus life . . .

GH: No.

SL: . . . other than in that law school building . . .

GH: No.

SL: . . . and the quonset hut?

GH: No. I was not engaged in any matters of—of campus life, as such. I'd go to a *football game*.

SL: Well . . .

GH: *That* engaged me . . . but mine actually was . . .

SL: Martin Terry.

GH: Hm-mm.

SL: Was Martin Terry not from Fayetteville? Basketball player? Okay. All right. I just thought of the name. See, it came to me without thinking about it.

GH: Yes. Okay.

SL: [Laughs]

[03:22:07] GH: But all of my involvement at the university was in, pretty much, the law school. And, as I said, I just put it—the business of the courses and the *Law Review*. I enjoyed doing the work at the *Law Review*. And not only did I do my *own* cases and case notes, but then I had the responsibility of looking at other people's case notes, you understand?

SL: You were editing.

GH: Yeah, exactly, exactly.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: So, that was pretty much it. We did go to the—when I say, “We”—C.C. and I went—to the Presbyterian Westminster . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Foundation.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: The Wesley Foundation . . .

SL: Yes.

GH: . . . did not want us . . . Methodists.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And, this guy that you either read about—or will—Miller Williams?

SL: Yeah.

GH: Okay. Oh, that’s right. You know Miller.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Miller was one of the—why—one—one of the guys that was just so upset because his father was a superintendent—Methodist superintendent . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . or something. And they had said to us, “Well, now, you go down to Saint James.” [Laughs] Not on campus. But, the Westminster House asked us if we would come over, and we—we certainly would go over there on Sunday evenings and, and became a part of their activities.

SL: They’re still—that center’s still the most progressive, I think . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . on campus.



GH: Mhmm.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And that was a good experience. It was.

SL: Mhmm.

[03:24:08] GH: I, then picked up a few other friends. One of the guys was in law school, and he flunked out, really. Eck Rowland. Eck—Eck Rowland.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He now lives in Van Buren, but he and his wife were very active at the Westminster.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And her maiden name was *Haley*. She's originally from Southwest City, Missouri.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: So, when she told me this, she said, "One, one—s—weekend, we're gonna go home." It's about, an hours drive, or so, you know, from here.

SL: Yeah. Mhmm.

GH: And so I said, "Yeah. Sure." So we'll just tell them that—that the black sheep is coming home.

SL: [Laughs]

GH: [Laughs] Yeah.

SL: Well, oh—n—kay—wait a minute. How did you end up in Van Buren? What were you doing in Van Buren?

GH: No, no. I said that's where they now live.

SL: Oh, that's where *they* live, not, not you.

GH: They live now.

SL: Oh, okay. All right. Okay.

GH: They live there now. And we're still, the—the Rowlands and Miller and Jordan Williams are my—my closest friends.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I won't say "white friends." They're my closest friends in that area.

SL: Mhmm

GH: As a matter of fact, Miller had read in this—some of this business about . . .

SL: The awardees.

GH: . . . our coming. Yeah. And so he said, "You know you—you know your bed is ready." He's called to tell me about that.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And I said, "Well, as I understand it, we're supposed to stay in—I'm supposed to stay in one of those places . . ."

SL: Carnall Inn.

GH: Yes. Mhmm. Mhmm.

SL: Yeah.

GH: Yeah. [Laughs] So that's much better.

SL: You—you can do whatever you want to do.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: You don't have to stay there if you don't want to. They're—they're really proud of that. They saved that. It used to be the old Carnall Hall, the women's dorm.

GH: Yes, yes. I've—I've been there before.

SL: Oh, you have. Okay.

GH: Yeah. They had me there when I did the commencement. I did the commencement a couple of years ago.

SL: Yes, yes. I've seen photographs—you know, I'm not sure—now, that was, in [19]90 . . .

GH: Not [19]90—two thousand something.

SL: It was in 2002.

GH: Yes, I guess.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: Or 2002—I guess [200]2 or [200]3. It's whatever the . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

GH: . . . thing says. I was there.

[03:26:53] SL: Before we leave the University of Arkansas, were you aware of anything else that was going on across the nation, by the time you were getting ready to graduate? I mean, had any—any of the other schools followed Arkansas's suit? Had they started to soften up? Had they started to pre-empt what everyone saw, the train wreck that was coming, I guess?

GH: If—if so, I was not—it was not *public* awareness.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: Of course, I almost consider myself to that extent. As I say, many peop—many states were definitely looking at—“Hey, look. We've got to do something.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and some of it was certainly economic.

SL: Yes.

GH: Yeah. Much of it was economic.

SL: And, it's a shame, but many times that is the driving force of change.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

GH: So, I can't say that there was any other university that I'm *aware* of, going further than—than we were. People were looking at the university . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . of course. If it happens here, it can happen other places. Incidentally—not—not college or university—but a little later is what happened at—at the Central High [reference to the 1957 Integration Crisis at Little Rock Central High School].

SL: [19]57.

GH: Exactly. I mean, whatever the circumstances at the university, there'd been certain successes there, and now we move it down to . . .

SL: Yeah. Now . . .

GH: . . . [19]57. Hmm?

[03:28:44] SL: Gradu—graduation day—did you go through commencement? Did you—what happened when you finished law school?

GH: Oh, no, I was in the commencement.

SL: And when you were walking across that stage, or during that weekend, or whenever it was, did—did you have any idea what you had done—what you and the

others had done? Did you have—was there any magnitude in—in your all's thoughts about what you had accomplished?

GH: Umm.

SL: Or was it just simply that you had come up here, and you had done it, you had gotten through it?

GH: No, no. It—it, certainly, you felt that you had accomplished something . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . for yourself and—and many others. I felt so much so, quite frankly, because I attended Jackie's graduation, as his being *the first*.

SL: Right.

GH: And how proud we were that he'd been able to do it, so, when I'm the next—certainly I was proud of me and what I'd done, but somehow I'm looking at what Jackie had been able to do, if you understand what I'm saying.

SL: Yeah. Sure.

GH: Yeah. But I certainly—certainly felt it. And—and . . . and some sense of accomplishment—no, a huge sense of accomplishment.

SL: Well, yeah.

GH: Yeah. A lighter moment about my graduation, my Kansas City family had come down . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . driven down. Certainly, my father was there.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And that was pretty much it, 'cause Alex didn't come, nor did Julius come. Alex

was—I don't know exactly where he was, but, at any rate . . .

SL: Any of the folks from Atlanta?

GH: No, no.

SL: No?

GH: No people from Atlanta came. [19]52. You know what, I'm not exactly sure, why they didn't come, but nobody from Atlanta came. Anyway, I was going to say about Miller, Miller Williams. Miller and I were tight buddies by then.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: He was graduating with a master's in zoology.

SL: Okay.

GH: And, so he came into my room and—so I don't know what he had on—this is on—back on commencement day after baccalaureate . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but I was really upbraiding him about how he looked . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . you know. And, so I said, "You've got to do better than that." So, I had my shirt I had worn for baccalaureate—still fresh enough.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And—and he and I can wear the same shirts . . .

SL: Size.

GH: . . . so—so I told him, I said, "Whatever that was, take it off and put my shirt on. Put this shirt on." 'Cause I had me a fresh one for commencement.

SL: Right.

GH: And, so, sure enough, he did. And, I had talked a lot about my friend Miller with my Kansas City folk . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . so, sure enough, the Kansas City folk came and they were there in the car and—and they either blew [the car horn] outside or somebody said, “Oh, Miller, there they are.” So we run out—run outside to—to greet my relatives, and, so in a—in a minute or so I said, “And this is my buddy, Miller, that I’ve been telling you about.” And so, Miller said, “Yeah. You see how he treats me; he makes me wear his dirty shirts.” [Laughter] And we still talk about that, but it’s—it was true because I had worn it. [Laughs] I had. But that’s kind of the relationship that we have developed through the years.

[03:33:08] SL: Well, let me ask you *this*. Was—did—was Miller your first close white friend?

GH: Mmm, that’s a good question. [Pause] I guess that’s true. Yeah, I guess that is pretty much true. *Certainly*, he has been the one who has been through a lot of stuff with me and . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . I with him. As I was telling you about [what] Ben Combs is doing now . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . about how long we’ve not only known each other, but shared experiences together—excuse me—that’s probably—probably true. We’ve developed that friendship now. Let me tell you others we’ve—I’ve developed a good friendship with—Lee Williams. Lee and I weren’t that close . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . in school.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Our relationship has developed, more through the years. And another, Bob Lowe? You would not . . .

SL: I don't know him

GH: . . . necessarily know him.

SL: Is he from El Dorado?

GH: I think he is.

SL: I probably know his son or grandson—grandson, I bet.

GH: Okay.

SL: I've recorded a Lowe that came . . .

GH: Okay.

SL: . . . good songwriter.

GH: Mhmm. Yeah. He's—he's—he's, I believe from El Dorado. I'm—I'm not certain . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . but I believe he is. He came on the Washington scene—Bob did—for a long time.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Now he lives down in Virginia somewhere.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: All of these old guys—the eighties and the eighty-ones, you see, but . . .



SL: Yeah, but . . .

[03:35:09] GH: But he—he and I came to be good friends from law school days. And now, of course, I told you that the Ecks—we—I mean, the—what—Rowlands—things happened. I’ve told this on an occasion. How things are—Eck and Marge Rowland are—I know they—they’re—genuine, sincere people, to the extent when I was on—when I—I stayed on campus, sometimes, as you know, the food was not something that you—in—in the cafeteria . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . that you were that interested in. And they lived on the campus, and maybe—I don’t know whether it was a quonset hut or something like that. So I dropped by—they were still in school . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . after—after Eck dropped out of . . .

SL: Law school.

GH: . . . flunked out of law school, he—he went on to continue getting his training. And I stopped in their house, and Marge said—something—“Well why aren’t you at, why aren’t you having something over there at the cafeteria.” I said, “Oh, whatever it was, I—I just didn’t like it at all.” Well, we were talking, and—and I wasn’t really observing what Marge was doing, but she was really preparing lunch . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . for Eck and herself.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: What she did—on that day—was to make whatever those two plates were, three plates. Even to the extent of—I—I know she had peaches—a half—two—a peach . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . on each plate . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . a canned peach.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And she cut it, to the extent of making . . .

SL: Six pieces . . .

GH: Exactly.

SL: . . . out of two.

GH: Exactly.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Exactly. So—and even the sandwiches—so she said, “Well, come on and have some lunch.” And it’s always, really impressed me that she would do that. I said, “Marge, come on, come on.” And she said, “No. Come on. Have something to eat with us.” But that’s the kind of . . . of couple and family they are. And we have maintained a good relationship through the years. We’ve visited them in Southwest City [Missouri].

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And we’ve had some—lot of laughs about certain things. For instance, the first time—this was—Doris has been there with our kids, but, I mean, much later when

we were in Kansas City.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But the first time I went, I was still in law school, really. And we went to church and, we were kind of back, you know, in line waiting to get in church. And—and Marge and—and Eck were both laughing—I didn't know—'cause the guy in there could not think about a black coming into the church [laughs] you understand? So, he was, you know, greeting everybody. When I stepped through the door, his—his smile just went. [Laughter] But I—but I came on in, of course.

SL: Yeah.

GH: You know. But, we just laughed about that because Southwest City was one—another one of those places where blacks were not expected to be there after dark, you see.

SL: Mmm.

GH: Mhmm. [Laughs] But I stayed in—in Marge's house. They were—the whole family is just really, really nice. You know.

[03:39:13] SL: Tell me again when you met Doris.

GH: Mmm, fifty—I guess I met her in [19]52. The year you were born.

SL: And where were you when it happened?

GH: In Kansas City.

SL: In Kansas City. You were visiting . . .

GH: No, no. When I finished law school . . .

SL: Oh, Okay.

GH: . . . I came to Kansas City to start practicing law.

SL: Okay.

GH: The—there was a partnership there that had been following, me and others.

SL: I was going to ask you about that.

GH: Mhmm.

[03:39:49] SL: I would assume that you and the other Pioneers at the University of Arkansas were *noted* across the country . . .

GH: Well . . .

SL: . . . in the professional community.

GH: Yeah, people knew—knew us.

SL: Mhmm. In fact, I'm just wondering how much you guys really put the University of ArkanLaw—Arkansas Law School on the map, because you've all done so well. I mean, you did *well*.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: Not only, did you go to law school, but you've taken what you got out of that law school and excelled.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: So, in—in a way, you know, you—you guys have really added to the prestige of the University of Arkansas.

GH: Well, quite frankly, and humbly so, I'd like to think so.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: We've done . . . quite a lot . . . using whatever . . . abilities and skills we had. But I tell you one thing—I told you earlier, The Old Man Upstairs makes happen whatever happens. And—and . . . my life has been one that—that pretty much,

I've felt that He has controlled. You know?

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and I feel, *thankful*, blessed, that many things have happened. [Coughs]  
Excuse me. And we were going through—my wife and I were talking about a few things that—that we've done. And I say, "We" because, certainly she's been very much a part of—of my life—our life—our lives.

SL: Mhmm. Mhmm.

[03:41:54] GH: Through the years—I guess this is about as good a time—I started reflecting on the kinds of things that have happened, where I have been [laughs] and the kinds of things that I've done. After law school, of course, I went immediately to—to Kansas City. I was invited there, by a firm. Incidentally, the senior member of the partnership was one of my father's students, Myles Stevens. And he, of course, among others, had followed what was going on at the university, and he said to me, "You finish at law school. We've got a job waiting for you." Okay? My plan, quite frankly, had been to go to Kansas City for a short span of time and come back to Arkansas—never got back to Arkansas to practice, though I still have my license, which I . . .

SL: Yeah. I saw that.

GH: . . . my Arkansas license.

SL: Yes, Mhmm.

GH: Okay. My Arkansas license, Kansas license . . .

SL: Washington, DC.

GH: Exactly.

SL: And your license to practice in front of the Supreme Court.

GH: Yes, yes. But law school—I mean, Kansas City—here now my family. Here I'm going on again—my Kansas City family. Cousin Georgia is the senior member of the Kansas City family, who in age, is like Grandma, in Henning.

SL: Okay.

GH: She is the—Cousin Georgia is the—[coughs] excuse me—daughter of Grandma's oldest sister.

SL: Okay.

GH: There were eight in the family. Grandma was the baby . . .

SL: Oh. [Laughs]

GH: . . . so they were about the same age and they were just really good friends . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . you understand—and relatives, but friends.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So it was at her house that I moved to in Kansas City after law school. Again, another member of the family, okay?

SL: Yeah.

GH: And one of her sons that had—she had two—one of her sons was Floyd Anderson, who was my real mentor, like, father-type on the scene. He was a *master* politician. He worked for the city and all that, so I was kind of under his care.

SL: Tutelage. Mhmm.

GH: Exactly. Exactly. So when I came—working for this partnership, shortly thereafter, I became an assistant city attorney, which was a political job.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Two years after I got there.

SL: Now, did you have to run or was it an appointment?

GH: No, no. It was an appointed position.

SL: Okay.

[03:34:11] GH: And, I was there for ten years as an assistant city attorney. I learned politics in that—and not only that, but many other kinds of things [our office advised and handled litigation of (IA)]: the—the—the representatives, the city commissioners, the city/county health department, the police department, the fire department. And I was showing you that—that thing downstairs, the pinball ordinance.

SL: Yes.

GH: Okay. That's when I was the chief counsel preparing all of that to go to the Supreme Court. Now, in the meantime, I was very active—now, you talk about becoming active. I came to be active in a lot of things: the church, community atmosphere, all kinds of things. And I met my wife and another girl that Floyd did not approve of [laughs] because she was divorced, among other things.

[Coughs]

SL: Yes. But you met both of them through the church, through your church activities?

GH: I don't know that I met—no I really—I met Doris at a social party.

SL: Okay.

GH: I met the other girl at church. But I met her at a social function.

SL: Funny Floyd would say okay to Doris and not the girl you met at church, but ...

GH: Well, mainly because of the divorce.

SL: Oh, uh-huh.

GH: And she was kind of—she’s—they—they didn’t necessarily approve of her.

SL: Okay.

GH: Anyway, Doris had come from Indiana to teach . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . teach high school there. [Clears throat]

SL: Okay.

GH: And we got to know each other and, of course, after . . .

[03:47:12] SL: Well, now, wait a minute. Let’s talk about that just for a second. So, you’re at this social gathering, and someone introduces you to Doris, or do you just go up to her? Was she across the room? What—how is it that . . .?

GH: She loves to tell this story.

SL: Okay, well . . .

GH: And she tells it better than I do. It was at the time of—I’ve—I’d seen her, of course, but it was—it really at the time of—of leaving at the coat check, and she says that I—I said to her, “I don’t think I’ve met *you*.” [Laughs] You know that’s what she says. “I don’t think I’ve met you,” or something like that. And, introduced myself. And, ‘course, we didn’t come there together; she had another young guy. In short order, though, I had gotten her telephone number. And—and all, [laughs] and so, that was the—the way we met. And, I was telling you—later—maybe the first or second date—you know how you start doing the girls.



You ask her, “When is your birthday?” And that’s what I did where she was concerned. I said, “When is your birthday?” And she said, “August 28<sup>th</sup>.” And I said, “Oh no, I don’t believe that. I don’t believe that.”

SL: [Laughs]

GH: I figured she’d gotten a little interested in me by that time and she’d found out *my* birthday. You know? [Laughter]

SL: You’re giving yourself too much credit there. [Laughter]

GH: Well she’d like to hear you say that. [Laughter] But at any rate, I didn’t believe it. I just didn’t believe it. And—and so when we had another date, she then, of course, documented it with either a driver’s license . . .

SL: [Laughs]

GH: . . . or something. And so, later when I decided that I’d like to ask her to be my wife, I said, “You know, I’ve looked all over the world for somebody who was born on my birthday, and now I’ve found her.” [Laughs] Big deal.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So [laughs]—so she accepted it. But at any rate . . .

[03:50:00] SL: Did you do that over dinner? Where were you all when you proposed?

GH: Maybe having a milkshake. [Laughs] We both loved milkshakes . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . and I used to take her out—take her out for milkshakes. And I’m just suggesting that. I don’t think it was over dinner necessarily.

SL: You can’t remember? You can’t picture where you were?

GH: Oh. You know what? You’ve caused me doing all of this kind of thinking. It

*could* have been—we did go out to eat, now and then, and, it could have been, over a dinner. I just remember that was the kind of things I did more than anything.

SL: Mhmm. Okay. I'll let you off the hook.

GH: Okay. All right. We're still—city attorney's office.

SL: Mhmm.

[03:50:58] GH: We're active, politically as well as Young Republicans—I was president of the Young Republicans.

SL: See, I'm not even going to ask you how you got down that path. But, [laughs] go ahead.

GH: It has done well . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . from the standpoint of—of my life . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . pretty much. And we could go—even go into that. I think more African-Americans ought to be Republican.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I know it's—it's—it's not easy by any means, for many reasons.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But the whole business of politics is power.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, you don't have any real power when either party takes you for granted. Of course the political—the Republican Party now is to the point where, “Well,

we're not going to get any black folks, or few, anyway, so, why bother trying to?"

SL: Right.

GH: The Democrats, on the other hand, as you know with ninety—eighty-five to ninety percent—take that for granted. So ...

SL: Right

GH: It—it leaves us not really using—having a power base . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . politically. At any rate, I was active in the party. And, by the way, there's a picture upstairs of Rockefeller, Win Rockefeller and Doris, when he came to do our Young Republicans Lincoln Day Dinner in Kansas.

SL: Okay.

GH: Ed Dunaway, who was his lawyer doing his divorce—you know . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Win Rockefeller and—I can't think of her name, but anyway, Ed was able to get me—get that for me. At any rate, I got elected to the state senate as a Republican from a Democrat stronghold, because the Democrats would not support my law partner. Got that?

SL: Yeah.

[03:53:23] GH: There was another guy, a white fellow, who had been in the senate for a good long time who had pretty much announced that he was not going to run again, but they came back and got him. It incensed enough of the black Democrats and the white Republicans who didn't think they were going to get [laughs] anybody anyway, but they'd accept me [laughs].

SL: Right.

GH: Which really made a great kind of thing from Wyandotte County, predominantly Democrat, on the—on the senate floor, forty senators, twenty-seven Republicans thirteen Democrats. I'm one of the twenty-seven Republicans. Coming from Kansas City—been in the senate—been in the city attorney's office for ten years, *knew* what the city needed.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And able to do a lot of things . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. So, Kansas City was, really a good place from the standpoint of my being able to do some things for myself, for my wife and family as it came forth. I ran for Congress. Ran for Congress in [19]66. Didn't lose my seat—the senate terms are four years. But, at least I ran, and it gave you further expansion for various other kinds of things that happened.

[03:55:02] SL: Where is *Brown*—the *Brown* [*v. Board of Education*] case in all of this?

GH: Okay.

[Tape Change]

GH: *Brown*. I was very pleased to at least be a part of the—the *Brown* case. Our firm was the largest—actually the largest black firm on the Kansas scene at that time, and—and we, of course, had knowledge of what was going on, not only from the—the legal standpoint, but from the standpoint of the individuals themselves. One of my partners' father-in-law was the president of the NAACP in Topeka

[Kansas].

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Burnett—Mr. Burnett. And—and—and it directly involved his son-in-law and the rest—rest of us in working on the case and the individuals—some of the individuals. Our firm with the—the Scott Firm, which were maybe one—two or three lawyers in Topeka, pretty much were the ones who did—well, a lot of the work. Please be assured we're not trying to say that we did—did all of it, but I was really pleased to be a part of it. And—and, they did use me quite a lot in the research because my having just recently come from the University of Arkansas Law School and having been *actively* a part of its *Law Review* staff, enabled me to have knowledge of how to do a lot of research that some of the other lawyers was—or did—did not really realize.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, so we did a—a lot of things—research—and—and, talking to individuals there as well as in other parts of the country. Thurgood Marshall did, of course, come out on occasions, and Robert Carter, the other . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . NAACP counsel, pretty much came to deal with us directly on the *Brown* case.

[03:57:33] SL: When you were working on that case, was there a—well, first of all, going into it, was confidence high that you all would prevail?

GH: I'd say yes. I'd say that we [coughs]—knew—well, you could say, when you *feel* that you know you're right, legally right, your confidence is such that makes you

really want to do every possible thing . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . to make things happen. And, as we've talked earlier about what was happening, not only at the university—not only in Arkansas, but in other countr—other states, pretty much southern states, one felt that not only was it past time, but the law was there, the attitude was changing, the awareness was, “Hey, look. We can't continue to do the kinds of things that we have been doing.” Prior, of course, to the *Brown* case, we had been living under *Plessy v. Ferguson*—the 1890s case in which was established the separate but equal doctrine. And—and of course, it was long since time that, we not only look at that and overturn it, and that is course—of course, is what the *Brown* case was doing.

FE: I'm going to have to check your mic. I'm sorry.

[Tape Stopped]

SL: That's okay.

FE: And we've got speed.

SL: Okay. So where were we? What was—it was past due.

[03:59:28] GH: Yes. The *Plessy/Ferguson* case—all kinds of things, were, as we know, involved to the extent of still having that separate but equal, all being separate, nothing equal, in any capacity. We'd been living through the years with separate education, separate housing, separate—all kinds of public accommodations—separate church facilities, separate restaurants—all—everything, you know, certainly transportation. And, it was long since time that we, as a nation, look at this situation, and, as I say, from the standpoint of the—the lawyers, in

particular, sociologists, psychiatrists in—particularly in the black community—  
and not only ourselves, there were *some* whites . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . who were very interested in—in helping bring about a change for blacks,  
which *also affected* whites as well. Let's face it. You don't step on a person too  
long, but—but have—have yourself problemed as well.

[04:01:01] SL: You bet. You know, we've been talking [about] your experiences  
from childhood until you got to the University of Arkansas and this—living under  
this 1890 law . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . that it, in your growing up, it was just the way it was. It was—you expected  
it. You dealt with it . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . like it was. And, and so, now, there's a—there's a change in attitude  
happening.

GH: Yes.

SL: And it's happening across the country. Is it—is it happening in the northern  
states, as well? Or does that come along later that—the outrage?

GH: It—it's happening across the country in various—various areas. Let's face it.  
Even when we were talking in terms of talking—when we were living in—in the  
South . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . there were problems in the North. My wife, for instance, talks about her

having gone to school with whites from the standpoint of the kindergarten years up. She never went to segregated schools. But there were other forms of segregation, and I'd—I say that to her and to others who were in the northern areas. Other real forms, some of them really very subtle, but—but even more *vicious* sometimes . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . than the white/black . . . drinking fountains. Somebody in the North would walk up, “Hello, Mr. Haley”—walk up to me—but you knew or felt that he was, he or she was ready to stab you in the back—economics, otherwise, you understand?

SL: Yes.

[04:03:04] GH: Let me back up again. Kansas City. After my wife and I were married, she was teaching, I'm practicing law. And, was I in the senate or about to get in the senate? And, we had a fairly good bank account because we were trying to—you know, considering a young couple . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and that capacity. And we were about—we were trying to buy our first house. Well, the house we were looking at was in a—a predominantly *white* area of town. And we were on the teacher's credit union through her, and, the—when—when our application came before the credit union, they turned it down. Well, there was absolutely no reason for them to turn it down, but the fact that it was in an area where there were no blacks at all. Now, the difference, I don't care—subtle—or course this was not that subtle. But, the interest rate on the teacher's



credit union was two percent, okay. We had to finally get credit at the bank, which was a black bank, six-and-a-half percent, you see. That is the kind of thing that happens . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . not only where we were concerned, but it's happened in so many other areas where blacks have sought credit or other kinds of things that—that've happened, you see. And it—it definitely has affected the kind of economic—bases where whites have continued. Right now you still have that in—certain areas, where blacks still pay more for—in interest, on a car loan or mortgages, and this kind of thing. Those are the . . . if you want to say *subtleties*, but they're very [chuckles] pointed . . .

SL: Yeah, you bet.

GH: . . . to the extent of—of, racial discriminations, you see. But, in spite of all of these things, there is a different kind of—of let's say *awareness*. First you have to *really* be aware. I'm not suggesting that a lot of people, a lot of whites are aware of this kind of thing . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you see. Enough of them are that, they still, in many instances, consider themselves superior, as over against blacks. Now, when you come to, how you feel—blacks feel about them—how I feel about *me* or my family, I—I certainly have not felt inferior. I'm not inferior, by any means. I *really* feel sorry—I mean this seriously because of my religious feeling . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . I feel sorry for a white person who thinks he or she is superior because his skin is light. You understand?

SL: Yes, sir.

[04:06:58] GH: Again, I deal with a Bible quote: “If a man say he love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For how can he love God, whom he hath not seen and hateth his brother, whom he hath seen?” The fatherhood of God presupposes that men and women, black/white, whatever, are brothers and sisters, and—and I feel comfortable enough, certainly, in the relationship that I have *with* God that He did not make me inferior. So, this is the kind of thing that I—that I see and—and feel very strongly. And . . . we get to this—the whole business of the—the race issue, and it’s—it’s certainly still with us, but, I feel that it is the responsibility of all of us to do the very best we can to make our lives and others’ better. Another little poem I’ve used a lot of times in speeches that I’ve made, about what *I* can do to make things better: “I’m only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.” If—it’s a very profound, simple little poem, but think about that.

SL: You bet.

GH: If all of us, wherever we are—black, white, whatnot, actually used that, and became that—that as a part of our living philosophy, it would make things so much better, for *all* of us.

SL: Lots of problems would go away.

GH: Oh, yes, yes. Now, please believe me. I know it’s—it’s not simple by any means.

And, you know what? And you do—you caused me to do a lot of thinking about my closeness with The Old Man Upstairs . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . how I have stayed with Him and He has stayed with me. We get back to my mama, you know, I mean even after—but she's been there, and we—so many good things—I've—I've had a lot of problems, please believe me. I'm not trying to say that there haven't been some—some other sadness—sadnesses because of that. When the old man passed, it was not nearly as sad because he had lived—Dad lived until he was eighty-seven, you see. And, just—just things though that have happened in your life. When I came back after my ambassadorship, I went to Kansas. We still had—my son and family live in Kansas City . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . so we're there back and forth a lot. And, I went up to the—the courthouse, as I sometimes do, and there was a guy up there—lawyer. He and I had been young lawyers together, struggling for whatever cases we could get and all of that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . young white lawyer. And, here I'm back from all of these kinds of things: been around the world just—just been here from my ambassadorship, you know . . .

SL: Mhmm.

[04:11:30] GH: . . . and when I was just coming to practice, the—the black lawyers couldn't belong to the Wyandotte County Bar Association. It was a private association. And there was a vote on our coming in. Well, this was one of the la—

[lawyers who voted (IA)]—no, they decided they didn't want us in there. And this one was one—I—who was *adamant* about not having any black lawyers come into the association, you understand. And, we even tried cases [on opposite sides (IA)] and all that together and—so I—we've kind of followed each other. Well, here I am, many years later, as I said, having done as much as I have, represented myself in private capacities, or the government in—all over—South America, Bahrain, the Persian Gulf, Europe, Asia, Japan, [Australia, China (IA)]—all of those places.

SL: Service to all the presidents.

[04:12:32] GH: Yeah. Exactly. You understand. And, now, I come back—just looking around—and I see this guy sitting up there. And he recognizes me and I recognize him. And he said, “Oh,”—and he kind of almost said it rather snidely, he said, “I see you, *Ambassador*, you're back home” and so and so and so and so. And, so then he said, “And here I am, still sitting around here looking at these probate cases and divorce cases.” I said, “But all is well,” you know—but something like that. But what I am saying to me, and to—here's a guy, who forty or—I don't know how many years ago—had the nerve, the audacity, to say, “No. I don't want him and his kind into . . .”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: “. . . a bar association.”

SL: A local bar association.

GH: A local bar association.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: What a big deal—then and now. But I’m saying, when I say, I look to the Lord, I say, “Well thank you, Lord.” You understand? It’s—there was a *personal* thing, but they, of course, are involved due to the extent of . . . thinking—well, God makes things happen. And He *does*.

SL: I think—what a horrible loss they had by not having you in. I think . . .

GH: Thank you. [Laughs]

SL: I think, you know, and, really, maybe, what good fortune it was for you not to be with those guys.

GH: Yeah.

SL: If there was that kind of stuff that was making them act that way, you know?

GH: Mhmm.

SL: It could’ve—you could have gotten mired down and . . .

GH: Well that’s true.

SL: . . . and—and, you know—although I think your faith would have kept you from that. I . . .

GH: Yeah.

SL: I’m just saying that sometimes—you know, people say, “God works in mysterious ways.”

GH: Mhmm.

SL: But, maybe in this case.

GH: Maybe. I was—I was just citing that as an example.

SL: Mhmm.

[04:14:59] GH: But you see, again, let’s look at the University of Arkansas. I feel the

university certainly was much stronger, by whatever the . . . whatever had to come forth because the blacks were there . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . to strengthen ourselves *and* the people who didn't—the whites—who had not seen us before, if you please. There was—there was strength there in their coming to know us and our coming to know them. I got to the place where I was in position to defend some of them by virtue—virtue of—part of the thing that we were talking—that I was talking too—about where the young son of a plantation owner had not seen anything with sharecroppers. You understand? I—I—I—I can understand that.

SL: You bet.

[04:16:06] GH: Yeah. Oh! V—very briefly now, I'm going to go through a lot of things. My . . . going to the state senate . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . back in Kansas . . .

SL: Yeah.

GH: . . . running for Congress.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And, again, as I say, we were really active in a lot of things, myself and my wife, active in—in many things in the community scene. We were kind of, at least in the black community, part of the top . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . areas. Then, in [19]69, Nixon appointed me [Chief Counsel of Urban Mass

Transportation in the Department of Transportation (IA)] Chairman of the Postal Rate—I'm sorry—appointed me . . .

SL: Postal

GH: . . . assistant—mmm, I guess I am getting tired—at UMTA—general counsel—chief counsel for UMTA—Urban Mass Transportation Administration

SL: Okay.

GH: Okay. Actually, John Volpe then was—was Secretary [of Transportation]—who had been governor of Massachusetts . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . okay? And, then during that time, the—the Secretary wanted things to happen. He had some of us going to various places around the world. I went to Africa during that time I—did lectures in Senegal, the Gambia, Nigeria, Liberia, Ivory Coast and Ghana—all six of those countries. My wife went with me. [04:17:45] Shortly thereafter, I went to USIA, first as—as an—an assistant administrator for equal opportunity and then general counsel and congressional liaison. This, of course, is a time when I did more traveling all over everywhere . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . representing the—the agency, which incidentally, is one of—one of the finest agencies I think that the U.S. had.

SL: United States Information Agency.

[04:18:17] GH: USIA. Unfortunately, we have done away with it. It's now gone into the State Department, which has pretty much abolished it . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . you understand? That's—that's most unfortunate for our country, and I've said this on occasion. I'm not talking Republican, Democrat, or whatnot; I'm talking about for the good of the country, now.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Because of what it—it *was* doing and needs to continue doing for this country. Again, it's a part of communication. Communication is so important, not only between us within this country, but how we communicate with the world, you understand. Okay. After USIA, *Roots* was on its beginning, and Alex wanted me to come out of—out of government then, which I did. I didn't work too much with—with him as such, but I came out and worked with a firm—a Philadelphia/Washington firm. I showed you a picture of some of . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: —well, the senator up there, Hugh Scott. We had a Washington [DC] office, and he was the—the senior partner. I was a partner in that firm . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel. Stayed there for six years, then I opened my own firm in [19]81. I was telling you about Joe—well, I don't know whether I never called his name, Joe Blundon, but the Harvard guy?

SL: Yeah.

GH: I brought him . . .

SL: Brought him in.

GH: . . . out of there . . .

SL: Mhmm.



GH: . . . to—to my—my firm. It was small. We did international law and other kinds of things then. And then, in—well during the time, I was doing other kinds of things. Prin—the—the major thing that I did was the UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] delegation. I handled quite a lot of that, and other kinds of things, from the outside in various administrations. And, of course, ran for the [U.S.] Senate in [19]86 . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . here in Maryland.

SL: Mhmm.

[04:20:28] GH: And then [President George H.W.] Bush Senior—I call him Bush Senior—appointed me Chairman of the Postal Rate Commission, in—in 1990 and I was there when [President Bill] Clinton—when parties changed. Clinton re-appointment me to the commission—not as chairman, but to the commission and—and then I stayed there until he appointed me chairman—appointed me ambassador to The Gambia in 1998.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: So, I was there, I moved from one thing to the other. I was there from 1998 to 2001 as the ambassador to—to The Gambia. All kinds of different experiences, but, as you know, the business of my going there was very emotional, among other things.

SL: Sure it was.

[04:21:30] GH: Seven generations ago, Kunta Kinte had come here, and now we're sending back his great-great-great-great-great grandson as the ambassador to

the—from the United States to The Gambia.

SL: That's poetry.

GH: Mhmm. Yeah.

SL: It is.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Living poetry.

GH: Yeah.

[04:21:35] SL: Well, through all of this I have—I've thought about six or seven different things to ask you about. Now, I don't want to just . . . have you talking till you could drop . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . but [laughs]—it's important that we got all of that stuff in and—and, you know, it could be—I can't imagine that you and I aren't going to cross paths again.

GH: Hmm, I can't either.

SL: Well, I'm thinking that . . .

GH: [Laughs]

SL: . . . first of all, I know there's going to be stuff that I didn't ask about.

GH: [Laughs]

SL: And second, there's going to be things that you thought about that you wished you had said.

GH: Yes.

SL: So I don't know when that path—when those paths will cross, but I—I can't be-

lieve that it won't happen.

GH: Okay.

SL: But, while I'm here . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . is there anything that—I hate to just leave Alex totally not mentioned but just in passing.

GH: Okay.

[04:22:51] SL: There's no question that his works—both the *Malcolm X* work and—  
and *Roots* . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . had an impact . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . on this whole country . . .

GH: Right.

SL: . . . I think. I believe.

GH: No, it's—you're quite right.

SL: Isn't it some kind of—it—it just seems to be so miraculous that he could spend twenty years doing something else besides writing and then he comes out with this brilliant stuff.

GH: Okay. All right. Well, Alex didn't just twenty years [and] not write.

SL: Okay. Well, of course, it's like any other craft.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: You spend a lifetime doing it; you just get recognized overnight.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: That sort of thing.

GH: Mhmm. He did a—a lot of other things.

SL: Okay.

GH: None of them, of course, with the impact of either one of those books.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: As a matter of fact, there were those of us in the family who were saying, “Okay, Alex, it’s time for you to get you a job!” [Laughter] You know?

SL: Yeah.

[04:24:07] GH: But he was *obsessed* with his writing.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and, we were supportive. He’d—he’d do articles for some magazines. The *Reader’s Digest*, he loved because they were the ones that gave him much support and a little money now and then.

SL: Yeah, mhmm.

GH: But, I don’t—I don’t know what else to say, other than the fact that we were supportive of Alex and . . . and . . . I guess, surely it’s not a matter of taking from him, by any means, ‘cause I was big brother—he was my big brother. We loved him to death and I was always on his case. I’d, some of the time, lend him money, you know . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and fuss at him for not having money. He had his own family and all. But, when we talk about the relationship, again. Oh! The Old Man Upstairs, we say,

each of us has our own abilities and responsibilities, and—and The Old Man Upstairs makes us as we are. And what we do—what you do—you know. He’s done this to us—maybe we want to do something differently. And—and we’re able to, maybe. I thought about this because a similar question was asked me about Alex at—at one of the—I was talking to a young group . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . group at church, and they were saying, “Oh, when you all were growing up, was Alex always this? Did he, did he do—did he go out and play?” [Laughter] You know? And did he do this and that? As—as if he had always written *Roots* if . . .

SL: Right.

GH: . . . you know what I mean.

SL: Right.

[04:26:24] GH: So what I—I answered this question, then better than perhaps I will do now, I said to this young group—I said, “Alex was big brother—was my big—when we were growing up, he was big brother.” I said, “How many of you know Martin Luther King?” And, of course, all the hands went up again. I said, “Well, I happened”—of course, from the standpoint that Alex’s being my big brother—but I happened to be in college with Martin Luther King, so I knew him as a—as a fellow student, who did very well, I’d say he wasn’t the most—wasn’t the best student and all, but he was a student. And pretty much I ended what I was saying there to tell this group, as I do all other people, “Alex was Brother. We loved each other, and, of course, we were proud of *Roots* and the *Malcolm X* book.”

And I get back to Dad—his “three fine sons,” you understand? But it was just family . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . and—and, I end up, as I did with this group, saying, “You know, we don’t know what God has planned for you to do.” I said, “You may be s—you maybe a president, or you may be sitting next to the president or some cabinet officer right here. So we don’t know. What is expected of everyone of us is to do the very best we can—what is expected of us.” You understand? And, that’s actually the answer I give *you* with reference to where—where Alex was. Now, I can say to you that, all of Alex’s life was not just that happy. You understand what I’m saying?

SL: Absolutely.

GH: He would come to little brother, to certain kinds of—to get certain kinds of support.

SL: It was hard for him to do that, I bet.

GH: Maybe. Maybe. But he felt that comfortable with me.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Be—as I said, he was big brother . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but the family actually pretty much de—depended on—on me, for the support. Alex would say that. He would tell people as—even after *Roots*.

SL: Mhmm.

[04:29:12] GH: Talked about Dad’s dying. Dad died, and he had been a long-term pa-

tient then, in the veterans' hospital. And, our family, Doris and our kids and I, were in Mobile, Alabama, on our way to New Orleans. And it so happened that I called—I was at USIA then—I—I called the office, and—excuse me—and—and Naomi, my secretary, was saying, “Oh, Mr. Haley! We’ve been looking all over for you!” So and so, and, of course, I hadn’t called, lately—well, two days. And I kept saying, “What is it? What’s going on?” And she would never really . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . tell me first. Finally, she told me that Dad had died. He was doing very well, we thought, when we left, you know. Dad died. She said, “And everybody knows about it—” said, “Including your brother, Alex. And they’re all here, in the Washington [DC] area, waiting to hear from you.” Now, here’s big brother, but he’s—he’s waiting to see what I’ve got to say. So I said, to Naomi—I said, “Tell them, tell them all, that we will be there as soon as we can.” And I remember, again, this experience was a summer day, and Doris and the kids were out in the park there, you know, waiting—we just had some food and all. They were crazy about their grandfather.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And so I had to come out and report that to them, and we had to turn around and—you get certain experiences about wives and what they do, or husbands and what they do, but Doris knew how upset I was and, she—she pretty much drove all night to get back from here—from there here.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And when I got here, of course, who did whatever was necessary to do? It was,

myself. And it's—it certainly—at his funeral, you know who was doing it? My brother Julius' wife died. She was killed in a taxicab. Julius just went into another world. This has been about ten years ago now. And he's never come out from under it hardly.

SL: Oh.

GH: He really hasn't. Some people . . .

SL: Sorry.

GH: . . . you know, are not able to . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . readjust, and—and where he was concerned I had to just, take over and do whatever was necessary.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Taking my own belt off, I remember that 'cause he—we couldn't find his belt. And my pants—now, they still stay up, and, so I took my belt off and, put it around him. Bought him a new shirt—all of this kinds of stuff . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . you understand. So I, again, I say, this has been my responsibility and continues to be. Of course, now I am the—now the real family patriarch, since Alex is gone.

SL: Right.

[04:32:44] GH: But, I don't know. Things have just . . . all of that because you asked me about Alex and me. But we were—I can tell you that we were very, very close. One of my prized possessions, assets, too, is letters that I have from Alex.



I have maybe as many as forty to fifty letters.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: ‘Cause he liked to write, typing and—and all that kind of stuff. And, I have some very—I’d say valuable letters . . .

SL: Sure.

GH: . . . from my brother to me . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: . . . you understand. Yeah.

SL: I hope you’re—I’m sure you’re taking good care of them . . .

FE: I’m just going to move your tie a little bit Sir.

SL: . . . and keeping them dry and cool.

GH: They’re out, I—within the last year, I got a vault.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: For years, [whispers] I’ll tell you it’s out in the—well, you can see it. [Normal voice] It’s out in the garage. And, I’ve at least gotten the letters in there.

SL: Okay.

GH: People have—they don’t really need to tell me—you can see the kinds of stuff that I have and . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . I don’t have it together at all.

SL: Yeah. Right.

GH: And I am concerned

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . because—what you said before, about—what’s his name? Will, the guy who died?

SL: Oh. Whillock.

GH: Whillock.

SL: Carl Whillock.

GH: Carl . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Whillock. I don’t know. I expect to be here another twenty years, and hopefully the mind will be all right.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But—but I would like, at this point in my life, to get some of these things . . .

SL: Organized.

GH: . . . better organized . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . than they are.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Because I do, I recognize now that I have a lot of—of *history*.

SL: You do.

GH: Mhmm. Mhmm.

SL: Maybe you should, you know—of course, people donate their papers and their stuff to libraries.

GH: Yes, I understand.

SL: Where they, you know, take care of them.

GH: Yes.

SL: And—and catalog them and organize them, and . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . you might consider doing that.

GH: Yes.

SL: You know, David donated his papers to the university in Fayetteville.

GH: Mhmm, mhmm.

SL: I don't know how you—how appropriate that would be with your life. You might be more prone to do it to More—Morehouse.

GH: Morehouse.

SL: Yeah, but still, you might consider that because they . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . I'm sure; any library in the country would love to have your papers and work. I—I can't imagine anyone not wanting them.

GH: Oh, my. Well.

SL: Well, I mean, you might—maybe when you come to Fayetteville you might ask about that. I—I don't know . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . what the particulars are, but I do know that folks donating their papers is common . . .

GH: Yes.

SL: . . . and there are mechanisms in place to get them organized and get them taken care of . . .

GH: Mhmm.

SL: . . . and make them accessible.

GH: Mhmm.

SL: So . . .

GH: Yeah. Yeah. I . . .

SL: It could be—it could be that this is too big of a task for one . . .

GH: Yeah.

SL: . . . for you to take on.

[04:36:15] GH: Okay. And it—it—it—it could be. It really could be because, I do, I've got things—I've at least now gotten to the place where I almost, throw out almost nothing, you understand?

SL: Yes. Yes.

GH: [Laughs] But—but I do—I do have all kinds of things that have—that I've been, a part of, and, *most* of which I'm proud of, not all. Even my dear wife [laughs] said to me not too long ago, she said, "You know—" she said, "You've been involved in a lot of things."

SL: A lot of stuff.

GH: And then, of course, I said, "Not me." I said, "*We* have been involved in a lot of things." And she has done—she's—she's . . . gets upset with things from time to time, but, as I say, after having lived for fifty-one years, you know, I—that's a blessing, too.

SL: You bet.

[04:37:22] GH: To be able to—to be that—and she's—she involves herself. The—

the—the last real experience, my—our going to The Gambia. I was real concerned about taking my wife to The Gambia. Not that we hadn't been to Africa before . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . but now to *live* there, you understand.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: There's a difference in visiting than—than living.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: And—and when we got over there, my business as ambassador, of course, was keeping me busy, but she got busy working with the schools. And she got a sh—a contest together that created a lot of *good* in the country—a contest of—of high school students from tenth through the twelfth grades doing prose and poetry, you know, see—and from a—of course, the country's not that large, but every high school in the country was involved in it. And, it turned out so well, that—but she had this—two or three offers, you know, local offers, making speeches and the contestants and—those who—reading the materials and all. And, I had got, of course, the television shows and . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . all kinds of things going to the extent that it's an annual function. An annual—well a function, I guess, you could say.

SL: Program.

GH: Program.

SL: It's a program.

GH: Exactly.

SL: She's left her mark.

GH: And—and, the secretary of education, who, incidentally, has her master's from Vanderbilt . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . was so thrilled with it, that, as you say, it's a—now it's an annual program. She did that. She worked with other kinds of things there, and—and enjoyed The Gambia.

[04:39:44] SL: So not only were you—your concerns probably not necessary, but she got over there and thrived.

GH: Oh, oh, exactly.

SL: Yeah.

GH: She did.

SL: Yeah.

GH: And we may be going back this year.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I hope so.

SL: Well, that only depends, if we ever finish the interview. [Laughter]

GH: Oh! Okay. All right.

SL: But you are thinking about going back.

GH: Yeah. Just for a little while. We're actually—I'm considering building a house in The Gambia . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. My son wants me to do that—David.

SL: Yes. Well, it would be a nice place to go visit . . .

GH: Yeah.

SL: . . . and hang out for months at a time, later.

GH: And, actually—I was telling you about my—my hands and all that.

SL: Yes, arthritis.

GH: I don't think that I'd have that problem, to be frank with you, if I were there.

SL: And why is that?

GH: Well, the weather is different.

SL: Is it drier? No, it's wetter, isn't it?

GH: It's . . . it's milder, for the most part.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: I'm not sure. We were talking, Doris and I were saying, that we were there over three years and hardly had a stomachache.

SL: So, weather changes are not as extreme.

GH: Right.

SL: So it probably doesn't cause the . . .

GH: That's right. That's right. Because I see it, and, of course, some of the doctors here . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . say that. Some days my hands and my feet are really, really very difficult for my stand—the standpoint of my being able to move them.

SL: Uh-huh.

GH: And, as I said, I want to think in terms of—of seeing what would happen if I were there pretty much in the winter. It's like people going to Florida.

SL: You go south when it's cold.

GH: Yes, exactly.

SL: North when it's hot.

GH: Mhmm.

[04:41:57] SL: Okay. I've got two more questions.

GH: Okay.

SL: And then we'll try and . . .

GH: Then I'll shut up.

SL: . . . and I will say—I will say that I always end a session with opening it up to whatever you want to say. So you can be thinking about that, but the two questions I . . .

GH: I've said too much! [Laughs]

SL: . . . the two questions are: we haven't really talked a whole lot about your relationship with Martin Luther King, and if your all's paths continued to cross after Morehouse. And, so, we can—do you want to—what's the story there?

GH: Okay. Well, the truth is, certainly our paths *did* continue to cross.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: You have certain pictures, the ones that you saw of myself, Martin Luther King, and the white gentleman there is Kenneth Boyer, who was president of the—I'm—I mean—chairman of—of political science at K [Kansas] State.

SL: Okay.



GH: And, Martin Luther King had been there to make a speech. I'm in the state senate at that time, so, of course, I went out to Manhattan, which is where K State is.

And we flew—we flew from Kansas City, out of there and back to Kansas City.

[04:43:25] SL: And this was one of his last—one of the last speeches . . .

GH: Exactly.

SL: . . . before he was assassinated?

GH: This was maybe about three months or so . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . before he was assassinated. So we talked, just family discussions about *our* families. At that time, our children were still younger.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: David, my son David, and his [Martin Luther King's] two [sons] had not been to Morehouse at that time. So, you know, we'd talk about them and other people that we knew.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I've pretty much told you about how the relationship was when we were both in school.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: His involvement, certainly on campus and off campus, our involvement church-wise and otherwise, church picnics together . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . the choir singing, and back and forth—this kind of thing. This was before Coretta [Scott King, Martin Luther King's wife].

SL: Right.

GH: Okay. And, Martin Luther King, at least one other time, prior to *this* trip to Kansas City, when we had him out with that group of guys—all of the other group that I had—a picture of him.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: I think you've got a picture of him and me . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . with a group of African-Americans, from the standpoint of business and other kinds of activities.

SL: Right.

GH: But that's pretty much the relationship that . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . that we had. I did not, really did not go on any of the marches.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: When he was involved with them, even [ ] when he did the *I Have a Dream* march. Incidentally, we did talk a little bit about that. And I—I tell you why even on this—the—when he was there in his last trip—last time I saw him.

SL: Mhmm.

GH: Because of what I had said earlier about Benjamin Elijah Mays, the president [of Morehouse] . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . Benny Mays impressed whatever Morehouse man there was. And we say, and I was telling him, *I Have a Dream* speech actually comes from what Benny Mays

was telling us. And he [Martin Luther King] was agreeing with it.

SL: Yeah.

GH: You understand. Because that's what Benny Mays did [laughs] . . .

SL: Well, yeah.

GH: . . . to all of us.

SL: He preached that.

GH: Oh, oh, yes. "I have a dream."

SL: Yeah.

[04:46:24] GH: And, of course, the last involvement, of course was at his funeral. I went to the funeral like all—as many Morehouse men as possible went to his funeral.

SL: Yeah, mmmm.

GH: And, Benjamin Mays did the eulogy at his funeral, and—and all of us will remember Benjamin Mays, who was a great orator, as well. He'd say, "One of my sons is gone. One of my favorite sons is gone. Here a son is gone," he says, "and *dead* at thirty-nine." You know?

SL: Mmmm.

GH: And how old he was. He says he's still here, "Why couldn't it be me, not him?" And the way he was doing his speech, at least all the other Morehouse men and others, we were just kind of in tears.

SL: Well, of course.

GH: Yeah. But, that's pretty much Martin Luther. And, of course, after his death, we have maintained a relationship with Coretta.

SL: Uh-huh.

[04:47:46] GH: I see her—the last time I saw her—it’s been a long time. No, no, that’s—that’s not true. But we had really long conversations on the way back from Zimbabwe, when we had gone over for the Leon Sullivan [anti-Apartheid activist], let’s say, conference that’s been had from time to time. You’ve probably heard of Sullivan in South Africa when they had those—I can’t think of it right now but.

SL: I have heard that.

GH: Yeah.

SL: Okay.

GH: But, anyway, conferences still exist with Leon Sullivan’s . . .

SL: Okay.

GH: . . . name being done, and we had, among other—Rodney, I think, was also on that, on that thing, as well as [former mayor of New York City] David Dinkins.

SL: Is that right?

GH: We saw various people up there. Okay. Next?

[04:48:41] SL: Okay. Now wait a minute. So—but you had a great conversation with Coretta?

GH: Well, family-wise.

SL: Yeah. Mhmm.

GH: And all of that. And . . . you know—and handle this carefully. I’m not sure—I—I’m—I—but it’s true. Coretta and I were discussing just—just broad things, and she said to me, “You know,” she says, “I’m really, really very jealous of you.”

And, I said, “Coretta, what are you talking about?” You know. “What are you talking about?” And all. She says, “Well, I—I saw the picture of your grandchildren.” And she said, “I don’t have any grandchildren.”

SL: Mmm.

GH: And that was—I said, “Oh”—well as soon as she said that, I moved my conversation as I much—as I said, to other things. I said, “Oh, you’ve got time, time.” I said, “Your boys are there.”

SL: Right.

GH: And all of that, you understand—“and your girls.”

SL: Mhmm.

GH: But, it made me think then and now, how we take so much for granted. Here I am now, blessed with seven grandchildren. She’s gone on—Martin and Coretta—with no grandchildren. And not even one of her four children even married.

SL: Hmm.

[04:50:32] GH: You see. As I said, we just kind of take things for granted. I don’t know why you keep my mama on my mind so much, but here I lost my mother at six. And—and how many people, who’re friends and relatives and whatnot, have their mothers and have had them for all these years? But we take it for granted.

SL: Yes. We do.

GH: That’s what I was thinking about . . .

SL: Mhmm.

GH: . . . where she [Coretta] was concerned. As—since she brought it up. And we—we never really think too much about certain kinds of things that are, let’s say,

sorrowful matters for some people that don't affect us.

[04:51:26] SL: Well, if you had some advice, to give the University of Arkansas, if you—if you . . . if you could determine what a university was going to do next, or how it fits into this world, what—what would you have to say to the University of Arkansas?

GH: My goodness. I would say to . . . to have—have all of its—its faculty, certainly, and students use their great abilities to make the university and the communities in which they live better for the benefit of themselves and—and the entire nation and the world. I know that sounds broad, but this is the way I feel about it—to use your abilities to the greatest extent possible. As I said, we use—use what is it we said? “I can. What I can do, let's do.”

SL: Okay.

GH: [Laughs]

[End of Interview]

[Transcribed by Rebecca Willhite]

[Edited by Joy Endicott]

[(IA) = Interviewee's Addition for clarification]