

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center  
for  
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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**Arkansas Memories Project**

Hank Haines  
Interviewed by Scott Lunsford,  
January 9, 2009  
Fayetteville, Arkansas

## Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center website at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

## Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
  - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing;
  - annotations for clarification and identification; and
  - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

### **Citation Information**

See the Citation Guide at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu/about.php>.

**Scott Lunsford interviewed Hank Haines on January 8, 2009, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Hank, the first thing we have to do—we have to take care of some business.

Hank Haines: Sure.

SL: First of all, we have to say that—uh—I'm Scott Lunsford, and you are Hank Haines. Um—we are at the Flippo residence in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Today's date is January 8, 2009. And—um—Hank, I have to ask you it's—if it's okay that we're—at the University of Arkansas—the—uh—Barb—David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History is recording this interview, both video and audio, and it will be archived in the Special Collections Department at Mullins Library on the Fayetteville campus.

HH: Sure. I understand.

SL: And all this okay with you?

HH: Sure.

SL: That's—that's good. Um—Hank—um—first of all, I need to ask you when and where you were born, and I need to get your full name.

HH: Okay.

SL: And you need to spell that name for me, too.

HH: Okay. My name is Harry Albert Haines—*H-A-R-R-Y A-L-B-E-R-T  
H-A-I-N-E-S*.

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: And I was named after my father and my grandfather, whom I never met. He died—he died of diabetes.

[00:01:13] SL: Now, exactly when were you—when and where were you born?

HH: I was born in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, in 1926. Shall we go from there to the movement to Arkansas?

SL: [*Laughter*] No, let's—let's—uh—the room at the Arkansas—um—no, let's talk about—um—your—um—first of all, you never met your grandfather on your dad's side or . . .

HH: Neither grandfather.

SL: Neither grandfather.

HH: One died of tuberculosis, and one died of—uh—diabetes—both manageable diseases today.

[00:01:47] SL: Were your—both sets of grandparents from Wisconsin, as well?

HH: No, neither. Uh—Dad was born in Missouri. Uh—my great-grandfather left Virginia in 1850 because the forty-niners were going to California . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: . . . and they could travel by water to some point in western Missouri. I think it was Buchanan County. And from there they had to get off the boats and get a Conestoga wagon.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And—uh—and he was a horse breeder and horse trader, and he wanted to sell 'em horses, and—and did, as far as I know.

[00:02:28] SL: What—uh—what was your grand—great-grandfather's name? Do you know?

HH: It was Will—it was William John Haines.

SL: Okay.

HH: Uh—and I, of course, have no knowledge of him. I just happened to run across his name in a—in a book in the Murfreesboro, Tennessee, library.

SL: Wow.

HH: I just opened the book. I didn't read the book. I just opened up and thought, "Well, this is about Virginia. I'll look at this." It said John William Haines moved to Buchanan County, Missouri, in 1850.

[00:02:55] SL: So he never made it out to California.

HH: He didn't intend to.

SL: Okay.

HH: He wanted to sell those pioneers those horses.

SL: Mh-hmm. And—um—that's on your daddy's side.

HH: Daddy's side, yeah.

[00:03:08] SL: Now, what about your mom's side?

HH: My mother's mother was from Germany, and—uh—I don't know whether she was born in America or not. Possibly she was born in America. Her father worked as a coach builder. That's not very good nomenclature, but it's the best I can do. He built coaches in [*clears throat*]*—I believe in Pontiac, Michigan. I'm not sure.*

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And then they went west. See, there was free land.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And—and they went to homestead place in Nebraska. And—uh—and then she met Mr. Gallup. I don't know—that's my grandfather, but I don't know his first name, and—um—I never saw him.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And—uh—his—his—uh—family had been in America for many years, and my wife Melinda came back from Boston one time with a picture of a tablet set in a church or something, to a William Albert Gallup or something like that, given by the

colonial governor of Massachusetts because he was the first man who ran a ship from Boston down to New York and back, and this was a great thing 'cause travel by land was really arduous at that time.

[00:04:41] SL: Mh-hmm. Um—so which grandparent did you see in your lifetime?

HH: I saw the grandmothers.

SL: Your grandmothers.

HH: Both of 'em.

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: And—and saw them is—pretty well describes—describes what—I—they didn't—children at that time didn't amount to anything—children and women.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: Women amounted to more than children but children—people didn't talk to children. And—uh—my grandparents—my grandmothers—I'm sure they were great people, but they didn't talk to me.

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: And nor did I care. It didn't hurt my feelings. I didn't . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: . . . have anything to do with an old woman. They were



probably fifty or sixty years old.

SL: Were they visiting your parents, or were you visiting them?

HH: We visited them once, and my [*clears throat*] paternal grandmother visited us once, and that was about it.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Few days each time.

[00:05:42] SL: Were you old—do you—are you old—were you old enough to remember what their places were like or . . .

HH: I real—I—I—I really remember my maternal—my paternal grandmother [*clears throat*] and what her place was like. My Aunt Gertrude, my father's sister, was a beautiful woman, and she worked in a big department store in Hastings or Grand Island, Nebraska. I—I don't know which. They're—they're both towns—at the time were 15,000, maybe.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And the—the son of the owner of the store married her. He was a wealthy man. And not only that, but he sold his store and bought a house in Grand Island, I believe, and became an oil distributor. But he struck oil three times, once in Kansas and I think twice in Colorado. I—I may not have that exactly right. And so he became even wealthier. And—uh—there was nothing for my grandmother. My grandmother was widowed with four

children. My daddy was two. And—uh [*clears throat*—she took a job running a—a—what we call a boarding house, a room-and-board house.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:07:03] HH: And that was all she could do. There were—women—there was no place for women in the economy at that time. [*Clears throat*] And so Daddy left and—and his brothers left, and by the way, he didn't speak to one of his brothers for twenty years or so—uh—because he left Daddy, a teenager, to care for his mother and his sister. And—uh—of course, that was pretty brutal, I guess. And [*clears throat*] so when Gertrude, the sister, got married, Louis, the son-in-law, took his mother-in-law into the house, gave her a room, and in—in return for that, she ran the kitchen, which she had great experience in.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:07:51] HH: And—uh—she also—uh—did not try to become a member of the family as such. She didn't eat with the family, you know.

SL: Hmm.

HH: And she was very—uh—very grateful for what Louis—Uncle Louis had done to give her a home. [*Clears throat*] And—uh—I remember going into the kitchen one day—one morning. No one

else was up, and Grandmother was in there frying donuts, and oh my goodness, they smelled good. [SL laughs] And she would put them out here, and—and I would edge closer and closer to 'em. And she said, "Don't you touch one of these donuts." [SL laughs] She said, "They're for Louis." And everything was—that she did was for Louis. So that was—you know, that—that worked out well. But—but this was a two-story house, and we didn't have many two-story houses in those days, but Louis had one, you know.

[00:08:43] SL: Um—so about what year do you think that was?

How—how old were you?

HH: Nineteen thirty-three, [19]34 . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: . . . [19]35, [19]36.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: Mid-[19]30s.

SL: Um—so let's see—uh—they—by then they probably had most of the modern amenities. They had water in the house and . . .

HH: Oh, absolutely.

SL: . . . yeah, and electricity and . . .

HH: Yeah.

[00:09:07] SL: Um—uh—was there—was it a downtown house or

was it out in the country or . . .

HH: No. You know—well, it—in those days those towns hadn't grown enough to have suburbs and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: . . . and—as they—as I imagine they do now, and so it would be what we would call a midtown house.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: I think you and I would call it a midtown house.

[00:09:28] SL: Mh-hmm. Maybe a few acres with it or . . .

HH: No.

SL: No?

HH: No, no. Uh—the lot was probably a hundred and fifty feet deep and . . .

SL: Hmm.

HH: . . . eighty feet wide.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: Trees. Very nice. But I'm sure you could walk downtown.

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: You know, be a half mile perhaps.

[00:09:46] SL: Okay, so—um—do you have any idea how your parents met?

HH: I really don't. My guess would be—my mother graduated from—

I think the name of the school was Nebraska Wesleyan—with a degree in education, and I think she came to Hastings, which is not far from where she lived—uh—to teach school. And I—and—and my—my father, desperately looking for a job, found a job as circulation manager of the Hastings newspaper. They had a daily newspaper, and no one wants to be circulation manager. That's a—that's a job with guaranteed headaches.

SL: [*Laughs*] So—uh—mainly because people complained about not getting the paper or . . .

HH: Oh, and your—your carrier boys collect and don't pay off, and your carrier boys don't show up to deliver the paper, and you have to deliver it. It just goes on and on.

[00:10:50] SL: And so this is in Nebraska?

HH: Yeah.

SL: And how did they end up in Wisconsin?

HH: Well, I'm a little shady about all this, but he got a job—he eventually moved from circulation to display advertising, and [*clears throat*] in that role he—uh—talked with a salesman who would come in and sell services, press services, and—and—uh—they offered him a job. And he moved—he and Mother moved to Rockford, Illinois.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And he evidently did well. He called on newspapers—I don't know—I think he was selling feature services, advertising services. And [*clears throat*] the—uh—publisher of the Stevens Point paper—uh—he somehow endeared himself to them, and they said, "There's a job over here at a neighboring newspaper, fifteen miles up the road." And he became advertising manager up there, which I imagine was a pretty good jump up for him. And then they, in return, decided that they would start a chain of newspapers and—uh—uh—wanted him to come along as a publisher. And—uh—they had several newspapers under consideration. Uh—Blytheville, Arkansas, because of its price. It just—you know, it was very cheap. It shoulda been cheap.

SL: Yeah.

[00:12:23] HH: And so he—uh—he came to Blytheville, and in meantime, when they went back to the bank to get refinanced or whatever they were doing, the bank said, "We can't—we can't do this," after giving their word that they would do it. And so the publishers, instead of going into the newspaper business extensively, began a bank in [*laughs*] competition to . . .

[00:12:46] SL: Now, is this happening in Rockford, or is this in Wisconsin?

HH: This was in . . .

[Audio drops out]

SL: . . . across the border.

HH: Yeah.

SL: Okay.

Trey Marley: Let's stand by for one second, Scott. I've got somethin'  
going on.

[Tape stopped]

[00:12:58] SL: So we were talking about—uh—this happening in  
Wisconsin and—um—uh—how that was just across the border  
from Rockford.

HH: I don't know—I don't know where Rockford is, really.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Is it near Chicago?

SL: Yeah, I think it is. Uh-huh.

HH: I think.

SL: Yeah, it is. Um—so the publishers—um—started their own bank.

HH: Yes, yes, and I think that succeeded. I—I don't—I don't really  
know.

[00:13:25] SL: Um—and so your father—uh—and some of the  
publishers had promised the Blytheville folks that they would—  
that their offer—they—in other words, they started the bank so  
they could honor the offer that had been given to Blytheville. Is

that the way . . .

HH: Oh, yeah, yeah, they—they had sufficient financing to do that and—but I imagine they ran a little short of financing because I've run into a letter that he wrote, that my dad wrote. I know it's Dad, but it's Mother's signature. And she owned an interest in some farmland in Nebraska, and they were talking about—the letter spoke of selling it. So I think they sold the farmland to buy stock in the newspaper, I think.

[00:14:12] SL: Now, did I get your mom and dad's names? Let—let me get that.

HH: Let's see—uh—my mother's name was Florence Marie Gallup Haines.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And Daddy's name—you got Harry Wilmer Haines. I think you got him.

SL: Mh-hmm, mh-hmm. Um—so you're a few years old, and they move to Blytheville.

HH: Yeah. I was two years old.

SL: Two years old.

HH: Yeah.

SL: Do you remember anything about hittin'—what—what do you remember your earliest memory about Blytheville is?



HH: Oh, without a doubt, my—my—my b—my best memory that lives the longest is—uh—the election of 1928. And we lived next door to a family—uh—whose name was Branson, and he was the only architect, probably, in eastern Arkansas. And—uh—he had a lot of children, maybe four. I—I—I'm not sure. And—uh—they were great. I—I—I—I would've stayed there forever, cheerfully. [Clears throat] And so my parents didn't have a radio in 1928, but the Bransons had a radio, and they sent me over—why did they—I don't understand that. But they sent me—two years old—over to the Bransons to find out who won the election. And—uh—my mother told this story endlessly. And I came back, and I said—uh—"Hoover was elected—eneckted," I think I said, "and Smiff got beat." And they—because they made me repeat this. The Bransons made me—"You got it? You got it? You"—"Yeah, okay, I got it." And that's my—uh—I guess that's my oldest memory.

[00:15:58] SL: That's—that's great. Well, so—um—give me a description of—of your house in Blytheville that you moved into.

HH: Well, we—uh—I was—I was—I thought you might ask this, so I was counting up. I lived in six different places in Blytheville—houses—including a boarding house, which I loved. It was—can you imagine sitting around a table with all these people, you

know. I was about five years old, four years old, you know. And—and including—they—many of 'em were pretty women, you know, teachers in the public schools. And—and one of 'em was the chief of police. And guess what? He wore a big pistol on his hip, you know. And I got to sit next to him. [*SL laughs*] You know, [*cell phone interferes with audio*] only guy in town who got to eat lunch with the chief of police.

SL: Well, so—um—this . . .

KK: Hold on. Somebody's cell phone . . .

[Tape stopped]

[00:16:49] SL: So—um—let's talk about the—the gathering around the—the boarding house and . . .

HH: Oh, I loved that. Uh—uh—uh—I was treated like an adult even though I was about four years old, and—uh—I got to sit next to the chief of police. And he had a big pistol that he always wore on his hip, and—uh—his name was Ed Rice, and he would say, "Do you want some rice?" And I said, "No, sir, I don't eat rice." And he'd—wham! [*SL laughs*] A big spoonful of rice. He said, "You've got to eat rice." I said, "Yes, sir." [*SL laughs*] Whatever he said. It was great. It was just great. We did—we lived there all too briefly, maybe a year, and then we moved into a little duplex with one bedroom.

[00:17:30] SL: So why do you think that y'all moved so many times? I mean, was it just that the newspaper income was so marginal all the time or . . .

HH: Well, certainly, newspaper income was marginal. We didn't [*clears throat*]*—it seems to me we didn't—we neither improved nor degraded our living circumstances with each move.*

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: Uh—you know, the—the difference between—we lived in an apartment—uh—on Walnut Street, and we moved one block to an apartment on Main Street. And both of them had one bedroom, a very tiny kitchen, and a bath that you couldn't put a big dog in, and real small. Everything was small.

[00:18:17] SL: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

HH: No, no. My—my mother underwent some sort of problem in my delivery and couldn't have any more children.

SL: Uh-huh. Um—and did your mom just mainly take care—was she a—a housewife? She . . .

HH: Yeah, she was a housewife.

SL: Uh-huh. And—uh—I would assume your father probably spent a lot of time at the paper.

HH: Oh yeah. I never saw him. It didn't make—you know, it didn't bother me.

SL: Uh-huh.

HH: You know, you think, "Yeah, you poor boy." No, no, I never saw him. He was a good guy.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: He was nice to me. He only hit me when he had to.

SL: Mh-hmm.

HH: And—uh—uh—we got along fine and were very happy. But—uh—he was gone all the time. All the time, including Saturdays, you know. He went to the office at seven o'clock. Saturdays—I think it was Saturdays—he'd go to the office. He would get an accounts receivable record of some kind, and he would start down the street. And he'd go in the jewelry store and say, "You owe ten dollars on this week's bill. Can you pay me?" You know, and he'd get the ten dollars from that guy. He'd go into the furniture store and collect twenty dollars. He'd go into—you know, [*clears throat*] the grocery stores at that time were downtown, some of 'em. They were on—they were on—uh—corners out in the residential sections. You know, my mother walked to the grocery store.

SL: So let's . . .

HH: But anyway, I was gonna tell you—what he would do with the money. He would go then straight to the bank, deposit the

money and come back and write the payroll out. See, he had to collect before he could write the payroll. It was a tough time.

[00:19:57] SL: Um—what—how big was Blytheville then? Do you . . .

[End of verbatim transcription]

HH: The—they had a census maybe in 1930. I'm not sure. And the official population was 10,098.

SL: That's a pretty good-size town.

HH: Well, I heard my father talk about it, and I think there was some chicanery going on, and for—and a lot of businessmen wanted to get those five digits, including my father, because a lot of national advertising was pegged on five-digit towns, 10,000 and up. Nothing under 10,000. So it meant a lot. It meant a lot to the paper. And you go back and look through the files of the paper, and they made it through the Depression on two things. I hate to admit this. Beer and whiskey advertising and cigarette advertising—they were big, very, very big. Very important. Very important. All yours—all your—there was no such thing as a supermarket, so they were all small stores that did no advertising, you know. The furniture store there did some advertising. A good bit. A good bit.

[00:21:09] SL: Mh-hmm. What were the streets like?

HH: Oh, they were in good shape.

SL: I mean, they were paved and . . .

HH: They were paved. Yeah, yeah.

[00:21:18] SL: And the economy I would guess was around cotton  
or . . .

HH: Yeah, I guess so. Yeah, well, it'd have to be. Yeah, it was  
cotton. Cotton. And then as time went on, Swift—they were in  
the feed business. They were in the meat business, I believe. I  
believe that you could get Swift bacon or something.

SL: Yeah, mh-hmm.

HH: Well, they put in a mill there, and they used cottonseed at first  
to extract oil, cottonseed oil, which was used—they said it was  
used in paint and used in this and that. And then they used  
soybeans. So they employed ten people, twenty people—  
somethin' like—but everything revolved around agriculture, and  
that was primarily cotton at that time.

[00:22:14] SL: So did you start school when you were five or six?

HH: Six.

SL: Six.

HH: There was no kindergarten. I started school at six, and I was  
getting all my stuff together, you know. And my mother was—  
actually, my mother was—seemed to be gettin'—I said, "Where

are you going?" And she said, "Well, I'm going to school with you. It's your first day." I said, "No." [*SL laughs*] I said, "I'm not going. If you—if you go to school, I'm not going." [*SL laughs*] And so when I got back, she said, "Well, how did things go?" I said, "Just fine." She said, "What about other boys? Did they have their mothers?" "Yeah, they had their mothers." [*SL laughs*] And said, "What did their mothers do?" I said, "Well, they'd say, 'And what is your name?' And the mother, not the boy—the mother would say, 'His name is Tommy Jones,'" [*SL laughs*] you know. "'And where do you live?'" The boy wouldn't say anything. "'Eleven nineteen Main Street,'" you know. Yeah, it was a funny time.

[00:23:01] SL: Well, how big was the school? Was there just one elementary school or two?

HH: No, there were three . . .

SL: Three, uh-huh.

HH: . . . not including the Negro elementary school. And in my room I suppose there was fourteen or fifteen people, so six of 'em—maybe a hundred—may—maybe a hundred students in the elementary school, grades one through six.

SL: That's great.

HH: Something like that.

[00:23:28] SL: Did you—how—were you a good student?

HH: I started—and my mother had been a elementary school teacher, and so after I was in school for six weeks or so, she said, "Come here." She said, "Here's your school book. Read something to me." I said, "I can't read." And she said, "What you mean—goin' to school, you can't—can you read that word there?" It was probably *cat*, you know. And I said, "No, I can't read any"—so she taught me to read, and after that it was pretty smooth sailing. And I was in school—one boy who's like my youngest daughter—and he asked me in first grade, you know, we were out on the playground. He said, "Let me ask you something." He said, "What are we doing here [*SL laughs*] in school? Why are we here?" I said, "Well, I'm here to read 'cause I'm gonna learn to read the Sunday comics." They—they were in full color—beautiful—Memphis paper, you know. And he looked at me. He said, "You don't know how to read?" I said, "No, that's why I came to school." He said, "I thought everybody knew how to read." I said, "No, Bobby, everybody doesn't know how to read." [*Laughter*] And my old—my youngest—I asked her after she got very—I said, "Just tell me how you learned to [*unclear word*]." She said, "No idea. I have no idea."



[00:24:49] SL: That guy sounds like he had a very inquisitive mind if he . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . was questioning why he was spending his time . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . in school.

HH: Yeah. He had a great mind. Today he wouldn't slip through the cracks, but then, Bobby did. I hate to say, but he did. And he would sit at the back of the room. All through elementary school, through high school, he'd sit at the back of the room, and here his textbook'd be open, you know. And if the teacher looked back there, he's sitting in front of an open textbook. In his lap Bobby would have a book from the library. And he probably read every book—by the time he was out of high school, he probably read every book in the library. And so his grades were normally Cs 'cause he didn't know what was going on in class and didn't care. But he read enough that he could make a C [*laughs*] and sometimes a B, you know, on the basis of just his incidental intelligence.

[00:25:54] SL: Sounds like a writer.

HH: Bobby went to the army, as we all did, and got—he got a chunk blown out of his head in the Philippines. Now, he lived. They

put a plate in, and he came back, and he figured that television was going to be a big thing in America. That was a different viewpoint. Most people ignored television. He ?thought? it was gonna be a big thing. So he went down in Florida someplace to learn how to repair TV sets, and he became a TV repairman, and he became a—oh, if you had a—what'd we call 'em—a record player, he would repair that, you know. And he was very good. Very good. And he stayed in Florida for years and years, and just before I left Blytheville in [19]84, he had a little shop there. And I remember I carried my record player in to him. He fixed it up in great style. But see, nothing ever came of Bobby. And this is the kind of guy that might cure cancer, given the right . . .

SL: Right.

HH: . . . direction.

[00:27:03] SL: Right. So what was your favorite subject when you were in grade school, or did you have one?

HH: No, I didn't have one in grade school.

SL: What about teacher? Did you have a favorite teacher?

HH: Yeah, I had a number of great teachers.

SL: Okay, let's talk about 'em.

HH: And Mrs.—Miss Garlington in the fourth grade was just wonderful. She loved children, guy, and we knew it. We knew

that Miss Garlington loved us, you know. And one day I got to see up her dress because [SL laughs] she was kinda careless, you know. And gettin'—and I thought, "Boy, that looks interesting." [SL laughs] I, you know, I was ten years old. [SL laughs] And then before her I had Miss Outlaw. Mary Outlaw, I believe her name was. She was wonderful. She was a very strict disciplinarian. She taught everybody to say "Yes, sir," "No, sir," "Yes, ma'am," "No, ma'am," and to sit up straight and not talk in class. She was great. Then I had a teacher who was not so great, but that was okay. And then, let's see, that was about the story. I had . . .

SL: Was there . . .

HH: . . . a couple of great teachers.

[00:28:13] SL: Did you ever suffer any corporal punishment?

HH: I had one teacher in the fifth grade who really wanted to lay some wood to me, and I made good grades in conduct all the way through school. I never was a problem, except under her. And the first day, she said, "I want all the girls to come down front 'cause I want the girls to sit on the front 'cause the girls are good students and"—and they—and she's right, you know—"and boys are no good." And she's kinda right there. And she told us we were just absolutely no good, and we'd sit back there.

And so guess what? We behaved exactly like she expected us to behave.

SL: Sure. Sure.

HH: And I had some trouble with her. And I made a U—"unsatisfactory." I made some unsatisfactory grades in conduct, which didn't please my folks a bit.

[00:29:06] SL: Did you go home for lunch?

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: You could just walk . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . down the street?

HH: Let's see, they were—the school was on about Seventh Street, and I lived on Tenth. And I lived one block over or two blocks over, so I had—you know, I had eight or nine blocks to walk. It's no big deal. Well, as a matter of fact, in first grade we only went a half a day. First grade went half a day. I guess second grade went half a day. I really don't know.

[00:29:37] SL: Was there a practice of letting school out—maybe it just didn't happen till high school—during the cotton harvest? Do you member . . .

HH: That was rural school districts. Now, rural schools—that was too bad, too. They shouldn't've done that. I don't know, but the

families out there—life was hard out there, and the families out there needed little Joe to pick cotton when the cotton got ripe. The cotton got ripe in October. It opened in October. And so they would have a school holiday that lasted sometimes thirty days. But they didn't make it up at the end, and they should've gone to July first, you know, on that basis. But they didn't let town schools out for that, so we were favored, I suppose, in that regard.

[00:30:33] SL: Was your school a substantial—like, a brick building or . . .

HH: Oh boy! It was built in [19]07. It was a brick building. And so they decided to replace it in [19]68 or somethin' like that. So they sent a bulldozer over there to bulldoze it, *[laughter]* and the school wouldn't budge. *[Laughter]* The walls wouldn't give. And they finally—I don't know what they did. They may have used dynamite or—I don't know what they did to get those walls down. They should've saved that school but . . .

[00:31:07] SL: How was recess? Did you get a recess? Did you get . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . to play outside and . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah, we got a fifteen-minute recess every morning, and

we played soccer. And the big thing in soccer was stay away from Clyde Metheny because he had nails in the end of his shoes, and he would kick you in the shins, and your shins would bleed, and it hurt like the devil. So you had to stay away from—now, I never saw anybody who was kicked in the shins by Clyde Metheny, and I never saw any nails in Clyde's shoes, but nevertheless, I believe the conventional wisdom, which was give Clyde wide berth on the soccer field.

[00:31:50] SL: You know, this is the first time I've ever heard soccer mentioned at that early . . .

HH: Well, see . . .

SL: . . . time.

HH: . . . it was something—you could throw this ball out there, and the game'd begin. You didn't need any balls and bats and bases, nothing, you know. Throw a soccer ball out there, and we kicked it up and down field. I don't think there was any way to score a goal in the soccer that we played. [*SL laughs*] The ball just moved up and down, and we ran a lot. Well, that was good.

[00:32:13] SL: Yeah, yeah. Well, let's talk a little bit about the places that you lived and the technology that you experienced. I mean, when did you—I mean, did you—every place you live have a telephone?

HH: To the best of my knowledge. Now, when we first moved in—like, when I went over to the Bransons and got results of the [19]28 election—yeah, that's when Al Smith got beat—I don't know whether we had a phone then or not. That would be maybe less than fifty-fifty, you know. Now—but it—by the time I was using the phone, we always had a phone.

[00:33:05] SL: Well, what was that like—I mean, compared to today.

HH: The phone? [*Laughs*] It was a—you picked up the phone, and the operator said—I think she—you would think she would say, "Operator." I think she said, "Central," 'cause she was the central locus of the phone system. And you said, "I want number seventeen." She said, "Just a minute." And she plugged you into number seventeen and then rang his phone. And then went to three digits, and from three digits we went to four or five, you know, and it kept going, and then we got—at one point—well, we moved into a new house, a pretty good house that my father built in [19]38, and he built it with an FHA loan, and the banker called him a Bolshevik for turning to such a Communist idea of a government loan for his house, which cut the banker out. And in that phone—in that house we had a rotary dial, which was pretty up to date.

[00:35:23] SL: Yeah. Do you remember after the Bransons, when you got a radio?

HH: No. I imagine it was some years. The Bransons—that was election [19]28. I bet we had a radio by—we had a radio probably by [19]34 because—or [19]35, because I remember that was our—that was sometimes the evening's entertainment, you know. "Jack Benny will be on in five minutes." [*Makes noise with mouth*] We got in there and pulled up our Emerson radio—I think it was Emerson. Is that right? I don't know.

SL: Hmm, could've been RCA but . . .

HH: Could've been RCA.

SL: Emerson—so . . .

HH: I don't—no. It wasn't. It had some name in it.

[00:35:09] SL: You remember Jack Benny, then.

HH: Jack Benny.

SL: See, he had Rochester.

HH: Rochester. Eddie Cantor. Who was the guy—Gracie Allen. Who was Gracie Allen's husband?

SL: Burns and Allen. George Burns.

HH: George Burns, yeah. I think George Burns was on. And they were—that was the entertainment of the day.

[00:35:36] SL: What about music?



HH: The only music I recall from my childhood was my mother singing as she did the dishes and scrubbed the floors and did whatever she did to keep the place up.

SL: Do—were they hymns or . . .

HH: No, no. She sa—I remember she sang—she would—now, her mother was German and so was Daddy's mother. They—I have two German grandmothers—and she sang—I remember her singing "Auf Wiedersehen," which wasn't—it only had the title word, I think, in German. I think the rest of it was in English. And—but I remember her singing that, and then I remember her singing some rather romantic songs, like "In the Shadows." Hmm. I don't know. That's goin' back too far for me.

[00:36:29] SL: [*SL laughs*] Well, now, that reminds me. Did any of your ancestors change their names, their German names?

HH: I think that Dad's mother changed her maiden name, or her family did, because I did some—I really [*laughs*—I don't know who has time to do genealogical work. It's endless. But I—every now and then if I run across something online, I go and take a look at it if I think—and I ran into the Stobers—*S-T-O-B-E-R-S*—in—they were in that area in Nebraska or Kansas—someplace out there. And they—and some of them changed their name to Stover—*S-T-O-V-E-R*—to be less German—just

less Germanic. The Germans weren't the most popular people in the world at that time, especially.

[00:37:21] SL: Right. So do you remember much about the Depression when you were growin' up?



HH: No, I thought everybody, you know, ate sauerkraut and, you know, I—no, you know, I—you know, a child is aware of what's happening, not what happened, because he doesn't have any history to speak of. My history was in the Depression. So, no—if my mother had known that some of the boys I played ball with were hungry—and I didn't know it—if we'd've known that, I'm sure that I'd've brought some of those boys home to eat. Now, they wouldn't've had great food. It—there was no—I can't remember meat being in our house. I know we musta had some meat sometime. Sometime we had hot dogs, but everything was fine with me, you know. I didn't know—I really didn't know that there were people out there hungry because they surely didn't make any noise about it. And my father—you know, there are two kinds—there are two types of guys who were raised poor. One of 'em who won't talk about it. You know, that was my daddy. Boy, I got no stories from him. The ones I got were really good, but practically nothing from him. And the other are the kind that won't shut up about it. They walked barefoot

through the snow every day five miles to school and back, you know. But, boy, not from him. Not from him. He had scar tissue on his shins, and I, you know, and I said, "What is—what happened to your shins?" He said, "Well, that's where I was whipped in school." He said the instructor was a man—one-room school—the instructor was a man that said he had a branch of a tree, just a small branch. It was about an inch around. And he said, "If you didn't know your lesson," he said, "he'd hit you across your shins." And he said, "He would bring blood." And so, you know, like I say, I—and now and then I'd get a story out of him, but not often.

[00:39:37] SL: Was there—when you were a child, was there anything that your mom or your dad said to you that kinda put a light in your head or really all of a sudden gave you a different outlook? Or maybe it, you know, grew you up a little bit or . . .

HH: I don't think so. My mother was a stickler for not quitting. You know, if you started the book, finish it, which I think, some degree, nonsense. If you're reading a book of fiction you don't like it, shouldn't finish—you oughta get on somethin' you do, I think. And I remember before I started out for junior high football, she said, "Well, yeah, that's okay. You can start. You can start." Some mothers wouldn't let their children play

football because you might get hurt. But she said, "I guarantee, if you start you are not gonna stop." I said, "I don't want to stop." She'd say, "Well, you don't know yet." And so I started, and no, I didn't stop. Never stopped.

[00:40:44] SL: When did you start hearing boxing on the radio?

HH: Oh, I heard it . . .

SL: Was that much later?

HH: Right from the beginning there were—there was—boxing matches were car—I heard a lot of Joe Louis's pretitle and title fights on the radio. I heard some other guy—I can't r—there was a welterweight who was popular then. I don't know. I can't name him, but yeah, I listened to boxing on the radio, as soon as I found out it was on there. My daddy came home one day when I was five years old with two pair of boxing gloves, and he would take a cushion out of the couch and get down on that—on his knees, and he wouldn't put the gloves on, he would just hold them, and he would slap me with 'em, you know. And I would punch him, you know, as hard as I could. And so that's when I started boxing. I started boxing at five. And my mother—when I was fifty—when I was forty-eight or something, forty-nine—fifty. When I was fifty, I had an amateur boxing club, and my mother said, "When did you get into such a vulgar sport?" And I



said, "You know, I never have thought about that." And then I thought—I said, "Wait, your husband [*laughs*] brought home a pair of boxing gloves when I was five years old."

[00:42:07] SL: Well, did your dad involve you at all when you were a kid . . .

HH: No.

SL: . . . with the newspaper in any way?

HH: Oh, no. No, no. When I—when I got to be, you know, twelve, thirteen, fourteen years old I started going down there. Learned the keyboard for Linotype. And—which put me in good stead for a job. Now, I talked to some guy who's a veteran of World War II, and you've got to—you've really got to take with a grain a salt those guys. And I said, "You know, I couldn't get—I couldn't stay in school with any degree of comfort on the GI Bill." I used it, of course. I took their money—fifty, sixty dollars a month for a single man. And I said, "But I needed—I wanted some more money." And I took a little from Daddy, but not much. I tried not to take much, 'specially for things like whiskey and gas to go to Richmond to date some—you know. I didn't want to use his money for that. So I got a job with Orville Campbell at Chapel Hill, and Orville ran the Colonial Publishing Company, and he printed the *Daily Tarheel* student newspaper. And I got a job

with him as a Linotype operator, and I got a dollar an hour. The minimum wage then was about thirty-five cents an hour. And I got a dollar an hour runnin' a Linotype machine for Orville Campbell. Orville Campbell was a great guy and he probably—I think he's credited with the discovery of the guy who rose to fame on the record, "What It Was, Was Football." What is it—Andy of Mayberry—the sheriff of Mayberry.

SL: Oh . . .

HH: Andy Griffin.

SL: Andy Griffin.

HH: Yeah. I think Orville discovered him, so to speak, with that record—made that record. And I worked for him. I got—boy, and a dollar an hour at that time was really great. And Orville told me—he said, "Don't tell any of these other fellows what you're getting." So I didn't. [SL *laughs*] But it was nice having that skill, you know.

[00:44:18] SL: So let—let's get back to Blytheville . . .

HH: Okay.

SL: . . . and so there was a railroad that came through.

HH: Frisco railroad. Yeah.

SL: Frisco. How much of life evolved around what happened with the railroad?

HH: Some. Some small part. For instance, our newspapers—the train from St. Louis to Memphis came through Blytheville at about three-thirty in the afternoon. Our papers, all sacked and addressed and everything, went to the train station, and they dropped off sacks of 'em at Burdette and Osceola and Wilson and those south Mississippi County towns. So the—it was important. It was important to us. Later, when the train quit running, we started running motor routes down through there.

[00:45:13] SL: What about the automobile in the early [19]30s, mid-[19]30s in Blytheville?

HH: Well, I know this, that I got—when I was—let's see, I was born in [19]26. About [19]36, when I was ten years old, I got a bicycle for Christmas. Greatest Christmas present I ever got. And I could go anywhere on that bicycle. At ten years old I used to go to Walker Park. I think it was two miles, right through the heart of town, you know. And so could any kid and—because there weren't that many cars. And our lawyer walked to work. He couldn't drive a car. Finally, he got up to be about sixty-five years old, [*SL laughs*] and his son could drive, and he said, "I've gotta learn how to drive a car." [*SL laughs*] But with the little grocery shops—not on every corner, but I would—you know, on every—in every neighborhood there was a little grocery shop.

And you didn't need a car to get to those. You do today. You know, you—we have two or three Walmarts in town where I live in Tennessee, and the closest one is about two miles. You don't want to walk there.

[00:46:31] SL: Yeah. So let me think for just a moment. There was a big—Mississippi River . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . was a—is certainly a part of that culture over there. What—what's your first—do you remember seeing the Mississippi River for the first time?

HH: No. No, because we saw it frequently. We were only seven miles from the river. And when I got to be a teenager, I used to go hunting out there. I'd get somebody, I guess my mother, to take me in the car out there and drop me off—maybe another friend—and we'd go—we'd hunt ducks and squirrels and stuff in the backwater out at the river.

SL: Rabbit?

HH: I beg your pardon?

SL: Rabbit?



[00:47:23] HH: Absolutely. Rabbits. Absolutely. And I remember one time—and this is such a misnomer, they say—but they said the river froze over. Well, it engorged. The ice engorged, and



you could walk across from the Arkansas side to the Tennessee side, and you really could do that. And I remember going out there, and there was a boat tied up out there on the ice. The captain had pulled it up on the ice on purpose. And we went out there—we got—we sent a photographer out there. He got a picture of that—appeared in *Life* magazine. He got thirty-five dollars, I heard, for it [*SL laughs*], which was a good bit of money. It was a week's salary.

SL: Yeah.

HH: And we went out there and ate lunch with 'em one day—good food because I was—I think a teenager never met bad food in my life. [*SL laughs*] And so that is a—my favorite memory of the river was the ice engorgement. And the captain of that boat out there's name was Haines, by the way.

SL: Small world.

HH: Yeah.

[00:48:39] SL: But didn't somethin'—the river had a big—in 1937 or . . .

HH: Yeah, [19]37 there was a huge flood. There was one in [19]27, just before we got there, and then there was a—there was one in [19]37. And the head of the Red Cross—the Red Cross used to have a different role. It was almost quasi-governmental at that

time. And head of it for that county was a friend of my father's, and he said, "I believe I'd get my family out of here." It wasn't—they didn't believe that Blytheville, Arkansas, would be engulfed with the water of the Mississippi. But to the west of Blytheville was a river—really, a floodway made out of a riverbed, old riverbed. And that thing was full, and that would cut off all travel to the west. And the Mississippi might cut off all travel to the south and the north and the east, of course. And he said, "I believe I'd get 'em out of here for a week or two till we see what this water's gonna do." So we went to St. Louis on a—what we called a due bill. We gave—the newspaper gave the hotel some credit, advertising credit, that they could use, and they, in return, gave us a due bill for \$200 or whatever. And we stayed there free—so we stayed there free. And we—and the—this due bill was good for meals, too, and I had steak twice a day. *[Laughter]* And I broke out, and my mother said it was 'cause I was eating steak twice a day.

SL: Well, how old were you then? Eleven, I guess.

HH: *[Nineteen]* thirty-seven—eleven, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Yeah.

[00:50:30] SL: So did Blytheville flood?

HH: No.

SL: No.

HH: No, but I remember when Dad came to get us and took us back that the water was still up. And I remember from the highway looking up and seeing ships, riverboats up there. And I thought, "Whoa!" That was at New Madrid, you know, so I would say they were really—but it didn't break. The levee didn't break. But they were really in trouble 'cause whenever the river's fifteen feet above your head, you've got a problem [*SL laughs*] aborning.

SL: No kidding. I think there's a Johnny Cash song about the . . .

HH: And risin'.

SL: Yeah, and rising.

HH: Yeah, they have those things where they can read the river level, you know, thirty-one feet and so—and rising. Yeah.

[00:51:20] SL: Right, right. So getting back to Bly—so you spent a week or two in St. Louis. You came back, and you are finishing up grade school, I guess, gettin' ready to go to high school. What was the high school . . .

HH: Junior high.

SL: Junior high.

HH: Junior high, yeah.

SL: So they had elementary, junior high, and then high school, all separate buildings. So what was junior high like? Is that where you ran into football?

[00:52:51] HH: Yeah, well, not really. The first football game I saw, I was sitting in my daddy's lap. That's how old I was. I was two, I guess. Yeah, 'cause we moved down there in the summer of [19]28, so I expect it was in the fall of [19]28, couple of months later, that we were at a football game. And I got this for sure. This stuff, whatever they were doin' out there was very important. [SL laughs] And everybody in the community who was anybody was there at the game, you know. And so it was almost being like raised in Vatican City, and you probably are gonna be a Catholic, you know. Well, I tell you, I bought the whole faith right then [SL laughs] at two years old, and I couldn't wait until I got to the seventh grade to go out and ask for a uniform, you know. And there were some real funny things that happened. I remember the first time—they had a bunch of us seventh graders on a defensive team. I guess there were some eighth graders, too. I don't know. And the first junior high team ran a play, and I was knocked down, but I was knocked down on my stomach, so I could see. And I think every member of the defensive team was flat. [Laughter] I don't

think there was a one standing. [*Laughter*] But, boy, I love football, and I still do. I . . .

[00:53:13] SL: What position did you play?

HH: I was an end because I was the biggest guy in my class in seventh grade, you know. I was—I don't know how many—how tall I was—probably around five six and a hundred and twenty pounds. I was the biggest guy in class—big twelve-year-old—you know, big twelve-year—and I remember my mother saying that the coaches would come to her from time to time and say, "How big"—'cause my mother and father were short. They said, "How big is this boy's grandparents?" And she'd say, "Well, his granddaddy was over six feet." The granddaddy on my maternal side. I don't know about the other guy. I don't guess Dad knew; he was two years old when the guy died.

SL: Yeah.

HH: So anyway, they kept me at end, and I'm glad because if I hadn't been that I'd've been a dad-gum halfback or guard, and we had halfbacks and guards running out our ears on that team. And some of 'em were really good. [*Laughter*] They didn't have that many ends. They had some tall boys that played end—some big boys that played end, but they were always hurt. 'Cause, see, we did a lot of low blocking in—in those days.

That's how I made my living was—you know, 'cause I was built low, and so I did my business low and I—a lot of that stuff I think is against the rules today.

[00:54:25] SL: So, really, the forward pass wasn't a huge deal back then.

HH: No. I was looking—you know—yeah, you know that my wife has dug up some old stuff, and I was looking at one of the old newspaper articles on it, and I think we tried ten passes and completed four in a game, you know. No, it was not a big deal. It was—a big deal was three yards off tackle. You know, that was a big deal. That's—and that's kinda how we played. And the scores were 6–0, you know, 7–6. There was a lot of scores of that nature.

[00:54:58] SL: So you didn't do both defense and offense?

HH: Oh, absolutely.

SL: Okay.

HH: Absolutely. We played football. [*SL laughs*] That included defense.

SL: Well, I was gonna say the teams couldn't have been really big.

HH: No, no, because I got to play as a twelve-year-old, as a seventh grader. I didn't play a lot. I didn't—I wasn't first string, but I got to play. I got to play, and I got to play—I played some as a

freshman in high school. I didn't really play some, but I was—I—you know, I thought, "I should've quit the junior high team and come over here because I could beat this guy out for second-team end." He wasn't very good. And it wouldn't have been much of a job [*laughs*] to beat him out.

[00:55:44] SL: Yeah. But you couldn't have done that, could you? I mean, they wouldn't have let you play up like that?

HH: Yeah, I had two teammates—let's see—yeah, just two—I had a tailback and a fullback who came over to the high school. See, some of these guys in Blytheville were eighteen years old. I guarantee you that those two boys were two years older than I was. How old was I? I was fourteen. I guarantee you they were at least sixteen, which means they would graduate when they were nineteen or twenty years old, you know. And—but I'll tell you somethin' bout Blytheville football. It—they used to go out and kinda scour the countryside and say—they'd say, "Come here. That boy over there is a big boy. Come here." He—and he'd go over there, and he'd say, "Have you ever thought about playin' football?" No, sir, I never have." He said, "Well, let me tell you something. You ever thought about going to college?" He said, "Oh, we don't have enough money to go to college." "You do if you're a good enough football player." "Really?" And

he'd bring 'em in. Now, for all the boys they brought in, probably one out of four or five would remain because football's a hard way to live, you know. And the rest of 'em'd go where they'd melt away, you know. And one or two of 'em—the—an assistant coach and a booster were out fishing one day—going to a fishing place out toward the river, and a boy got down off a tractor 'cause he'd spotted a cow that had gotten loose. And he got down off the tractor and ran across the plowed field and got the cow and did whatever he did. And the assistant coach said to the booster—said, "Did you see what I saw?" And the guy said, "Yeah." He said, "Let's go talk to that boy." So they talked to him. His name was Byron Walker, the boy was, and they brought him in and put him in as a junior in high school, and he was probably about eighteen then. And they put him in as a junior in high school. Oh, he was a good student, and he wrote a fine hand, you know. And I remember asking Miss Hardy, the high school principal, who was a good, hardworking, no-nonsense, west Tennessee unmarried woman, maiden—I said, "How do you keep order in a class where Byron Walker and guys like that are students?" He was big. He was—he weighed two hundred pounds, which at that time was big for a football player. And she said, "There's no problem with that, Haines." She said,



"Byron Walker keeps order and discipline in the classroom." [*SL laughs*] And when he graduated, there were a lot of colleges after him, especially Alabama. We had boys go to Alabama regularly—graduates. And he turned 'em down, and he went to VMI, which at that time was a Division I school, because he wanted a commission in the army and a degree in engineering, so he went to VMI.

SL: Smart choice.

HH: Yeah, made good sense. And he came out—he was a major—I think by the time the war was over, he was a major in the army 'cause this—he probably went to VMI in 1939 or [19]40.

Probably [19]40.

[00:59:05] SL: My son went to Washington and Lee, which is right next door.

HH: Yeah, I know.

TM: We need to change tapes.

SL: Change tapes? Okay.

[Tape Stopped]

[00:59:14] SL: Okay, so Hank, we were talkin' about football and we were talkin' about the recruit that—the Blytheville recruit that ended up going to VMI, and for good reasons. I'm just wondering—did you have—did you only have one—I guess you'd

have a junior high coach and a high school coach.

HH: Oh yeah, we had two or three high school coaches, and one junior high coach, I believe, was all we had. That's all I remember. The—you might be interested—the 1939 Blytheville team was extraordinary. An old player who's now dead, a friend of mine, and I started counting the number of Division I scholarship winners who were on that 1939 Blytheville team. And we couldn't count any farther than sixteen, but we're—we weren't sure we weren't missing someone, you know, 'cause this was only a couple of years ago, you know, and it'd been a long time since I—but that's an extraordinary record. I remember Orville Henry writing once—Orville Henry was the sports editor of the *Arkansas Gazette*. I remember Orville Henry writing once that—quote—"There's never been anything like that Blytheville team"—end quote. They were defeated in one of the opening games on a very clever play by Pine Bluff. They—the first—the opening play—when everybody was jacked up as high as the stars, they threw a screen pass that went for a touchdown. We—they caught all six of our guys in the backfield, and two linebackers and two backs, maybe, to block, and the guy ran for a touchdown. And that was the ball game because back then, as we spoke earlier, there was not many passes. Scores were 7-0,

7-6, and so forth. And—but anyway, that was an interesting ball club. They had at one time, although they weren't all on the depth chart because for whatever reason—Alabama had their own reason—Alabama at one time had five Blytheville boys down there. Some of 'em listed; some of 'em unlisted. I don't know why they didn't list them all, but they didn't. They didn't.

[01:01:44] SL: Was that Bear Bryant era?

HH: Oh no.

SL: Okay.



HH: My high school coach and Bear Bryant were college roommates. So Bear Bryant—he spoke at a couple of our football banquets—he was a line coach over at Vanderbilt at the time. And so they—this predated his head coaching career quite a bit.

[01:02:07] SL: Yeah. Well, that's interesting they'd always—they—Alabama had such an interest in Blytheville.

HH: Yeah. Well, we always had—during those years, from about 1934 forward until the war, we always had an Alabama coach, an Alabama graduate as coach. I remember yep—everybody was on their knees to Bear Bryant, who was another good Arkansas boy. I was a big Bear Bryant fan. And I had—I didn't tell my ex-high-school coach this, but I had some important money bet on Alabama one day, [*SL laughs*] and I was

disappointed in Coach Bryant's call of plays at a particular juncture, and I asked my high school coach—his name was Joe Dildy—I said, "Coach," I said, "why did he call that play in those circumstances?" And, like I say, the whole nation was on their knees worshiping Bear Bryant. And he said, "Well, Hank," he said, "no one ever accused Bear of being the brightest guy in the world, you know." [*Laughter*]

[01:03:19] SL: That's good. Well, did you have a favorite coach?

HH: Oh, you mean personally?

SL: Yeah.

HH: Oh yeah, Joe Dildy. Yeah. I just—I just got through reading a letter that he wrote when he—when he read—or—that I was getting married, you know. And—and it was words to live by and stuff. It was great. It was pretty good stuff, but I was—I asked his wife, Mary Ellen, one time—she said—we were—she and I were back in the kitchen alone. Joe wasn't around. He was in the front room, I suppose. And she said, "Hank, I wanna tell you that I appreciate you coming by here and visiting with Joe." And I said, "Mary Ellen, why do you think I do that?" She said, "I don't know. Why do you?" I said, "I don't know." I said, "I thought maybe you'd"—I said, "I'm gonna tell you something. Joe Dildy was hell on us on the football field. You

have no idea." She said, "Oh, yes, I do." And I thought, "How does she know?" But she acted like she really did know, and it was—it was a hard way to go, and gosh, I loved the guy. I lo—and that's strange, you know. Somebody—I was talkin' with somebody one time, and I said, "You know," I said, "they're so smart nowadays playing football. It's a whole new world out there." And I said—but I said, "When we played six-man line, two linebackers," I said, "there was a seam a mile long and half a mile wide down there when an end was wide open." And I said, "I never saw a time when they weren't." And she said, "Did"—or whoever it was I was talking to said, "Did you ever tell Coach Dildy this?" I said, "?You don't? go around talkin' like this to Coach Dildy, [*laughter*] tellin' him how to run his football team. Hell, no! No, thank you!" [*Laughter*]

[01:05:12] SL: Well, you know, the—in the armed services, they say that the drill instructor kinda ends up being a mother figure, of all things.

HH: I wouldn't be surprised. I wouldn't be surprised. I never had anybody like that in the army, but I can see where—and I have ex-students. I taught at the college level at Arkansas State and at MTSU, Middle Tennessee State University, and a few other places. And I have students even today that come around and



say, "Oh, you did so much for me." I say, "What did I ever do for you?" And the only halfway decent explanation I ever got was, "You convinced me that I could do it. You convinced me I could. And I went ahead and got a degree, and I owe you." I think, "Well, okay, if you think you owe me, that's fine. I'm glad to take the adulation, if any, but I don't think I earned it." But what we do—we attach more importance to that mentor, to that coach, to that teacher. Attach more importance to him, probably, than he deserves, and I probably did it, too.

[01:06:27] SL: Well, you know, growin' up, I guess you're lookin' for an example or you're—and you want to believe what people are . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . telling you.

HH: Yeah.

SL: And you want to have faith in that.

HH: Yeah.

[01:06:40] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about religion in Blytheville. Was—were your parents churchgoers? Did you . . .

HH: My . . .

SL: . . . have to go to Sunday school?

HH: I did. I did have to go to Sunday school and later church. My

father was almost sacrilegious. Almost. He explained one time that the going-to-church business—when they loaded up the wagon and went four or five miles, and you can imagine how long by wagon that would take. An hour or two, you know. And said they spent all day at church, all day. And they'd bring out their meal at noon and eat it and go back for hymns and prayer and so forth and get back home at night. And he said, "I've had enough of that." He said, "I'm not goin'. I'm not goin' to church anymore." Not only that, it bothered him a great deal that churches didn't approve of drinking—most of 'em. And they didn't approve card playing. Forget gambling. The cards themselves were the instruments of the devil. You would hear sermons like that from the pulpit about card playing and drinking, of course. And he liked to play cards, and he liked to drink. He wasn't a drunkard. He was kinda one of these one-highball men, where he'd pour a heck of a drink it seemed to me. It looked like a lot of whiskey to me. And he'd put ice in there and put something like ginger ale in on top of it, and he'd drink that for the next hour or so. That'd be probably about the only drink he ever had—he would have for the day, but he liked that drink. He wanted that drink. And he couldn't do—evidently felt he couldn't with a clear conscience go to church and come

home and have a drink, you know. He—that was . . .

SL: Just didn't want to be the hypocrite.

HH: Yeah, yeah, so he didn't go to church.

[01:08:42] SL: Well, he probably also lived through Prohibition  
at . . .

HH: Oh, right. Oh, right. I'll tell you a funny story about that. There  
was a guy named Rodney Bannister who worked at the bank.  
He was a cashier.

SL: This is in Blytheville.

HH: In Blytheville. And he had a bunch around about 1946, and I  
wasn't there, but my daddy was. And Rodney had a bunch  
around, and they were saying, oh, how good that Prohibition had  
ended, and they were enjoying their whiskey that Rodney  
provided them. And they said, "You know, that—the only decent  
whiskey we got during Prohibition was that whiskey that was  
made over in Pine—in Marked Tree." [*SL laughs*] And  
everybody agreed that—"Yeah, that was good. That was really  
good. Wasn't that? Yeah, that was really good." Rodney said,  
"Do y'all think that was really good?" "Absolutely." Well,  
Rodney went back and produced a bottle of it and poured out a  
little and let them pass it around, and they said it was rotten.  
[*Laughter*] And it was not good. But they remembered it as



being good.

[01:09:45] SL: Yeah. That's funny. So—but your mother held on to the . . .

HH: Oh yeah, and she made me go to church.

SL: Now, was she Baptist?

HH: No, Methodist.

SL: Methodist. Mh-hmm.

HH: I'll tell you how the—how it was. We had—the only babysitter I ever had that I have any memory of at all was a girl named Annie, and she sat with me one time. And I don't remember the details. But anyway, the preacher said, "Where was Annie tonight? I didn't see her at church." And somebody said, "She was sitting—babysitting for the Haines. They went to Memphis to play in a bridge tournament." "A bridge tournament?" You know, and the preacher the next Sunday got up in the pulpit and said, "The devil really was at work here last week," you know. Said, "We had a couple who went to Memphis to play in a bridge tournament, and they hired a girl out of the congregation to babysit their child, and she missed church because of that." Said, "Look—you see what's happening here? You know, we're all going to hell." [SL laughs] And—but that's the way they were operating. [01:11:07] Now, when I was thirteen years

old, Lloyd Blomire and I—very smart guy, by the way. He graduated from California Tech. First graduated from the naval academy. But Lloyd said—Lloyd and I thought that LaRae Ford was the best-lookin' girl we had ever seen. And Lloyd said one time—he said, "You know, on Wednesday nights the youth choir at the Baptist church sings, and LaRae Ford is a member of that choir, and we could go to church and see her sing." And I said, "Sounds good to me." [*SL laughs*] And he said, "Not only that, but she lives out at Chickasaw Courts," one of the first of the government housing projects. "She lives out at Chickasaw Courts, and we maybe could walk her home." I said, "Oh my goodness." So anyway, we went to church, and it was Lloyd's church. He was a member of First Baptist. So I went to church, and the preacher said, incredibly—he said, "We have here tonight a visitor," and I thought, "I wonder who that is?" And he said, "This visitor has his own church, and he should be attending his own church 'cause it's a very good church, and he has no business over here," and he went on and on, and I finally concluded he was talkin' 'bout me. I couldn't believe that, you know. And I never went back to that church, for sure. And Lloyd and I did walk her home, by the way. [*SL laughs*] She was a charming girl. She really was.

[01:12:39] SL: Well, now, let's talk about friendships growin' up in Blytheville. Did—did you have any good friends . . .

HH: Oh boy, yeah.

SL: . . . kidwise?

HH: Yeah, yeah. Lloyd and I were good friends. Lloyd had a super intellect and tried to go out for football and just almost got killed. I mean, you know, not everybody is made for that, and he wasn't. And he—so he had a series of jobs. One of the jobs was doing whatever he did for the Morgan Amusement Company, and Morgan Amusement had the jukeboxes out in the various joints around the county. And Lloyd went out and serviced 'em. You know, he put new records in and, I guess, took the money out. And so Lloyd and I got a musical education not afforded all white boys, and we found out about people like Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Christian, you know, and on and on and on and on. Jimmie Lunceford, Duke Ellington, you know, all of these terrific black musicians—and white music was never the same to me after that. And Lloyd and I would get old copies, old 78s worn down to a nub, and play them, you know. And it just opened up a whole new world for us both, you know. It was a great thing. And it also permitted us sort of a translator for what guys like Benny Goodman were doin'. Benny



Goodman would take—he would have the Benny Goodman sextet, quartet, you know, and so forth. And he would put Hampton in there, you know. And they couldn't say, "Benny Goodman, you Communist sucker. Here you are, employing a Negra," you know, because he'd say, "Well, he's not a member of the band," you know. And he'd cut records with Hampton, you know, and other black musicians. Did—just did a wonderful job of gradually integrating American music.

[01:14:57] SL: Let's talk about the joints out and around the country. What were those like?

HH: I didn't go to 'em. My parents were very strict, and I didn't get out into them much until I came back from the army and kinda fell out from under the purview of my parents. The joints were bare-boned stuff. There were people dancing on floors that hadn't even been finished, you know. They were—and they were worn black by the many boots and—that had traveled over 'em over the years. And they did a lot of dancing to the jukeboxes. I imagine there was many a bottle of illegal whiskey sold from the joints. They pretended to sell nothing but beer. But I'm sure they sold more than that. And I know Albert King—have you ever heard of Albert?

SL: Oh yeah.

HH: Albert King told me one time—he said, "Now, Mr. Haines," he said, "when I tell you I played in the joint," he said, "I want you to know that some of the people got there ridin' a wagon pulled by mules." He said, "We're talkin' about the bottom of the chitlin bucket here." And he's right, you know. He was right. Those things were awfully tough.

[01:16:33] SL: Do you remember live music anywhere around Blytheville? Was there any of that?

HH: In the black joints had live music at least once a week, at least Saturday night. The white joints—now, I'm talking about as we approach the rock and roll era. And then there were white boys playing guitar and drums who played in some of the joints. Some of 'em were pretty darn good, too. I was amazed at the level of talent in these road joints.

[01:17:13] SL: Were there any [*TM coughs and clears throat*] minstrel shows—any tent stuff or . . .

HH: Yeah, there was . . .

SL: . . . flatbed trailer?

HH: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. What was the name of the—Silas Green from New Orleans. He had a minstrel show. It was called a minstrel show. He called it a minstrel show. And I went out there to talk to him. I didn't go to the show. I don't know what

that was about, but I didn't go to the show. But I went out there to talk to him, and I had a great time. And he said the girls—now, he had—he called it a minstrel show, but it was all black, and his so-called black girls were about the color of a good lemon. [*SL laughs*] You know, they were barely black. And they were very cute girls. And I went down there to see him—talk with him, and he was having trouble. I said, "I don't understand what the trouble is." Two of the girls—I said—I said, "I don't understand what the trouble is about." He said, "Well, one of the girls was signifying against the other." Do you know what that means?

SL: Hm-mm.

[01:18:22] HH: I didn't either. And I said, "What do you mean, signify?" He said, "You know what I me—signifying"—said, "Okay," but I didn't. And I still don't. I don't. But he said, "And I told her to quit it. I told her I just"—you know, while I was there, I said, "What was that trouble about?" He said, "I told that girl to quit that. Quit signifyin'." So—but I remember that incident from Si—but I didn't see Silas Green.

SL: Now, is this when you were growing up? This was after you'd been in the paper.

HH: Oh, this was. Yeah, this was . . .

SL: In the [19]50s.

HH: . . . more like 1950.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Yeah.

[01:18:55] SL: Mh-hmm. Well, so it's interesting. You were tapping into those 78s . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . when you were in high school, then.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: So you had a phonograph player at your place that . . .

HH: Yeah, I got a phonograph player for Christmas about 1940.

Business had improved. Before then [*laughs*] my Christmas presents were always some wearing apparel, you know. Say, "Let's see what Santa Claus left you." [*SL laughs*] And I'd open it up, and it'd be a sweater or a shirt. And I thought Santa was in the haberdashery business. [*SL laughs*] I didn't know that he brought toys and [*laughs*] stuff 'cause we never—I never got any.

SL: Never got a wagon? Never got a . . .

HH: No, no, not until on up toward [19]38 when I think [19]37 or [19]38 I got a bicycle. But until then I got socks, you know, stuff like that for Christmas.

[01:19:58] SL: What about early high school girlfriends? When did girls start to enter your realm?

HH: Well, girls drew my attention when I looked up Miss Garlington's dress in the fourth grade. [*SL laughs*] But I never knew what to do about 'em. Whenever I dated—I didn't date. How could a guy without a sou, without a farthing, and without a car, how could he date? [*Unclear words*] I—sometimes you'd go to a girl's house and sit on the front porch with her. And now and then you'd walk around the block with her after she'd checked out with mom and dad, you know. So there wasn't much goin' on in—at that time. And then as I got older, I know I would date a girl that my mother didn't approve of, and the next day on the coffee table would be the Castle Heights Military Academy yearbook. [*Laughs*] And that was all the clue I needed. And I remember one time I asked—I said, "Wait a minute. Do you not like so-and-so?" She said, "Not particularly." I said, "Take that book back." I said, "I'll never date her again." And I never did. [*Laughs*]

[01:21:17] SL: Well, what about movie theaters?

HH: Oh yeah, we had several in Blytheville. In fact, the only—there were two people in town who were really wealthy men. One of 'em was Al Leach, who owned the Coca-Cola Bottling Company,



and the other was O. W. McCutchen, who owned one, two, three movie houses in town. And—of which the Ritz was a premier movie house in our town.

[01:21:46] SL: So do you remember the first movie you saw?

HH: You know, the first movie I saw—well, my mother took me, so I was very young. In the afternoon. And it was one of the first talkies. Is that possible?

SL: Yeah.

HH: Nineteen thirty or 1929? Could . . .

SL: When did Al Jolson's thing . . .

[01:22:12] HH: We saw the Al Jolson movie. And I heard it was the first something or other.

SL: Mh-hmm, it was.

HH: Maybe it was first getting to Blytheville, Arkansas, talkie.

SL: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

HH: You know. It might've been two years in release.

SL: So you didn't ever see any silent films that you remember?

HH: Not to my memory.

[01:22:31] SL: Mh-hmm. So did you end up—I mean, was it—ended up being an every weekend thing as you got older, that you'd go see a movie or . . .

HH: My parents used to go. I'm not sure they—I think it was on

Friday nights. It was one night during the week. I think it was Friday. And they used to go on Friday nights sometimes. And I remember seeing Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, you know. And they were about to phase out when I started going to the movies.

SL: Mh-hmm. So did that ever become a dating ground for you?

HH: Yeah, somewhat. There again, I didn't have any money. Now and then I'd earn a little money around the shop, at Daddy's newspaper shop—earn a quarter or two and—and take a girl to the movies.

[01:23:32] SL: What about the black population in Blytheville when you were growing up?

HH: I think Blytheville was 35 percent black.

SL: That's pretty big.

HH: It's more than that now. But I think it was 35 percent black, they said. And the black guy who was janitor at our newspaper name was Kenneth Pettigrew, and he was a fine guy. He just—and real nice to me. We just got along so well and—before then, one of the—the janitor there was Otto Young. And Otto Young was one of Joe Craig's—Joe Craig was a boxing impresario—amateurs. Mainly amateurs. And he had a middleweight named Gorilla Jones, black guy. And he sold Gorilla Jones to some—

what I think were mobsters—maybe they were not—in St. Louis. And I—and he got, I think, a thousand bucks. Now, a thousand dollars in 1931 or [193]2 was a bunch of money, and the thing was they thought they got Joe's best boxer. But Otto used to beat Gorilla Jones in workouts that Joe had. And so Otto was—and Gorilla Jones became middleweight champion of the world in one year after the boys got him in St. Louis, so he was pretty good. By the way, he's online. If you ever—you can look Gorilla Jones up online. He had a colorful career. Went out to Hollywood. Dated actresses and stuff. I don't know [*unclear words*]. But anyway, they left the best boxer. They didn't know about Otto. And Otto was my buddy. And he walked real fast, and I practically had to run just to keep up with him. And he told me—I remember he used to tell—talk to me about boxing. And he said, "Now, your left hand is your best friend in the ring 'cause," he said, "it'll keep a guy off of you." So he said, "Brush your teeth with your left hand. Turn the knob on doors with your left hand. You know, do everything you can with your left hand, you know." So I remembered that. [*Laughs*]

[01:26:03] SL: Well, so let's talk about—we'll get back to the race stuff here in a second but—so Blytheville had a boxing gym or it—was there a place where boxing . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: It was a . . .

HH: Yeah, they . . .

SL: . . . a daily thing in . . .

HH: Yeah, they—the boxing season started as soon as football season was over. And the same guys were never involved, except once there was a heavyweight named Babs Roberts, and Babs was an outstanding football player. Went to Alabama—I think was team captain down there one year. And he also liked to box. And so—but aside from him—'cause, you see, in boxing, you have guys that are 112 pounds, 118, 126, you know, and lightweight, welterweight, middleweight, light heavyweight. And so some of these guys were too small to play football. And they—the training was different, anyway. Everything was different.

[01:27:07] SL: So—but this wasn't a public school thing. This was . . .

HH: Oh, this was Joe Craig down there with the American Legion hut. And they built a wooden arena down there that seated about eight or nine hundred people for him, and if fire ever broke out there, it woulda killed everybody because the exits were about two and a half feet wide goin' out, and it was really—and

everybody was smokin' cigarettes, and the place was full of cigarette smoke. But you couldn't do it—they couldn't do it in there in hot weather because it would've just been stifling.

[01:27:45] SL: Mh-hmm. So—but it sounds like there was a real pop—that was a really popular thing.

HH: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. I met—I was working in a boys' camp in Mississippi—for little boys—young—boys under twelve, and I was only fourteen, but I looked like I was twenty-five. And my daddy came to get me. He said, "How would you like to go to the boxing match tonight?" And—well, I didn't know what was goin' on in Blytheville. I was in Mississippi. And I said, "I'd like to go." I said, "But you gotta ask the camp director." He said, "Oh, I've already cleared that with him. He said you can go, and I'll bring you back in the morning." So we went and Joe Craig—he was a boxing godfather there in Blytheville. And he had arranged—he had a heavyweight who knocked out everybody he fought. He didn't knock 'em—you know, he didn't knock 'em where the referee would stop—came in and stopped the fight. He flattened 'em and put 'em out on the canvas. And [SL laughs] he called—or he probably wrote 'cause we didn't call much long-distance—wait a minute, I'm—this guy's name's coming to me in a minute—he was Tex Rickard's partner—Jack

Kearns. He was known as Doc Kearns.

SL: Okay.

[01:29:10] HH: And he was—he and Tex Rickard had the first million-dollar gate when Dempsey fought Jess Willard in Toledo, Ohio, because boxing was illegal in a lot of places, a lot of states. And Kearns came down to see this heavyweight, and **Joe** let him—oh, and I got to meet him. I got to shake Jack Kearns' hand, you know. I've told that to everybody. I—I've—I told [*laughs*] a friend of mine who was on my boxing team—I said, "I got to shake Jack Kearns' hand." And I said, "I haven't washed that hand since." [*SL laughs*] And he said, "I been meanin' to talk to you about that. [*Laughter*] But anyway—and I did—I shook his hand and we—Joe had matched this heavyweight against the heavyweight champion of Golden—Mid-South Golden Gloves in Memphis. His name was Manley. He was a pretty good boxer. And Jimmy Lunsford, by the way, Jimmy Lunsford went out, and he just knocked him flat in the first round. It was all over. And then Joe sold his contract to Doc Kearns for a thousand dollars. Doc Kearns took him to a gymnasium in Hoboken and somehow ruined this guy. I don't—beyond that, I know nothing. [*Laughter*] But he wasn't the same boxer anymore.

[01:30:33] SL: So you didn't see your first boxing match till you were about fourteen.

HH: Oh, probably thirteen, maybe.

SL: Thirteen. But you had been listening to them on the radio . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL . . . incessantly.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: And your dad was a big fan, obviously.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: And how'd all that sit with your mom and the churches?

HH: I don't know. I never heard them express—I think they were silent on boxing and football both. I don't know.

[01:31:01] SL: So when did you start boxing, then?

HH: Well, I started in that boys' camp, and we used to put on exhibitions for the boys. And, now, it may have been exhibitions for those guys, but I was fighting for my life. [*Laughter*] I was trying to stay alive. And I got whacked pretty good at times, and then I never did go out—I never did go to Joe Craig's boxing teams because I thought I wasn't good enough, and I probably wasn't. But I—it was kinda a mistake not to at least go and try. And then I boxed in the army some, and I had a sparring partner from south Chicago. He was white. He was a Polack and he—I—

I'd say, "Listen, you don't need to go full steam with me. You know, I'm just a neophyte, you know." He said, "You'll learn quicker." [*Laughter*] And he'd beat me up pretty good.

SL: Yeah, but you liked it. You liked . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I liked it. My daughters, when they were little, would say, "Daddy, did you win all your boxing matches?" I said, "I beat every guy that I fought who didn't know how to fight." [*Laughter*]

SL: But you boxed a lot of guys that did know how to fight.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: Yeah. I remember there was one story in your memoirs about a really good boxer that—I think it was in the army. I'm not sure—that fought you—that made you look better than you were.

HH: He did. He did, that sucker. He was very—he was that skillful, and he told me just before the first bell—we met in the center of the ring—he said, "Hit me here and," he said, "it'll look like you hit my chin," you know. And he—you know—yeah, he made the fight look good. There was no fight there, really. He just let me live.

[01:33:00] SL: Well, that's interesting. So in the local boxing ring there in Blytheville I would assume there was heavy betting. Is



that—I mean, did that—did you ever—were you ever aware of the undercurrents of . . .

HH: Not aware, but, see, that was a time when I wouldn't say, "Now, listen, Scott, I'll bet five dollars that this boy whips this boy," you know. I would come over and whisper in your ear, you know. I would—I wouldn't make a—make a show out of that at all. I'd come over and whisper that you wanna bet five dollars on that, see. So I wouldn't have been aware of—but I wasn't aware of any betting. I bet it was—it's bound to have been going on. Bound to have been.

[01:33:41] SL: Well, I—you know, that's what's kind of amazing to me is the churches didn't—I mean, if they were after cards . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . I would've thought . . .

HH: Well, now, this was a few years later. Not many . . .

SL: Yeah.

HH: . . . but a few years later.

[01:33:53] SL: Mh-hmm. Okay, well, let's get back to the black and white communities in Blytheville. And you—it was 34 percent black is what . . .

HH: I think so. And they took the paper, or the female member of the house brought the paper from the house home—brought

yesterday's paper home with her when she'd go back to her little cabin, wherever it was. And they—and they read about white people and they kinda—some of 'em prided themselves in keeping up with whites. A friend of mine was Cecil Partee. He was—he went to Northwestern, and he was a very sharp guy and a beautiful man. I really liked him a lot, and he was black. He was black. And Cecil told me that he was at a—well, Cecil was a state senator. He was a ranking member of the state Senate and speaker of the Senate and ex officio lieutenant governor of Illinois. He lived in Chicago after he got out of Arkansas. And Cecil said he was at a cocktail party in New York one time, and Bo Coppedge was there. Bo Coppedge played football at Blytheville and eventually became athletic director. He played football at VMI, too—not the same guy, but later—and then at Navy. Navy got him out of VMI. You could do—the Armed Forces Academy could cherry-pick and take football players from anybody. And Cecil said he—that Bo Coppedge walked by him, and he walked—Bo was watching a young lady walk past, and Cecil said, "And I told him, 'Get your eyes off her. That's not Sarah Lou McCutcheon.'" Sarah Lou was a rock star of our high school. She was a pretty blonde, you know, and a great girl. And Bo—you know, here's a black guy talking about Sarah Lou,

and he said, "What do you know about Sarah Lou?" "Oh, okay, I'm from Blytheville, Arkansas," and they got together?. But that shows you that they kept up. For instance, Cecil's mother knew that I went to the University of North Carolina, you know. And how did she know. She was great. I told Cecil—I said, "Cecil, I could've amounted to something, too, if I'd've had Bessie Partee Ivy for my mother. You—you understand that, don't you?" He said, "Yeah, I know." Great guy.

[01:36:36] SL: So things were segregated. They were . . .

HH: Very.

SL: . . . still very much a—probably a second-class rank in the community . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . I would assume.

HH: Yeah.

SL: But relations were good.

HH: Relations were pretty good because they worked as domestics. The women worked as domestics, and I kinda have the feeling they wouldn't work for anybody they didn't like. They might for six months or so, but then they'd be looking around, you know. And we had a—several of 'em in our homes after 1940, when business picked up. And they were great women. We really

enjoyed 'em.

[01:37:22] SL: They had—did they have their own—did the black community have their own theater?

HH: Yes. I don't know—I don't know if they did before 1946, however. I think—I—it's—and I have some idea that they could go into the balcony of some of the white theaters. I'm not—I think they could. I'm not sure. They didn't go much, though.

SL: I think the balcony seating was—that was pretty standard.

HH: Was it?

[01:37:50] SL: Yeah. And then what about diners and restaurants and any other . . .

HH: Oh, ho—there was a black hotel down on Ash Street, and it sure didn't look like much to me. And then also on Ash Street were a couple of restaurants which—at one of which I ate at years later. I don't know how good it was, you know.

[01:38:19] SL: Mh-hmm. So did you ever—sportingwise, was there ever any intermingling or, you know, maybe not official sports but pickup games?

HH: Yeah, yeah. I played sandlot—I played some sandlot football with 'em, and some guy told me—he said, "N-words will never become football players." I said, "Have you ever played against one?" And he said, "Yeah, I played against one when I was in

the army." And I said, "Boy, those guys wore me out." He said, "Well, they didn't bother me. Of course not." He was a real man.

[01:39:01] SL: Right. You know, what—describe the football equipment to me that you wore when you were a kid.

HH: It was—it'd be considered primitive, but I don't know—it was pretty effective. And we had a leather headgear, but it was as hard as this floor. It was—it wasn't that flimsy leather that you've seen pictures of, you know. That stuff was really, really hard, and if you got hit in the face with one of those things it'd, you know, knock a tooth out or knock you unconscious or somethin'. They'd really—and then we had—and we wore hip pads, and a lot of players are not wearing hip pads now. And I notice that Dildy had pads for the running backs that were much smaller than pads for the linemen. So I guess it was going that direction, you know. Our game trousers were some stretch material. I don't know what they were, you know. But our practice trousers were canvas, and by the end of—what—by the end of September, it must've weighed twenty pounds.

*[Laughter]*

[01:40:17] SL: Well, so I'm trying to think—when did you get—was it after college that you came—became more engaged with your

dad's business or . . .

HH: Oh yeah, with the editorial end of it.

SL: Well, then, let's talk about how you ended up at North Carolina, then.

HH: Well, I—well, in the first place, as I've told you earlier, there were so many eighteen-year-old boys on our football team, and we had a pretty good team coming back for the forty—[19]43 season, and I felt pretty good. And ?both? these guys started goin' to the army, and then one guy who was 4-F was so ashamed of it that he'd left school and got a job over at the atomic place in Tennessee.

SL: Oh.

HH: I want to say Oak Grove, but that's not it. It's something similar to that.

SL: Yeah, uh-huh.

HH: And I thought, "There's gonna be me and Harold Thompson."

[01:41:15] SL: Oak Ridge.

HH: Oak Ridge. Thank you very much. "There's gonna be me and Harold Thompson and—wait a minute," you know, and guess what our schedule was. Tech High, Memphis, Little Rock, North Little Rock, Pine Bluff, you know. I said, "Oh, man, they're gonna get killed." I mean, but not only that, I'd joined the Air

Force Reserve because I didn't wanna have anything to do with the draft board. There was a guy on the draft board I didn't like and didn't—probably didn't like me. And I wanted to stay away from there, so I joined the reserves, and they said, "Well, you've got one year." And I thought, "I'd like to see what my chances are of gettin' in some college, although I'm a high school dropout." I would've been a high school dropout. And so I applied to Dartmouth and University of North Carolina, University of Chicago and University of Texas. And several of 'em said—only North Carolina and Chicago—University of Chicago, Chicago University—said, "If you can pass our entrance exams, we'll take you as a freshman." There was no SAT—there was, you know, scores at that time, no SAT tests, but they had their own entrance exam. So I had read an article about the University of North Carolina in *Atlantic Monthly*, and I thought, "Oh, that'd be a neat place to go." I didn't know what I was doing, but it was a good school. I'm glad I went, but I didn't know that. And they sent their test to my high school principal. She gave it to me. It was about a three- or four-hour test—and sent it back, and they sent me a—said, "You need to be here Monday morning. We're gonna register for classes," and I was gone [*claps hands*], you know. So that's why I wound up at

North Carolina. Dartmouth wanted me to go to a prep school for the summer prior to the . . .

SL: Fall.

HH: . . . beginning of the fall semester. Chicago said okay. Texas wanted me to take some sort of state exam on state history, you know. I thought "Aha," you know, so anyway, they—I eliminated them one by one, except for Carolina.

SL: And you passed the test.

HH: Oh yeah. I did real well on the English grammar. I didn't do so well on English literature because I hadn't had that yet in high school. That was a senior-level class, and I hadn't been a senior, you know.

[01:43:34] SL: So you didn't graduate high school?

HH: No.

SL: That's amazing. Well, I guess, actually, then it was not uncommon for kids not to go all the way through high school, was it?

HH: Oh no, the senior class'd be so much smaller than the freshman class, yeah. Guys would go to work, and as far as the football team was concerned, the draft board got our boys, you know.

[01:44:04] SL: So what was the rift between you and the draft board guy?



HH: [*Laughs*] Okay. [*SL laughs*] He had a son in—about 1935 or something like that, he had a son who was twenty-two, twenty-three years old and working at a bank in St. Louis and he—the head of the draft board. And he was president of a bank in Blytheville. And the headline on our women's page said, "B. A. Lynch Jr. to Wet St. Louis girl."

SL: [*Laughs*] Oh!

HH: And that cost us for years. That cost us advertising that we needed, you know, and so I didn't know the guy, but I didn't wanna know him, you know. And I'm sure he didn't want to know me. "Okay, we're even on that."

SL: That's tough.

HH: And I'm not sure that was an innocent typo.

SL: Is that right?

HH: Yeah, he was not well respected, and I can see some guy back in the shop who maybe had been turned down for a loan or something, you know, putting that in there. Maybe not. Maybe—you know, we had plenty of typos. That may be one of 'em.

SL: How close is that *T* to the *D*? [*Laughs*]

HH: I can't remember. [*SL laughs*] I can't remember. I was trying to—I was trying to think of how the *D* and *T* . . .

SL: Uh-huh. That's funny. Small-town stuff. Small-town politics.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

[01:45:38] SL: Okay, let's talk a little bit about small-town politics.

Were you very much aware of any of that when you were growin' up?



HH: No, I was apolitical, I think, until John Kennedy was killed. Now, I was not a Kennedy aficionado. As a matter of fact, I read, I think in the *Atlantic Monthly* an article by a man who was a Catholic, and he advised, "Don't elect a Catholic to the presidency" and so forth. And I read that story. I voted for Nixon, you know. Okay. And then, you know, went about a thousand days and Kennedy was killed. Boy, and I was unhappy. I—you know, God almighty, pretty terrible. And I went to a cocktail party—he was killed in November. I went to a cocktail party, holiday-type thing in December, and here were a bunch of guys who were practically celebrating the death of John Kennedy. And I thought, "Wait a minute! These guys may be okay. I'm sure they're okay, but they're different from me. I would never—even though I voted against the man, I would never celebrate his murder!" And I thought, "There's something here. There's something different. There's a gulf between myself and these people who—who'd been my friends for years."

I thought had been my friends. I'm not sure they ever were, really. And so at that time I went to work the next morning and wrote an editorial about something along this nature, I'm sure, and I wrote one every day from that day until I quit the paper in [19]83 or [19]84.

[01:47:25] SL: So the Kennedy assassination changed you . . .

HH: Oh, when I saw . . .

SL: . . . from a . . .

HH: . . . the reaction . . .

SL: . . . political agnostic to . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . an activist, almost.

HH: Yeah, yeah. And I—for instance, I attended Democratic Party—what—county committee meetings, and I was active in Dale's campaign. I was active in Bill's—I ran Bill's attorney general—Bill Clinton's attorney general campaign for the northern half of the county. And I was—yeah, I took it—and wanted to do more, but I had a full-time job. I . . .

SL: Yeah.

HH: . . . I couldn't . . .

[01:48:04] SL: Well, we'll get back to those days a little bit later on.

But—so you signed up for the Air Force Reserve . . .

HH: Yes.

SL: . . . as a junior in high school . . .

HH: Yes.

SL: . . . to avoid the draft.

HH: Yes.

SL: And you got a free year of college out of the deal.

HH: Yes.

SL: Spent that at North Carolina.

HH: Yes.

SL: And then you started your armed services commitment. Is that . . .

HH: Yes, in [19]44.

[01:48:36] SL: In [19]44. What was going on with the war in 1944?



HH: I was—in Chapel Hill somebody was checking my mail June the sixth because I had something there that looked awful official to them. I was in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, living the good life, and meanwhile, a bunch of real good guys were hitting the beaches at Omaha and dying, and so it was the beginning of D-day. It was D-day. June 6, I think, was D-day. And that's when I—at—somehow somebody got hold of me by telephone and said—and I said, "Open it." And they opened it, and they said, "You're to report to commanding officer [*laughs*] in Fort

Bragg." And I said, "Okay." So I was—I hitchhiked home. I mean, I hitchhiked back to North Carolina, and by standing at McBee, South Carolina, nobody'd stop. There wasn't anybody. There wasn't any traffic in McBee, South Carolina, and I stood in the road and raised my hands as a truck approached. I said, "Hey, man," I said, "I gotta get in the army." I said, "Can you take me to Charlotte?" He said, "I'm not allowed to take passengers." I said, "How about if I get on those feed sacks back there?" He said, "That'd be okay." He said, "Hang on." I said, "Don't worry." So I got on the feed sacks and hung on and went to Charlotte. And I don't know—I think at Charlotte I figured I had enough money to take the Greyhound to Chapel Hill. And I went to Fort Bragg. [01:50:24] I thought Fort Bragg'd be like Blytheville Air Force Base, you know. And I got to Fort Bragg and got outside, and the Greyhound bus said, "Which gate do you want at?" I said, "How many gates they have?" He said, "I don't know, ten, maybe." I said, "Holy cow! I have no idea." He said, "I'll let you out at the main gate." I said, "Good idea," you know. [SL laughs] So he let me out, and I spent the whole day looking to report to the commanding officer. The commanding officer at Fort Bragg must've been a—at least a one- or two-star general. Fort Bragg is bigger—I bet

Fort Bragg is bigger geographically than Washington County or Mississippi County, Arkansas. I'll bet it is. It's a huge place. Huge place. And I went to some guy, and I said, "How do I get to the commanding officer?" He said, "What do you want the commanding officer for?" I said, "Well, my orders say report to the commanding officer." He said, "No, you want to report to the chicken shed." [SL laughs] I said, "Thank you." So I got out on the road, and I said—I—he said, "Where you going?" You know, I said, "The chicken shed." He said, "They ain't no chicken shed he-ah." [SL laughs] I said, "Well, I was supposed to report"—you know, so he turned—and I went to the—he took me to the commanding officer's office, and I went in, and here was a sergeant that had stripes from his wrist to his forearm or to his shoulder. He said, "What do you want?" And I said, "I'm supposed to report to the commanding officer." He said, "Get the hell outta here." He said, "You're supposed to go to the check-in shed." [SL laughs] "Oh!" So I went out, and I caught a ride in a garbage truck. [SL laughs] And I said, "Hey, man, I spent the day doing this." [01:52:17] Caught a ride in the garbage truck, and I said, "I'm to go to the check-in shed." He said, "Okay." He said, "We'll get you there." He said, "By the way, they're gonna close up before for long. Mmm, mmm,

mmm." And I went—I got out—I was the last man in, and I got in [*claps hands*] 'cause—I guess if they'd closed up, what the hell woulda happened to me? I don't know. I'd've been AWOL. I woulda been AWOL.

SL: Not a good way to start.

HH: No.

[01:52:39] SL: You know, what we didn't talk about is how the war—course, you were in North Carolina for a year, but did you see a change in the economy in Blytheville or around the country because of the war?

HH: I didn't pay any attention to that.

SL: You didn't?

HH: My primary concern was girls and beer. Neither one of 'em had anything to do with the economy. No, I didn't. I'm sorry. Things were better, though, I can guarantee you. My daddy built that house in [19]38—in [19]39. I remember have people—we had people for dinner with roast beef. See, that woulda never happened in [19]36, you know, and so forth. And Dad served whiskey—not to me, but to them, you know, and we'd have . . .

[01:53:26] SL: Now, what base is it that's over by Blytheville?

HH: It had a—it was a—an advanced flight training center, whatever

that means. Well, we know what it means—they were training pilots. But they graduated at Blytheville. So they would get out, and they would buy their uniforms in Blytheville, and they would buy their wings in Blytheville and their hats, everything. And they—it was—Blytheville floated along on the—on Blytheville Air Force Base.

[01:53:55] SL: Okay, so you got checked in, just . . .

HH: Yes.

SL: . . . under the bell.

HH: Yes. [*SL laughs*] And there was a company there called the Casual Company, and it was that. It was where they—they'd say, "Report to the Casual Company." And they—and they issued uniforms and, you know, and all of that. And you got your shots and all that. And you waited for a train to take you to basic training. And I remember [*laughs*] we were—I'd been in the Casual Company twenty-four hours, and there was a good ol' mountain boy up there with his guitar, and he was singing a song about the cap'n. "The cap'n said we would go over the top tonight." Well, of course, in World War II we didn't go over the top, but that was a World War I song, you know.

SL: Yeah.

HH: And I thought, "God, that guy hasn't been in the army long



enough [*laughter*] to get a uniform, and he's singing about going over the top tonight."

[01:54:50] SL: Well, so, did you do your basic training there?

HH: Hm-mm.

SL: Where'd you go?

HH: Remember, I was in the Air Corps. Army Air Corps. I went to Keesler Field. Got off the train outside of Biloxi or in Biloxi or wherever it was at two a.m., about, and looked at the temperature, and it was eighty-eight. And I said, "Hey, [*laughs*] did you see this temperature?" And he said, "Yeah, what does that mean?" I said, "That means durin' the day it's really gonna be hot. Really gonna be hot." And so in I go, and we did some army things. We learned how to close-order drill, and we took a long hike, ten, twelve miles, somethin' like that, with a pack, you know. And it was so slow, you know. I kept—"Let's go. Let's go. Hmm, mmm, mmm." You know, and guys'd pass out, you know. And so the next time we took a hike, I asked—I said, "Can I lead it?" He said, "Yeah." And went shoo! And they—here comes a Jeep about two miles down the road. He said, "Sergeant says for you to sit down and wait on us." [*Laughs*] But anyway, it was okay. It was okay.

[01:56:04] SL: You were probably a fairly decent marksman going

in, weren't you? I mean . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . you had some hunting.

HH: Yeah, yeah, I'd—in fact, I was told—and I'm sure it's right—but I got a look at my 201. That's my personnel file. It shows everything about me, you know—that I—one year in college and so forth. And he said, "Lookin' at your 201, you'd've been perfect for"—this terrible job in the infantry: scout. I think that's what they called it, the infantry scout. You'd go with your rifle at night out to find the other line. "Where is the other line? Where does it begin, you know." And you would do it, you know. I said, "What was the mortality rate of those guys?" He said, "Oh," he said, "I don't know of any of 'em [*laughs*] that came back alive." He said, "Some of 'em got blown up a little bit and maybe lost an arm or somethin' and got back that way, but," he said, "they were killed."

SL: Yeah, I think it was about a two-week life expectancy once you . . .

HH: Really?

SL: Yeah.

HH: Whew! Gosh, I'm glad I didn't . . .

SL: Yeah.

HH: . . . know that.

[01:57:07] SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Yeah, they were out front. So what kind of a—I mean, did you get close to anybody in the army when you were in basic training or . . .



HH: Yeah, you know, and that's a funny thing. In fact, in looking over old pictures, I found a picture of myself and this guy, and my wife said, "Who is that?" And I told her. I said, "He was my best friend in basic training." And he was, and he was a great fellow. When I got back, eventually he looked me up and came to see me when I was in North Carolina. He and I had nothing in common, and I wonder what—by what prism did I look at him and say, "This guy's my buddy." I think it was because that we all faced, well, faced death. We were going to leave basic training. We were going to gunnery school. From there we went to get on our bomber and go to Europe or the Pacific. And I guess it was that that led me—but I would have no reason—I mean, I loved the guy, but I had—I would have no reason to sit down and have a bottle of beer with him. God bless him. He was a great fellow. And I had that happen again and again. I had a guy—this was when I was in North Carolina. But I had a guy come see me—a couple of guys come see me in Arkansas. And I thought, "Good grief, this is ol' what's his name, my friend.

But why was he my friend? I don't know. I don't know." Now, I had one guy—'cause, I mean, he was just wonderful. He—his name was Tom Haney, and he was my buddy from Oklahoma, and he and his wife were in—let's see—see, I went to gunnery school, and I did real well. And then I was sent to B-29 gunnery school. I went to what they called a flexible gunnery school, meaning we turned the turrets and everything. Then I went to B-29 gunnery school, and I did well there. And then I went to A-26 gunnery school, which was for a different plane which you've probably never heard of, and I did well there. And then I went to instructors school to become an instructor in A-26 gunnery. And meanwhile, there were guys living—dying overseas, fighting the war for me, you know. And I was doing my part, man. I was there. I was ready to go, you know, but I didn't want—no, I didn't want to go. I didn't want to die. I didn't want to die. [02:00:02] So anyway, I—they—I went to what they called a central aerial gunnery school. The air—Army Air Corps's central school. That means headquarters school. Chief school. And when—before I got out, they gathered us there. There were thirty of us, and they said, "Listen." They said, "You're going out to gunnery schools across the nation, here and there." They said, "Sometimes we think you probably

will walk into a school where they'll have all of this"—the A-26 had a—probably first use of the computer made in the military. And you didn't grab the handles of the gun. You had a gun sight, and when you twisted it and turned it, you fed information into the guns, which were out here somewhere, see. And said, "You're gonna find this remote-control business sitting in crates, and you're gonna wonder, 'What are these guys teaching these A-26 gunners?'" Said, "If so," he said, "here's what you do." And he passed out cards. "You write 'Major Joe Dokes, Central Gunnery School, so forth, Laredo, Texas.'" So I took one—put it in my wallet. And when I got to Florence as an instructor, I looked on the floor, and guess what did I see? I saw this central—all this remote-controlled gunnery stuff in crates sitting around. And they were due to be set up in match—in mock-ups, which would be just like—to simulate the interior of an airplane. It wouldn't look like it, it'd just be raw wood, you know. And—but from there you could operate your guns, and you know, and the guy could tell you you're doin' this right or wrong or somethin', you know. And I said—and I went [*laughs*] I went down there—I really endeared myself to the top NCO of the gunnery school there at Florence. I said, "Listen, we've gotta set these things up." I said, "I just got out of Laredo." He said, "I

know." [*Laughter*] I said, "We've gotta set all this stuff up." I said, "We're sending guys to their death over there without any training." I said, "How—we can't do this." He said, "What is your name again?" [*Laughs*] He said, "Listen." He said, "I'll tell you somethin', Haines or Heinz or whatever you are." He said, "I've gotta go on furlough"—gotta go—but he said, "When I get back, I'm gonna take care of you." And I remember his name. I dare not repeat it. And I said, "Okay." And so anyway, I went back, and they said, "Well, what did he say when you told him that we had to set—this stuff had to be—set it up and made operative?" "He said he had to go on vacation. [*Laughs*] He had to go on furlough, but when he got back he's gonna take care of me." He said, "Oh my gosh, he's gonna send you overseas." I said, "Well, whatever will be, will be." And I wasn't tickled about that but . . .

SL: We're out of tape.

[Tape stopped]

[02:03:20] SL: All right, there's a few things I want to . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . clear up just a little bit. First of all, when you say you were in Florence—Florence where?

HH: South Carolina.

[02:03:28] SL: Florence, South Carolina. And we're talking about an A-26 . . .

HH: It's . . .

SL: . . . bombing—bomber. And how does that compare to a 29 and a 17, say? I mean . . .

HH: No comparison. The A-26 is—was an attack bomber. It had twin engines, rotary, you know, internal combustion engines, with 2,800 horsepower in each engine. And it topped out at close to four hundred miles an hour.

SL: So it was like a fighter bomber, almost.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Across.

HH: And the pilot had control over .50 caliber machine guns in the nose, and the gunner had control—it was a great plane. The gunner sat on a seat that was kinda like a plow seat—I mean, a tractor seat. And he had—and he looked into a periscope through an eyepiece, and he could turn 360 degrees. He kicked himself around on a circle, you know. And when he turned this far—he—with his handles this far, the guns turned this far. So wherever—and now, if you picked up a fighter plane coming down and you're shooting—when you get down where you might shoot your own wing off, it cuts out, and the underneath guns

break in. It was ingenious. It really was. It really was.

[02:04:56] SL: Okay, so you get assigned to train gunners . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . on this device . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . .and—in a simulator, and you were warned that when you got sent out to Florence, you'd get there—there'd be crates of equipment—thousands of dollars worth of equipment to do this training with. And sure enough, you got there, and the guy in charge didn't like your fervor of . . .

HH: No.

SL: . . . gettin' this stuff operational so we could be training these guys.

HH: No, he didn't. And I really got some appreciation for it. Well, like the non-com in charge of the ground school—now, this guy was in charge of lord knows how much, but the non-com in charge of the building where the ground school was, was a guy named Frank something. Nice guy. Lots of stripes. Master sergeant. He had taken his gunnery instruction—when he went to gunner school, he stood in the rear of an airplane with an open cockpit with a .30 caliber machine gun, and it was on a—I don't know what you call it. There was a name for this. And it'd



come up here—it raised the thing, and it'd keep you from shooting your tail off, you know. It raised the gun as it went around. And that's where they went to gunnery school. And here you're askin' him to install remote-controlled, computerized equipment? Come on, you know. And he didn't know what he was doin'. Now, he had a corporal there who did know what he was doing, and when I made my complaint—now, I entered my complaint also in writing, such as it was, to Laredo, and there was some transmission from Laredo back to Florence. And they started setting up things and everything, and the guy—the sergeant called me and said, "You are going overseas." I said, "I want to go to Europe." He said, "Everybody wants to go to Europe." He said, "You're goin' to the Pacific." And so, well, I wound up, you know, I was headed for the Pacific. Now, I got sick, and I had flu of some kind and temperature of 103, you know, a really high temperature for an adult. And he—I was counted as AWOL. I was in the hospital. [Laughs] So that got cleared up, and I finally got orders to go overseas. And I—I've told Dale Bumpers this. I said, "You know," I said, "I was on my way overseas, and," I said, "they dropped those—Truman dropped those damn atomic bombs." And I said, "I had no chance to sacrifice my life for my country." And Dale said, "Are

you crazy?" [*Laughter*] He said, "He saved our lives." I said, "I know, Dale." I said, "It's ironic, you know?"

SL: Yeah.

HH: [*Laughs*] And so, anyway—and I went on through and went overseas and went to Okinawa and never—I was out by the latrine, isn't this romantic, one day, and I was getting ready to go in, and there was a pop. And bang! Somethin' hit the wood on the latrine. You know, it was made out of wood. And, boy, I tell you, me and the guy with me, we dropped down to the ground and got small, you know.

[02:08:30] SL: This was in Okinawa?

HH: Okinawa. And I—and anyway, and then—now, he said that there were a couple more shots fired. I don't know. I—you know, it was pretty frantic there for a few seconds. And we . . .

SL: Okay . . .

HH: . . . finally went on and got up and went in the latrine. And I said, "You know, it could've been some GI, saying, 'These guys are going to take a dump, and I'm gonna get 'em started,'" [*SL laughs*] you know. So I—he almost got me started, you know. Boy, it was—but that was the only thing. There were four sailors—they—there were places you didn't go.

[02:09:03] SL: Okay, now, wait just a minute. Let's . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: Let's get you to Okinawa. How did you get there?



HH: Okay, I went to [*laughs*] I went to Los Angeles. God, it took forever. It took me forever to get from Florence, South Carolina, to Okinawa—I mean, to my POE, you know. Forever. Trains, you know. And you'd get on a train, and you'd be chugging along at pretty good speed, and it'd stop. But it might be stopped for hours, you know. It just took forever. And I went to Los Angeles, where I had to change trains, and I had about ten hours to wait for the train out, and I went to a bar, and some paratroopers came in, and some Marines came in, and there was bad blood between 'em, and I left my beer [*laughs*] and went out. And then we went to—I went to Merced, California, and that's where they checked my uniform and gave me clean socks and whatever, you know. All the uniform and equipment and steel helmet and all that stuff. And then I went up to Seattle, where [*laughs*] we caught a—an auxiliary power attack, APA, ship to Okinawa. And we got out in Puget Sound, and the guy made a few turns, and they were calibrating the compass, which I knew at the time what it meant. I don't really know now. And this guy standin' next to me said, "What was that?" And I said, "Well, it just made a couple of turns." He said, "I don't feel

good." Boy, that guy got in his sack. He hung his headgear over on the chain that came down. You know, we slept in miserable conditions. And he vomited into that, you know. Oh, man, it was bad news. There's a story that goes along with it. There was a colonel whose troops were being transferred to Timbuktu by boat, and he had a pet goat. [SL laughs] And he was checking—he says, "Everything ready to go?" "Yes, sir." "Is everything"—he said, "What about the goat?" He said, "We don't know where we're gonna put the goat, sir." He said, "Put him down in the hold with the men." And he said, "What about the smell?" He said, "The goat'll just have to get used to it." [SL laughs] And so, anyway, well, it—that's humor with a cause. It was smelly down there. It was bad, you know. But we arrived—oh, it took . . .

[02:11:38] SL: How long did it take you?

HH: Oh, it took forever. Twenty-five days, twenty-eight days from Seattle to Okinawa, you know. And I—we got to Okinawa at night, of course, and we went down the landing net to the landing boat, you know, and we went in, and they said, "You can sleep anywhere." [Laughs] You know. So I didn't take—I didn't undo my pack, you know. I just used my pack for—it wasn't very cold. It was a little cold. And so the next morning, believe

it or not, the next morning—we're sleepin' out here on the ground, you know. The next morning, the first thing I hear is Count Basie's "Red Bang Boogie," you know. And some guy had hung a speaker about this big [holds hands about 16" apart] up in a tree, you know, and had hooked it up and played it. Where he got his electric power—well, they had a generator there because they were fixing our breakfast, such as it was. And our breakfast was oatmeal and coffee. No milk, no sugar, nothing. Oatmeal and coffee. Well, you gotta give 'em credit. They didn't have anything to work with, you know.

SL: Yeah.

[02:12:51] HH: And so I tried to eat oatmeal—God, oatmeal without salt, without sugar, without—oh boy, it was terrible. And hey, and that was—it was dark. It was dark. The sun hadn't come up yet, and there was a lightbulb down the way burning, you know. Probably off the same power source that played Count Basie, and you couldn't see very well. And there was a little short guy with his hat pulled down to here, [gestures to top of eyes] sittin' across this plank from me, and he was eatin' like this [gestures quick, rapid bowl to mouth]. And I said, "Do you like that stuff?" He said, "Ugh!" And he eat—you know, and I turned to this tech sergeant sittin' over there, and I said, "Do

you see this guy? He's eatin' this stuff up, just—could you eat that?" He said, "No, I didn't eat it." I said, "I can't either. I'm drinkin' the coffee. I can't eat that." I said, "How do you stand it?" And he finished the bowl of oatmeal. He left his mess kit, his spoon, his tray, everything, and headed for the hills. And it turned—tech sergeant said, "We just had breakfast with a Jap soldier." [*Laughter*]

SL: They must've been hungry.

HH: He was—they were starving. The ones who hadn't surrendered—they were starving. God!

[02:14:07] SL: They were—let's see, I'm trying to remember—they—caves—they were in caves, weren't they?

HH: I beg your pardon?

SL: They were in caves, weren't they?

HH: Yes, they were. Yes, they were. They were in caves—like, I think those were burial caves, but I'm not sure.

[02:14:24] SL: So did you ever have to go out and face 'em? I mean, what—you were a gunnery guy for a bomber. What were you doin' on the ground in Okinawa?

HH: We'd quit bombing.

SL: I see.

HH: Thank you, Harry Truman. No, we'd quit bombing. And, you

know, they said, "What are we gonna do with this guys?" Oh, there's plenty of 'em, you know. I became duty sergeant, and then I became first sergeant of an outfit. No, I never had to go up here and root any of those guys out. We had four sailors come in down the way. They didn't come into our place. And they had a Jeep, and I don't know how they got a Jeep, but they had one. And everybody said, "Don't go up north." You know, they said—but by the same token, if you wanted any souvenirs, up north was where to go 'cause there were guns lying all over the ground and all kinds of stuff, you know. They went up north. None of 'em returned. And my group sent—and a engineer group sent a bunch of guys up there, and they threw satchel charges in the cave and closed up the mouth of the cave and, I guess, closed up some Japanese soldiers in the mouth—in the cave. I don't know. But I didn't have to go.

[02:15:37] SL: Any other conflict stories there in Okinawa?

Any . . .

HH: Well . . .

SL: I mean, how were the casualties? I mean, was it . . .

HH: Oh gosh, before I got there—see, hostilities had ended. Now, we had some Japs runnin' around, you know, but hostilities had ended, and so I wasn't in any of that, thank God. Yeah, it was

terrible toll of soldiers on both sides, just terrible. Awful, awful, awful, awful. We—they—Americans—in a group of—a large group of Americans, you're gonna find guys that can probably—you'll find some guy can do brain surgery. I don't know. You know, they can do things. Americans are great at doing things. And so a bunch came to me and said, "We'd like to build an NCO club. [SL laughs] I said, "What are you gonna build a"—we were living in tents, you know. I said, "How are you gonna build an NCO club?" He said, "Well, they're unloading stuff down on the beach, and we're—we can go down there at night and get stuff and bring it up here." And I said, "Go ahead," you know. And they did. They built an NCO club—it—such as it was, you know. And so Mohan, a big, tall Irish American who could—great guy—and I were in the NCO club the night we dedicated it, you know. And we'd had a lot to drink, and I said, "Mo, let's get out of here and get some fresh air." He said, "Okay." [02:17:18] And we went out, and there was a Jeep parked down there—a couple of 'em. And I said—well, some of the officers from Okinawa base command, OBASCOM, came. I don't know why they came, but they came. And I looked at it. I said, "Hey, the keys are in this," or "you know, we can drive this." I said, "Get in." Hmm. There was no place to go. Nothing—and what in the heck we



were doing in that thing. And Mo looked back, and he said, "There's somebody following us." I said, "Oh, man." I said, "That's bad news." And so we sped up, and he said—I said, "Where does this road go?" He said, "It goes to the officers' quarters." So we rode about a mile and a quarter down the road and pulled into the officers' quarters, and Mo, a good Catholic boy, said, "Follow me." And we went into Father what's-his-name's, the chaplain's, tent, and he said, "Father, we're in big trouble." No, we could've been thrown in the brig. They didn't fool around with people at that time. And he said, "Get on your knees." And he grabbed a Bible and opened it, boy, and the two MPs came through there—said, "Father, have you seen the"—he said, "Would you get out of here? I'm trying to save some souls!" [*SL laughs*] And the—"I'm sorry, Father." [*Unclear words*], you know. "Whew!" But we had to walk back. It was a couple of miles, maybe, something like that.

SL: [*Laughs*] A couple of miles.

HH: At dark. In the dark, on an unimproved road.

SL: Hung over.

HH: That was high adventure. I was glad to get out of that one.

[02:18:49] SL: How long were you there?

HH: Roughly six months, including travel, and it just took forever to

get there and to get back. I was probably on the island four and a half months.

[02:18:59] SL: And you ended up being a sergeant in charge of what? What . . .

HH: Yeah, I was the first—I was acting first sergeant. They never promoted me because they asked if I was gonna stay in the army. I said, "Not a chance of that." [*SL laughs*] And so they made me an acting first sergeant of headquarters squadron. And we had five hundred men on the morning report, but boy, I straightened that out 'cause there weren't five hundred men out there. There were about three-fifty. They had guys on the morning report—they had one guy who was dead, I happened to know. He was dead, and there were guys who'd been sent to the hospital. From the hospital instead of sent back to us, they'd been sent to the States, you know, and oh, there'd been guys transferred, and it didn't show on the morning report, and all of these hundreds of soldiers, you know—they'd want us to provide a detail of fifty guys for this or that. We couldn't do it. But I got it straightened out. It was all straight. They shut up after a while.

[02:20:01] SL: So you get on a ship. You go back to Hawaii, Seattle, where—what happens? How'd you get out of there?

HH: Five hundred of us got on a ship at Okinawa by a route that [unclear word]. There was a guy in front of me who had been wounded in the Battle of Okinawa and had been hospitalized, so he was late going home, and he was yellow from Atabrine, and we were standing—they pulled a landing craft up beside the—the *Admiral Sims*. The *Admiral Sims* was as tall as a hotel, you know. It—hundred feet up. And they opened a hatch on the side, and the boats were—you know, they were—they weren't going whoosh bang, but they were banging, you know, they were kinda mushy, and what—they built a—an elevated table twenty feet up—twenty, twenty-five feet up out of wood, you know, and you walked up the stairs and—up the steps, and you waited until the landing craft was as close to the big mother ship as it could get and then you jumped. [SL laughs] And there were sailors standing in that hatch who were gonna grab you, you know, and see that you didn't fall down between the two boats. And I said, "Man, this is so scary." And he said, "If that big ship was goin' anywhere but the United States," he said, "they wouldn't get me to do that." Well, there were about a hundred and fifty guys that wouldn't do it—who didn't do it. And—but I did it, thank God, and it was over like that, boy. No—I didn't have any problem, but boy, it was a scary

experience. Now, there were a bunch—I told this guy—I said, "You know, you can't tell me that out of five hundred guys, we're the only two guys who were scared doin' this." And he said, "Oh no." I said, "And you can't tell me that there aren't some guys who said, 'I'm sorry, I'm not doin' it.'" He said, "I imagine you're right." So we went back, and there were about—there were a hundred guys, about, on the shore out there who refused to jump, and they brought them up to the side of the boat and dropped some sort of ladder, and they went up that, which didn't look like much more fun than jumpin' across the dangerous three-foot passageway, which—so . . .

[02:22:28] SL: So at least they didn't leave 'em there.

HH: No, I'm surprised. But if they'd've taken all of us that way, it'd taken us all day to load, you know. And that was a slow way to go. And we went from there to Manila, where we had a party that lasted three days and three nights. It was really great. [*SL laughs*] And then we went to Los Angeles and saw the Golden Gate with the sun shining through it. And . . .

SL: No, that's San Francisco.

HH: Thank you very much.

SL: Okay. [*Laughs*]

HH: Not even close. [*SL laughs*] Not even close to Los Angeles.

And then in time we got discharged. We didn't get discharged there. We—they sent us back to—something near your home, you know. They sent me to Fort Chaffee here—down here in Fort Smith.

[02:23:24] SL: So you get back into Blytheville.

HH: Yeah, and I opened a bottle of beer the first afternoon. I don't know what time it was—probably about three o'clock, which by army time wasn't really early to be drinkin' beer. But by Florence Haines time was too early, and she said something about it, and I thought, "I'm not gonna be able to live here anymore." I'd been a sergeant in the army. Come on. I was only twenty years old but still—and so I wasn't going back to Carolina until the fall semester, and I got on the phone, and I said, "You guys gotta find me a place to live." All these GIs goin' back—the dorms were all full. They were housing 'em in the basements of certain buildings and stuff. But they found me a pretty nice place out in town. I rented from some woman out there.

[02:24:19] SL: This is back in Chapel Hill?

HH: In Chapel Hill. And I was gone from Blytheville as soon as possible, which'd be, you know, like, three weeks, four weeks.

And I went to school around the calendar. I didn't take summer

off or anything 'cause I just wasn't gonna get along very well with my folks—it—when things had changed between us so much. And they were okay. They were good folks. I'm happy that I had them.

SL: But you were . . .

HH: And I told somebody—I said, "Oh, my mother was, you know, she was—she declared war the day I came back, for whatever reason." But I said, "That's okay because from the time I was born until I left for the army, she was a darn good mother, and after that I didn't need a darn good mother."

SL: You were no longer the child.

HH: No, I—I think that's what browned her off. She didn't like men much anyway.

SL: Yeah.

HH: I don't blame her. I'm not fond of 'em myself. [*Laughter*]

[02:25:20] SL: Okay, so tell me about life in Chapel Hill, then.

HH: Oh boy, it was good. I was a wastrel for a year, year and a half, and I wondered, "What am I?" You know, I kinda completed my freshman year before I went in, and then I was goin' summers and stuff. And so I went to the registration school or whatever part of—department it was, and I said, "Where am I in the process of getting a degree?" And they, you know, they ran a

total and said, "You need a year's work." And I said, "Okay."  
And I walked—I remember walking out and looking down that  
quadrangle at that library, which was completed about 1941,  
you know. And I had made poor use of it. And I said, "Okay,  
buddy, the taxpayers built that thing, you know, and your  
parents have paid tuition and the American government paid  
tuition and bought your books, and you're not getting your share  
of what they've provided for you." So I raised my grade level  
one grade, from a C—a 2.0 to a 3.0. I became a 3.0 that day.  
And I did a lot better from that day. That was pretty late in the  
game but anyway . . .

[02:26:39] SL: So what'd you take? What'd you end up gettin' your  
degree in?

HH: I was majoring in business administration, they called it at  
Chapel Hill, until I went on the catalog and started figuring out  
what they wanted you to take. And I knew one thing about  
the—about Guttenon, who was from the Weimar Republic and  
who ran the statistics course there. And he had a thing with the  
dean of the college about making it a two-semester course. So  
the dean said, "No deal." So he made it a two-semester course.  
You got an F the first semester. Come back next semester, and  
you'll get a passing grade probably, you know. So that's what

he did. And so anyway, it was gonna be a five-year course, including summers. And I said, "Man, I'm not takin' five years of this for a—an AB, you know." I said, "I'll get"—so I went to journalism, which was kind of a cop-out, but it was something I was interested in, and I had fun doing it and made good grades.

[02:27:47] SL: Well, so, were you thinking when you were in the services and when you were in college that you would come back to Blytheville and work the paper there?

HH: No, I wasn't. No, I wasn't. [*Clears throat*] But when I graduated from Carolina, a faculty member got me a job at the *Salisbury Post*, which is a pretty good newspaper. It was seven days a week, circulation of about twenty thousand. And I worked there a year, and then I wrote my folks, and I said—'cause we didn't have cell phones and e-mail, and I said, "They tell me that there's a guy at the *Charlotte News* who's interested in talkin' to me about a job." [*Clears throat*] Excuse me. And I said, "I'm gonna go talk to him." And my daddy called me and said, "Well, I'll pay you x dollars if you come home." So I came home. And I don't know how it'd gone had I not. It'd been interesting, but I did the right thing. I did the right thing as—yeah.

[02:29:02] SL: So okay, you graduate from North Carolina with a



journalism degree—I guess the equivalent of a BA.

HH: Yeah.

SL: And you come home. What happens when you get home?

HH: Well, I . . .

SL: First of all, you're not married.

HH: I am.

SL: You married while you were in North Carolina.

HH: I barely—I got married in May, and I finished my work in August.

SL: Well, we should talk a little bit about that.

HH: Okay.

[02:29:35] SL: So how did you meet your first wife?

HH: On a blind date arranged by a fraternity brother. And we actually had—we had very—an amazing—amazingly small amount of actual contact with each other because I was in the army when I met her. She was very good about writing. She wrote me all the time I was in Okinawa, for example. Regularly, once a week, once every four or five days, somethin' like that.

SL: That's huge.

HH: And then when I came back, we had one date, and then I went to Chapel Hill. She had graduated from UNC Greensboro, [*clears throat*] and so there was more letter writing. And I didn't have a car then, and so you didn't—150 miles on a two-lane highway—

kinda slow hitchhiking. And hitchhiking was dangerous business, especially in North Carolina, where there were some real bootleggers who really ran fast. Now, I caught a ride with one quite by accident one day, and he told me—he said, "You figured out by now"—and whoo! We were—I don't know how fast we were going—"that I'm a bootlegger, aren't you, or I'm runnin' stuff?" He had some arcane comment on it. I said, "Well, I'm about to figure it out." I said, "Listen," I said, "they'll pick you up for nothing—speeding—if you don't slow down." And he said, "But they know this car so well, and they know me so well that if I were goin' thirty miles an hour, they'd pick me up. So I've gotta get off the highway before they"—so we got to some little town. I used to know the names of these towns. I think it may have been Statesville—I said, "Well, here's where I wanted to go." He said, "I thought you were goin' to Hickory?" And I was, of course. I said, "No," I said, "that's where I live, but I'm goin' to Statesville." [*SL laughs*] And so he let me out of the car, and I said, "Whew!" And I wrote Dad, and I said, "Listen, I've got several thousand dollars saved up." I got a little lucky at cards in the army. And Florence, my mother, rented out my room at fifty dollars a month, which was a bunch of money back then, and she put all of that in my bank account. So I had several

thousand dollars. I said, "Buy me an automobile." I said, "Man, I'm gonna get killed out here hitchhikin'." And instead of buying—and he did buy me—when—he didn't—he gave it to me. And so we were able to date a little more. But even so, it was—I probably—I married that poor girl probably after having known her for several years, but having had, what, seven dates. You know, something on that order.

[02:32:23] SL: Was that uncommon back then or—I mean . . .

HH: I don't know.

SL: . . . war veterans and . . .

HH: Probably.

SL: . . . relationships before and . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . .after the war.

HH: Yeah, probably not. Probably not uncommon.

SL: So you all got married in her hometown and . . .

HH: Mh-hmm.

SL: So you bring a bride home.

HH: Yes, yes. And she and my mother got along fine. I think later they didn't, but at that time they were. And my mother was much in favor of my getting married as a way to keep me out of . . .

SL: Trouble.

HH: . . . road joints and so forth.

[02:33:11] SL: So did y'all have your own place or . . .

HH: We had—no, we had an apartment that really was pretty bad. It was really, really bad. And [*clears throat*] I went to a lumberyard owner-operator, and he said, "You know, if you're smart, what you'll do is you'll be the general contractor." He said, "You and I can be the general contractor." And he said, "I've already got a couple of guys in mind for doing the carpentry work and so on." So that's what we did. And we—and we saved some money, got a GI loan. And the house is still being occupied by a family member. My number two daughter and her husband now live there.

SL: So you ended up building a house.

HH: Oh yeah, yeah. I guess we moved in in [19]50.

[02:34:01] SL: Uh-huh. And so what about the paper and the job?

I mean, you were workin' for your dad then and . . .

HH: Yeah. I—when I went to work, they had a claim of six thousand circulation. But when I started lookin' at it, it was—it was more like forty-five hundred. Boy, that was awfully light. So I said, "Well, what we'd like to do is build this thing, you know."

SL: So this was about forty-what?

HH: No, it was about [19]51.

SL: [19]51. Okay.

HH: And he said, "Well, you go ahead and do whatever you want to do." I told him—you know, I said, "We need to use more local pictures," and so on and so on. And he said, "Okay, you do whatever you wanna do." And we started to build it, and it is awful slow. It's awful tiresome work, and it took me a—almost an adult lifetime to get it up to eleven thousand from forty-five hundred. And when I left, it was eleven thousand, which I think tells us something, because certainly no one took the paper because they were fans of mine. In fact, just the opposite. I imagine a number of people quit taking a paper. But nevertheless, a lot of those people who really didn't like my take on things took the paper to see what I was up to.

SL: Sure.

[02:35:34] HH: They were interested in reading, you know. And that's the idea, you know. And I also opened—I opened an office in Caruthersville, Missouri. I opened an office in Osceola and we—and then we started putting out two editions. I found out from my boys in my back shop, it's very easy to do. You know, I thought it'd be asking too much of 'em—said, "No," they said, "we won't change a thing except the front page and the

jump page." And it went without a hitch, and we sold a lot of newspapers in Missouri. Sold a lot in the south part of Arkansas, too—I mean, Mississippi County, south part of the Mississippi County.

[02:36:17] SL: How did that Missouri-Arkansas relationship go? I mean, that . . .

HH: That was . . .

SL: . . . that was kind of a strange thing.

HH: That was . . .

SL: The—that little . . .

HH: . . . so . . .

SL: . . . boot there.

HH: It was so tough.

SL: What was the story? Give me . . .

HH: It was so . . .

SL: . . . some history on that.

HH: Well, I tell you—I could give you the romantic story, which is that the surveyor came down and the boys from Missouri didn't want to be in a territory. They wanted to be in a state. And the way to get their farms in the state was to get that line dropped southward and then across, and that they got the surveyor drunk and took him out on the boat or something, and I don't

know. And so on and so on, and by gosh, what they ended up with the bootheel of Missouri instead of having the line come straight across and all be Arkansas. Now, that's the story and that's what any good bootheeler would tell you. I kinda doubt that's the truth. I think there was a very big landowner—I can't remember his name—in southeast Missouri, and he was a powerful man politically. And he said, "Wait a minute." He said, "I don't wanna be in this territory. You gotta—I want to be in the state of Missouri." So he got them politically—he used his political leverage to get 'em to draw the line down and across and creating the bootheel. I remember I was playing in a golf tournament up there one day in the bootheel, in Kennett, and I looked up at the starting times for tomorrow, and the tournament director was standin' right there. I said, "Look here." I said, "I've gotta drive an hour to get here, and I'm to tee off at eight o'clock, and this guy lives right in town. He tees off at one." I said, "What do you call that?" He said, "We call it bootheelin'."

[02:38:06] SL: [Laughter] Bootheelin'. [Laughter] So there was—there is rivalry. There is a—maybe not animosity, but there's a pecking order there—or there was—that . . .

HH: I'll tell you this—and every paper in America's doin' it now—I

took a look at that thing, and I, you know, I worked in circulation for a year or two. [*Clears throat*] I took a look at that, and I'd go up, and they'd say, "Oh, is that the Blytheville paper?" Whew! Boy, that was bad news. That was bad news in Osceola, too, you know. So I changed the name, [*SL laughs*] not technically, not legally, but I changed the name to the *Courier News*, not the *Blytheville Courier News*, you know. And I changed the—what do we call it—the banner. And I changed that to the *Courier News*. And I didn't ask 'em to take the Blytheville paper, I asked 'em to take the *Courier News*, and it worked a lot better. So we did a lot better. We're doing pretty well at that—at the time that I got out. I was so glad to get out of there, though, because, you know, that thing sits on the New Madrid Fault, and someday it's goin' off, and when it does you're not gonna have any newspaper. And I was able to convince my majority stockholders in Wisconsin of this, and so we sold it.

[02:39:26] SL: So how does that New Madrid Fault play in the psyche over there? I mean . . .

HH: It's just like [*clears throat*]*—it's just like a doctor telling you, "You know, I think, Scott, there's something on your lung that might develop into something cancerous. But for right now, just forget about it."* [*SL laughs*] Well, you would forget about it if



you could, and sure enough, by the way, in six months you would've pretty well forgotten about it. And that's the way I lived over there, you know. I would—every now and then I'd be almost shocked to read that, "Hey, you're sitting right on top of the New Madrid Fault." And . . .

[02:40:07] SL: Did you ever feel any tremors while you were there?

HH: Oh, they have—they probably have fifty to three hundred tremors a week. Every week. But you don't feel most of 'em. You don't feel most of 'em. So, sure, I've felt plenty of tremors and I just—I've got family living on there, and I got friends living right—I just hope it doesn't happen. I've got a farm over there in—up in southeast Missouri. And I sure hope it doesn't. It'll be a tragedy. It'll just be a tragedy. They—somebody said, and I don't know—there weren't many people livin' there in eighteen, what, twelve or 1808—whenever the thing went off. Somebody said that the trees in the forest waved like grass in a field in a—under a wind. Serious business.

SL: Well, the Mississippi ran backwards, right?

HH: I beg your pardon?

SL: Didn't the Mississippi run backwards? Is that . . .

HH: At one point, yeah—at one point it did. And I think that's how Reelfoot Lake was formed. I'm not sure of that, but I think it is.

[02:41:14] SL: So you're back in Blytheville. What's your community involvement like in Blytheville?

HH: Oh, I pretty well—I was active. I was a scoutmaster for seven years. I was president of the Chamber of Commerce. I was "Young Man of the Year." See, this was all pre-1963.

SL: Right.

HH: I taught Sunday school.

[02:41:45] SL: For a Methodist church?

HH: First Methodist Church. Just things like that. I was on the board of directors of the country club, and I did a lot of things like that. I kept involved in youth work because—well, I'll tell you this. Frank McRae was my preacher in Memphis at St. John's Methodist Church. And Frank and I used to have some talks about religion. Imagine that. And Frank said, "Let me tell you something." And I didn't tell Frank what I'm about to tell you and the rest of the world. Frank said, "Let me tell you somethin'. You can't make a deal with God." He said, "Just forget that." Because I'd told him about a guy I knew that was a gambler and a minor criminal, who one day became a devout Christian and served the Lord better than me or you or anybody you or I know.

SL: Yeah.

[02:42:55] HH: He founded a mission, you know. He took in the unloved. He took in the dirty and let 'em take a shower, fed 'em, clothed 'em—just—he did impossible things. And he—and Frank said—I just tell you—I said, "So I—I suppose that Paul asked God to give him the wherewithal to do good works, and he would do good works." And Frank said, "Let me tell you somethin'. You can't make a deal with God," and he's right. But I'm telling you, when I thought I might get killed, I prayed, and I said, "I'll tell you what." [*Laughs*] I said, "If I get out of this World War II alive," I said, "I'm gonna devote myself to youthful intelligence and training and help." And I said, "That's what I'm gonna do." So when I got back to Blytheville, I became scoutmaster. They were looking for a scoutmaster. I became a scoutmaster. I was a sorry scoutmaster, but I had a bunch of boys who thought I was great, you know. And we met every Monday night or whatever night it was, and we went on overnight hikes and everything, and all that was good for them. Probably good for me, you know. But I began to see that the boys who were from upper-middle-class families had the uniform. They—you know, and they had the neckerchief, and they'd add the hat, and they'd—and then they'd add a merit badge, and so on and so forth. And meanwhile, the boys who

didn't have money to do that would drop out of the scouts because they didn't feel like they could afford membership, you know. So after seven years, I went from that into elementary school football. And they asked me—they said, "What school"—they had four or five schools playing football. Said, "What school do you want—would you like?" I said, "You mean I can have a choice?" They said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, I'll take Sudbury." Sudbury was a very blue-collar school, and I've got the greatest bunch of boys you ever saw. They were [*laughs*] just terrific. They were just terrific, and we had great success. And I'm gonna meet one of 'em in the morning for breakfast here.

[02:45:11] SL: David . . .

HH: Arnold.

SL: . . . Arnold.

HH: Yeah.

SL: Married to Betsy Broyles.

HH: Yeah, how'd you know that? Did I tell you?

SL: No, I think Melinda told me.

HH: Okay.

SL: But I know Betsy. I grew up . . .

HH: Oh, you did?

SL: Oh yeah. Barbara Broyles was my Sunday school teacher. [*HH*

*laughs*] I know that family very well.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah, we . . .

HH: And . . .

SL: I've been in their house interviewin' . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . Coach. So, yeah, I—and I—we've—I've met David. I was not aware that he had a big profile. I was not aware of his painting . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . stuff until [*HH clears throat*] that profile.

HH: Looks successful. Looks successful.

SL: Yeah.

HH: I hope it is. I hope it is.

SL: Yeah.

[02:45:51] HH: But anyway, he was one of my elementary school football players, you know. And we just had—I just had a big time. I was in that program for ten years or more, and then whatever happened, happened, and I got out of it. Oh, they—no, they—the high school coaches wanted me to come to junior high as an assistant coach. And I said, "You know that every law that was ever written by the Arkansas state athletic

association would have that in violation, and they might just bring down the house on Blytheville in penalties, you know." [Clears throat] And so they said, "Okay." So I started the seventh grade program, so we wouldn't have the little twelve-year-olds competing against the thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds, and that gave us a few more bodies on up in high school, when the seventh grade graduated from the ninth and went up to the tenth grade.

[02:46:47] SL: The population of Blytheville about that time is . . .

HH: Twenty thousand.

SL: Twenty. Now, didn't you also have a boxing club or something, too?

HH: Then my first wife ran me off, and she should've, and [SL laughs] some guy—some boy came up to me, a white boy, at a boxing match, an Osceola boxing match, and said, "Mr. Long"—he was an old friend of mine and an old Golden Gloves boxer. "Mr. Long said you were gonna start an amateur boxing club." And I said, "Well, I don't know why Mr. Long told you that, son, but I'm [laughs] not gonna start an amateur boxing club." And he said, "Well, would you think about it?" I said, "Yeah, I'll think about it." I had no intention—well, I did. I did. Yeah, so for three years I ran an amateur boxing club. [Laughs]

[02:47:38] SL: Did you like it?

HH: Parts of it were matchless. Just wonderful. Yeah, yeah, I guess any—then—and then—actually, boxing's not something that's going to inspire a boy to attend workouts. Workouts are hell, you know. Very hard. Very hard. When we started—when I started the club, we ran five miles a day. That was for openers, you know. Then we did weight work, then we did boxing, you know. It was a grind. And boys that had weighed a hundred and seventy pounds now weighed a hundred and fifty-five, you know. And we had a lot of success. I kept books, which is—you know, I had a binder, you know. I would have—I'd have Scott Lunsford, won, Osceola, you know, three rounds, decision. So—and we won 87 percent of our fights, so we did really, really well, and I had some great guys. Some great, great fun. And the boy that asked me—that said Mr. Long had told him [*laughs*] that I was gonna start a boxing club, that guy turned out to be my best friend. Today he's my best friend. He—he's editor of a newspaper in Malvern, Arkansas, and he's a great guy, and I love him to death.

[02:49:05] SL: So you didn't have to deal with any of the mob out of St. Louis and sell anybody for a thousand dollars?

HH: No, no, I wi—[*laughter*] I didn't have any—I didn't have a fighter

that was worth a thousand dollars. [*Laughter*]

[02:49:15] SL: Well, so I can't—I just—what about the boxing—is boxing—was boxing still a big deal there in that town? Did they still have a place at the armory . . .

HH: They . . .

SL: . . . or whatever?

HH: No, they had a new arena called War Memorial Arena—what else?

SL: Yeah.

HH: And it was built out of concrete, [*laughs*] not wood. And it had that same old ring in it. It was terrific. But it was used for wrestling. And we got under there and put some supports. See, the wrestling ring's like a trampoline. And we got down there and put some supports for boxing. And I heard later that the wrestlers said, "You know, that ring is killing our backs." [*SL laughs*] But anyway, we were there, and we draw—and we drew well for a while. But then at my suggestion the club grew increasingly black, and it was to the point where the white fighters didn't want to be with the black fighters or vice versa. Maybe they didn't want to be with each other. In other words, the black fighters thought it should be a black club, and the white fighters thought it should be a white club. And so



eventually the white fighters all quit. Now, until—while we were a white club, we'd put 250, 350 people a night into the arena to see a club—a show, you know, which was good. When it went all black, we put in 20 in a night.

[02:50:56] SL: So this is late [19]50s, mid-[19]50s?

HH: No. No. This was just before I met Melinda. I met Melinda, my current wife . . .

SL: Oh, okay.

HH: . . . in 1980.

SL: Okay.

HH: So this was [19]76, [19]77, [19]78.

[02:51:11] SL: So this is interesting. So what about—you know, after the—you go to war, you go to—you finish your college degree, you get married, you bring your wife back. What's the racial outlook in Blytheville when you come back from your travels, let's say?

HH: You know what?

SL: I mean . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . like, what happens . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah, 'cause . . .

SL: . . . from that point, what . . .

HH: . . . I was—I was two years in the army and three years in college.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Five years. I would say the racial situation hardened, and the reason being because we didn't have those black women in those homes anymore. They didn't do that. They—people didn't admire them for doing that. I think they would catch some static from their own people. "Oh, you a house niggah." I don't know that, but I would—I would guess so. I guess so. And so the racial situation was not good, and it was not better. I think there was two reasons. Number one, I think it was 'cause the black—every house didn't have a black woman in it. Now, I think we think of having a black servant or any kind of servant a privilege of wealth. I'm tellin' you, some tiny merchants who didn't make a hundred dollars a month had a black woman in the kitchen. They had a little shack out behind their house. She got that shack rent free. She got her food free, you know, and she maybe got a dollar a week.

[02:52:45] SL: The culture changed.

HH: Yeah. And so then she—those jobs ceased to exist, and there was not—there were—the blacks and whites were not close together anymore. And they were—and, you know, you can't

blame the blacks. They wanted to be met on their own terms, not as a servant. I can see that, but that's the way it was. And I—and the racial situation was worse, and it got worse. They—the chamber of commerce had me in a couple of times when we were having racial disturbances, you know, when—after the Martin Luther King murder, blacks in the—in that area—all through Arkansas, Little Rock, Blytheville, they set fire to places and, you know, they were civilly disobedient—violently disobedient. And in a way, boy, it was a bad time. In a way it was a good thing. I hate to even say that. I don't—'cause I don't believe violence is ever a good thing. But I think that that violence at that time showed that we were gonna have to accept black people on their own terms, not as some fellow out there mowin' the lawn or something—that he was a man, too, you know. That was their, you know, kind of their theme, anyway, that "I'm a man," you know. And you know, it was, "Yeah, okay, you're a man." But no, that's what it meant. I—and I think we came to realize that. And I got a—oh, I can't talk about that.

[02:54:49] I got a call from Elizabeth. Only call I got of this nature after the Obama election. And—well, I can't talk about it.

SL: Well, maybe we can get back to it.

HH: Okay.

[02:55:13] SL: You know, the—even before *Brown v. Board*, there was a rippling. There was something going on in all the communities. And even—there was—I'm aware of efforts out in the back communities where there was never—to educate blacks that you didn't have to take the secondhand books, you didn't have to take the one-room schools and you—there—this separate-but-equal thing was not gonna maintain. And so I think they became—I think they were—I think you're probably astute in saying that things hardened.

HH: Yeah.

SL: There was change happening.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: And that is hard.

HH: Yeah.

[02:56:08] SL: So you mentioned—did anything—I mean, what about the Klan and crosses and . . .

HH: Oh.

SL: . . . any of that activity? What . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . what was going on . . .

HH: Well . . .

SL: I mean, did that not pop up until early [19]60s or late [19]60s?

HH: I don't know.

SL: I mean . . .



[02:56:32] HH: Now, I was familiar with it from [19]65 on forward.

The White Citizens Council, which was the Klan with a bath. And what was it? The John Birch Society—you know, those things didn't exist in 1940. In Blytheville, Arkansas, they didn't. And, you know, we saw this rise in racism. We saw Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, and West Virginia gave more votes to John McCain than they did to Bush in [20]04. That doesn't compute. That doesn't compute, you know. And it's nothing—you know, you can't look at it any other way but racism. I can't look at it any other way. 'Course, I'm—I've been sensitized to racist illogic, and maybe I'm too suspicious of . . .

[02:57:50] SL: Well, were your—I know that you didn't really become activist on this stuff, I don't think, until the Kennedy deal and the . . .

HH: That's right.

SL: . . . Martin Luther King deal.

HH: That's right.

SL: And so I'm assuming that the home that you grew up in—it was just the culture. The segregated culture was just there. But did you detect any clues from your parents growing up or even

maybe when you got back, that they were also hardening?

HH: No. No, I didn't.

[02:58:25] SL: I mean, were they more tolerant? Were they . . .



HH: No, I didn't, but I was surprised at the attitudes of not my parents and not my parents' friends, I don't think, but the attitudes of—oh, we might say common working man—about race in the 1960s. Oh, boy, they—there was some bitterness. It went above racism. It went beyond racism. I remember some guy called me up in 1965, [19]66, [19]67, somewhere like that, and he said, "Did you—I haven't seen anything in your newspaper about the rape attempt in the Kroger's." I said, "Good lord, I haven't heard anything about it." And I said, "Tell me about it." He said, "Well, I don't know. You tell me. You're the editor of the paper. You're supposed to know these things." I said, "I'll check on it." So I called the manager of Kroger's, whom I knew, and here's the way it happened. Let's see, in Kroger's store the previous day, there was a black man in there shopping and a white woman shopping, and she had her handbag or something—I don't remember the details—but anyway, she tripped and fell or something, and all the stuff came tumbling out, and she shrieked, you know. And the black man knelt and started helping her pick it all up and put it back in her

purse or her shopping bag, and so forth. And people gathered and said, "What's going on?" You know, said, "Nothing's going on. She just dropped all her stuff and it—it's all over." And that was the incident. And it had come to him as a rape attempt in Kroger's, and that was the incident, according to the store manager. I don't think he'd lie about it. And I thought, "Wow, that story got out as a rape attempt, you know." And so these volatile feelings are lying just below the surface. Just barely below the surface.

[03:00:39] SL: So when you picked up on those feelings about Kennedy's assassination and you started writing your editorials . . .

HH: Yes.

SL: . . . [*clears throat*] you—in the public—in the community's mind, you became a totally different person, didn't you?

HH: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

[03:01:03] SL: All of a sudden any of the popularity and a lot of the acceptance that you had in the community, it hardened.

HH: Yeah. Well, I was an outsider from that point, you know. I wasn't Chamber of Commerce material. I wasn't country club board material. I wasn't Sunday school teacher material. And I was over here. [*Gestures to his left*] My friends at that time—

such as they were—they were nice fellows, but I never felt they were—I never felt close to them—were mainly school teachers. High school teachers. Males, you know. And we met on Friday afternoons in a little place and drank beer at four o'clock—four or five o'clock. And that's all I saw of them. They were great guys. They were all good Democrats, you know, and I approved of that. But as far as—you know, and I quit—I finally quit going to [*coughs*—excuse me—the First Methodist Church because—not because of anything happening in the pulpit but because of—I would stop in the kitchen to get coffee, you know, and here come these guys, you know, and they'd—oh, it was just very uncomfortable. They would remark about how they disagreed with me on this thing or that thing. And so I quit going to the Methodist church. I quit going to the country club. That was a bad place to go because I would drink some, and that guy'd drink some, and we would be in dispute—disputation. And [*clears throat*] I quit goin' to the country club. I quit goin'—I went to the Episcopal Church because—not because they were more egalitarian than the Methodists, but they didn't know who I was. They were mainly people from the air base, and they didn't know me, you know. And I was just another white face in the crowd. And it wasn't a crowd. I used to go to early communion,



and there wouldn't be but seven or eight of us there. So I could have coffee in peace. [*Laughs*]

[03:03:20] SL: Well, now, you know, there was the crosses—or the Little Rock stuff happened in [19]57.

HH: Yeah.

SL: And we're talking Orval Faubus years . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . and stuff and so—I mean, did you not have any kind of . . .

TM: Excuse me, Scott. We probably should stop and change the tape.

SL: Okay, we can pick that up after we eat.

HH: Yeah, do remember that 'cause . . .

SL: Okay.

HH: . . . there's some good stuff coming.

SL: Okay. All right.

[Tape stopped]

[03:03:49] SL: So what about when audio recorders first came out?

HH: Oh, I thought they were the hottest things goin', and I went down and bought one with company money. And I thought, "Now I can go to city council meetings, you know. I'd take all those notes, and I'd have it all on tape." What a pain the neck, working from taped, you know, phenomena. Oh, oh, my gosh!

And I never used it again.

SL: Well, you know, we—we're very careful about the quality of our recordings, and it was a big deal for me to try to convince people that you really need to put a microphone on people to get a good recording.

HH: Yeah.

SL: They always thought, "Well, if someone sees a microphone they're not gonna talk. You know, they're gonna be intimidated."

HH: Yeah.

SL: And we especially got that when we brought in the cameras and the lights, but . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . we have found, really, that has not been a problem. You know how you kinda got emotional about the Obama thing?

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: Well, you know, I'm—I'm tellin' you, as many times as not, people have emotional releases when they're doing this 'cause . . .

HH: Is that right?

SL: Well, they're looking past—lookin' . . .

HH: Sooner or later . . .

SL: . . . they're—they're back—going back over their life.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: And they're thinking about things they haven't thought about in a long time, and it strikes a nerve. And I think that's honest and beautiful. I think it's a good thing.

[03:05:20] HH: I remember I was in a writing class up at the University of Iowa and, oh, the guy that wrote—something—tales from a far mountain or something—he won a Pulitzer. Ah, I can't think of his name. My wife would remember. Anyway, he said, "Tell me"—he said, "who was that little girl?" Jesse was twelve. "Who's that little girl I saw you with? Tell me about her—and the class. Tell me and the class about her." I said, "Well, you know, it"—I said, "I was single for six years, and then I went to a wedding in Memphis, and then I met her mother, and her mother was eight and a half months pregnant." And I said, "I can't tell this story." So he went to a guy from St. Louis, and he said, "Tell me about—you worked at so-and-so's. Tell me about workin' there." And the guy started talkin' about workin' at wherever he worked and whatever he did, and he just broke down. He sobbed. I stopped before I got that far. *[Laughs]*

[03:06:28] SL: Well, I guess what I'm trying to let you know, it's nothing to be ashamed of or embarrassed about, and it's—and of

course, I thrive on honest emotion and honest answers and honest recollections. And you know, if it—and I'm a wuss. I mean, I cry during commercials. [*Laughter*] So it doesn't bother me in the least but I . . .

HH: I was in therapy ten years ago. And I'm in today but I—and not the same guy and not the same—different problem.

SL: Yeah.

HH: And the guy said, the therapist said, "Now, why are you here?" or something like that. I said, "I'm too damned emotional." [*SL laughs*] He said, "Well, what is it?" And we talked about this, and we talked about that. And I said, "Well, for instance," I said, "if I see"—and maybe even a commercial or on TV—"a father being reunited with his daughter," I said, "man, I almost cry." And he said, "Oh, you're on the road to recovery."  
[*Laughter*]

[03:07:36] SL: Well, that's good. I'm in constant recovery, then.

[*Laughter*] Okay, now, listen, we were talkin' kinda race relations in Blytheville, and we kept going up to the [19]63 time when you really started becoming more of an activist politically. But there were things going on in Arkansas that I'm sure that you were aware of [*TM coughs*] and thinkin' about, and I had mentioned the [19]57 Little Rock crisis and the tenure of Orval

Faubus. And you know, I think we ought to talk a little bit about Arkansas politics in . . .

HH: Okay, good.

SL: . . . statewide.

HH: Yeah.

[03:08:24] SL: And I don't know—you were—you may not have been aware when Governor Cherry was governor or . . .

HH: I was. That was—the Cherry affair [*laughs*] peaked my interest, you know, 'cause here was Cherry from nearby Jonesboro, and some political figures in the know said that when he was in the governor's office, that Jim Crane and some of the plantation bourbons went to see him with a proposition of some kind and that he kept them waiting in the outer office for over an hour. And I didn't know Jim Crane, and I didn't know Francis Cherry, but I thought, "You know, Cherry sounds like a pretty good guy to me [*laughs*] if he kept Jim Crane and these other guys waiting an hour out there in his office." But those planters sure hardened their attitude about Francis Cherry. And he wasn't a very politic man anyway, I don't think, do you?

[03:09:40] SL: No, I think he—from what I've heard and read, he seemed to be a very honorable guy.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: But maybe not totally politically savvy.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah, or expedient.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: I would say. Yeah.

HH: The way these guys—and I'm sure it worked all through, maybe, the Arkansas Valley and the Mississippi Valley—we had a lot of farms with a lot of manual labor. And I remember there was a plantation operation in Mississippi County where—I was looking at election results one time, and they had this box A, B, C—whatever it was—479 people for, we'll say, Faubus; 23 against. That's almost a statistical lie, you can tell. No group of people votes in these overwhelming numbers. And I thought, "I don't think there are 425 or whatever it was—85 people in that area, that particular area, and I'm gonna go get in my car and go down there." I went and got a—and I counted the little houses of the farm laborers, and there were—just weren't enough—not unless there were 10 to 20 people living in a house, and there weren't. There were no—so that was fraud. That was election fraud.

[03:11:11] SL: Now, when did you take that little drive?

HH: I—I would—probably as close as I can come to it is [19]64 to

[19]70. In that—well, do you know when Amendment 51 was passed?

SL: I don't.

HH: It was just before Amendment 51. And what they were doing—I was sitting in the sheriff's office—the sheriff was a good man—I was sitting in his office. And you know, the sheriff of Arkansas counties at that time was called sheriff and collector. He collected taxes, and we had the poll tax. And Bill was sitting there with a big envelope, a big manila envelope, eleven-by-fourteen or somethin'—came in, and in it were multiple little envelopes. Each one of those little envelopes had a dollar bill in it and a vote—voter application form filled out, all in the same handwriting, you know. And here were all these dollar bills and all these voter application forms, you know, and they all came from one farm operation. And what they would do—they'd have, you know, they'd have Jim Jones in there as a voter, and Jim may be dead twenty years. They never had a decrease in the number of voters they had. Meanwhile, we're using tractors, we're using chemicals, you know, and the farm population's going down. The vote population never went down. It was just terrible. [03:12:46] Now, my attorney, who was also on the election commission and—with a strange role, you know. He

was on the side of the big farmer and then he was against him. I don't—I never sorted it all out. Don't care to. Didn't care to then. But he said that a—the court ordered one box of votes opened and recounted in the presence of election commission members and so forth. And so they opened this box, and he said, "If you'd've taken a package of notebook paper, a package of it, and removed the cellophane wrapping and folded it over halfway and put it in the ballot box," he said, "that's what their ballots looked like." And you know, it was eleven ninety-one, eleven ninety-two, eleven ninety-three—you know, down—all filled out in the same pencil and everything. Obvious voter fraud, you know. And they were just—gosh, they—you take the guy that had four hundred poll taxes and this guy that Oscar saw, saw his box open, and it had seventy or eighty or ninety poll t—you take those, and they all get together, I think, down at Lee Wilson Company, [*SL laughs*] and they would decide on a candidate. Well, boy, you've got tremendous voter firepower behind that candidate. Now, let me say this. They often picked pretty good candidates, almost always, because they didn't want to rile up the Blytheville vote, you know. If they break even in Blytheville, they're gonna win everywhere, you know. They're a win. But they just—you just didn't run without their permission,



you know. It was a—and you didn't—your gubernatorial candidate—you wanted to drop him by the—the Lee Wilson office and up to the Olandor office and around, you know, and get their pat of approval on your candidate. It was just—it was not one man, one vote, you know. It just wasn't. And if you don't have that, you don't have a democracy.

[03:15:11] SL: Well, talk about the poll tax. What was the poll tax?

HH: Dollar.

SL: And what did that do? What—I mean, what was the mechanism?

HH: You could—well, you could come—you or I would walk in the collector's office or the assessor's—I don't know—yeah, probably the collector's office and say, "I'd like to vote in next year's election, and I want to register." And they'd give you a piece of paper. You fill in your name, your address, you know, and so forth, and you'd pay a dollar, and they'd put you in the list of voters and give you a receipt for your dollar. And everybody thought that all you had to do was walk in and hand that receipt to an election clerk or judge and you could vote automatically. And that may be true but that—anybody could have that receipt, you know. You had to—anyway—and so what they would do, these guys—let's say Jim Jones is living out there on the Lee

Wilson place, and he doesn't sign up for a vote—voter registration card, you know. He doesn't know anything about it. Lee Wilson is signing him up and paying his dollar and everything and then takes him to the polls, maybe. Some of the places didn't even go through the motions of taking the laborers to the polls and say, "Vote for Faubus," you know. They just voted for him, and Jim Jones didn't know the difference. He—and he didn't care. He didn't care. It was just a—it was just less than a democratic system. [03:16:50] Amendment 51—I think I'm right on the number of that. Amendment 51 is the longest—I think it's the longest amendment in the Arkansas Constitution because they spelled out every detail. They didn't miss a thing. They had three or four lawyers working on it, and they did a darn good job. And they said, "If you do this, you're creating a felony. You're committing a felony, and you're gonna be in trouble, and here are the—you know, ten years in prison, you know, \$1,000 fine for each offense. Well, you see, they were falsifying two hundred poll taxes at a time, so that'd be \$200,000, you know. And so the penalties were sufficient that they quit doin' it. They quit doin' it. That box that had four hundred and eighty-some-odd voters shook out to around a hundred and fifty, and I believe that was too high. I don't know.

Anyway, they—but they were still kinda kingmakers for many years.

[03:18:02] SL: So it changed dramatically . . .

HH: Oh, absolutely.

SL: . . . the politics . . .

HH: Absolutely.

SL: . . . of the state.

HH: And if you—if you multiply that on down the Arkansas Delta and over to the Red River and the Arkansas River and all of those farms, rural areas there—whew! Boy, that was a lot of votes, and Orval Faubus had 'em. Almost every one.

[03:18:26] SL: So did you ever cross—did you ever talk with Orval Faubus? Did you—I mean, when did you start—I mean, did Orval Faubus ever do anything that kind of upset you or . . .

HH: Well, yeah, he—you know, he closed those schools, and I understand that Little Rock didn't get another industry for ten years or more, you know. He hurt the whole state. And I liked Faubus. I met him a couple times and talked to him, and he was a likeable fellow. Most successful politicians are likeable fellows, and he was. He was a nice guy. But oh, the state was in bad shape when Rockefeller took it over. The prison farm, you know, was just terrible, and the insurance picture here was so bad that

when Rockefeller was elected, this Texas insurance company down there in that building across the street from the capitol—I can't remember the name of the building—closed the next morning. They didn't wait till he was inaugurated and had a new insurance commissioner. They were closed and left town. So he was not a good governor. He—if—even if he'd have been racially liberal, which, of course, he wasn't—he was not a good—now, Sid McMath told me, and I believe him, and I believe this, that race—racism was not an article of faith with Orval Faubus. He was raised by a socialist father up in the hills. And he didn't—he never knew a black guy and he—and those people tend to be racially neutral, and he was racially neutral. And Arkansas—under his governorship, Arkansas had the first integrated—Southern integrated law school. The Hoxie Schools were integrated. Arkansas Tech had some classes integrated, all under Orval Faubus's rule, you know. But when it became a big thing with these—I guess with the planters. I guess with the planters. And I did a—I—when I wrote my master's thesis at University of Memphis, when I was forty years old or forty-two or whatever the hell I was, I asked Bill Smith. Do you know him? Are you familiar with him? He was an attorney who did a lot of heavy lifting for Faubus.

SL: Okay.

HH: He was good. He was smart. He was good. And I said, "Tell me about the gang of people who were going to descend on Little Rock School to prevent the integration, and it was gonna be a riot, and that's why he called out the Guard—Governor called out the Guard, you know, and everything." He said, "You ask the FBI about that." Well, the [*scoffs*] FBI didn't know anything about it, you know, and there wasn't such. They did, I think, haul in a few people to protest the integration of Central High School.

[03:21:56] SL: So was your father editorially neutral all the time or . . .

HH: He didn't write editorials.

SL: He never did?

HH: No. And I think he was—may've been a closet Republican. And here he had a son goin' off in this other direction and never said a word to me about it. He never even said—which my mother did—but he never even said, "Hey, you slow down. Watch your step. Be careful." He never said anything about it. I think he became a convert, but I'm not sure. I never was sure.

[03:22:47] SL: So you were busy trying to increase the circulation of the paper . . .

HH: Yes, sir.

SL: . . . late [19]50s, early [19]60s.

HH: Yes, sir.

SL: And you were having some success with that.

HH: Yes.

SL: And John Kennedy gets shot, and you hear this awful conversation, and you go home, and [*TM coughs*] you go to the office, and you write your editorial about how awful that was, that . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . anyone would wish that kind of thing on a president.

HH: Yeah.

[03:23:15] SL: And the public response—was that the beginning, you think, of . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . any animosity toward you?

HH: Yeah, yeah, because there was kind of a shock. And it—rightly so because I'd gone along for all these years. How many years had I been back? [19]63 to let's say [19]50, thirteen years. I'd gone along for thirteen years writing stuff about how grand the Boy Scouts were. All support United Way, you know. Writin' that kind of stuff. Now and then something a little more edgy,

but not much. And then here's this thing that's just kinda foaming at the mouth politically, you know, and so they were shocked that the guy said anything at all, and then he said this—they were shocked doubly. Yeah.

[03:24:11] SL: Were there any other journalists at the time that you were impressed with?

HH: Oh boy, I'll bet. Yeah. There were some people at the *Atlanta Journal* or *Constitution*. I don't know which, and I can't name them and I—but they—there were some good people there. The *Gazette* had good people. Boy, they had good people. Dumas. I would nominate Mr. Ernest Dumas for a . . .

SL: Oral history.

HH: . . . interview with you. It—it'd be good. I—you'd love it. He's a great guy. Very sharp. Very sharp.

SL: It'd be an honor.

HH: Yeah, there were a lot of—I think it was a chance for journalism to show its good side, you know. I—Scott, I was all—I felt pretty much alone when I started this nonsense that "the niggahs should have a right to vote" and, you know, because there was no one—there didn't seem to be anyone supporting me. I wasn't even sure the blacks did, by the way. And I thought, "Okay, just you wait." We're talkin' probably about the Civil Rights Act of

1964.

SL: Okay.

HH: "Just you wait. Just you wait. Wait till these Southern Baptist preachers get up in the pulpit and start talkin' about this. Wait till these Methodists do—wait till the Catholic Church—now, you just wait till the Catholic Church—till the priests of the Catholic Church get up and talk about this. This whole thing's gonna swing." Guess what. I was smokin' the wrong stuff, man. That never happened. "Just wait till labor unions"—ah, you can forget labor unions. And I thought, "I won't be alone then." "Yeah, you will [*laughs*] because there was nobody coming up. Nobody stepping to the plate."

SL: So there—I mean, surely there were some folks in the—that area that . . .

HH: Absolutely. The four or five guys that I gathered—that I met with on Friday afternoon to drink beer, they were all on my side.

[03:26:23] SL: Now, did you have a particular place that y'all always went?

HH: Yeah, the Villa.

SL: Tell me about the Villa.

HH: The Villa—I'm tryin'—I can almost tell you the incarnation of it. I think that when Blytheville Air Force Base came in [19]41 or



[19]42, I think that building was one of their buildings out there, and these things all went up for sale after it—they closed it down. [*Clears throat*] And I think it was hauled into town, and it became the little office of a tailor. And then it became the office of Roy Hossell. And Roy made the first pizza in eastern Arkansas, next to me. I probably made the first one. I used to have to go to Memphis to get oregano. [*SL laughs*] And you can buy it—you could buy it in Armarillo, Arkansas, today, probably. But [*clears throat*] anyway—and then—and I—and it—what—let's see, it was a—it was one of the Hossells. I can't remember his name. And [*clears throat*] I went in there one time, and he was workin'. Oh boy, it was workin', and the temperature in that damn place must've been ninety-eight degrees. Oh boy, it was hot because he had the pizza ovens turned up, no air-conditioning—he had the doors open. Oh, it was hot. But he made a success out of it. He was a good entrepreneur. And then Virgil Boyd bought it and opened up Blytheville's finest dining place. [*SL laughs*] And we used to go there not to dine, but to drink beer late in the afternoon on Friday. And so that—there were those guys. I'll tell you something else. I think in any society you go in, that if I'm—let's say I'm an Armenian and easily identified as Armenian, and

you're a white guy, and this is a white guy, and that's a white guy, and Armenian is white, too, but you know, Anglo. You're all Anglos. And over here is a—an easily identifiable minority group. I'm a minority of one or two. You know, me and my wife and my daddy-in-law so—and some of the whites really hate that minority group. They'd talk about 'em. I as an ethnic minority will join the whites. "They're no good," and—you know. And this was the way the Jews were in Blytheville and the—what is Greg?

SL: Lebanese.

HH: Lebanese. And the Lebanese. Not Greg but his father and grandfather, you know. They were racists because they wanted to identify with the mainstream. But boy, I'll tell ya—now and then I'd be at a cocktail party, and the Jewish wife would come up and be very solicitous of me. "How are you?" You know, and so forth. And I thought, "She's on my side, you know."

SL: Uh-huh. Yeah.

HH: But she didn't dare speak out. [03:29:34] And so—did you ever meet Greg's mother?

SL: No. Oh, well, actually, I think I did meet her one—we spent the night at his house there one—we were going . . .

HH: She was one of the most beautiful women in America.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Oh my gosh. But—so, yeah, I felt some support. Not much that made much noise, but, yeah I felt some support.

[03:30:00] SL: Well, what about—so the Civil Rights Act comes out. How did the sheriff, the county sheriff, relate?

HH: Oh, I don't know about the sheriff. He probably would say,



"Obey the law." But we had a police chief then who was a hero and never recognized as such, and some of that may've been my fault as editor. I may not have given him enough press. But George went around to every public institution—Holiday Inn, if we had one—I think we did have one by then—the restaurants—and explained—said, "This is the law." Said, "If a black guy comes through that door, you've gotta serve him." And he said, "Let's don't have any trouble about this." He said, "It'll be easy to serve him and take his money and forget him." Said, "But if we have trouble, you're gonna be arrested, you understand?" You know, you know, and he did that, and it was a prophylactic for the city, you know, and sure enough, on the morning it went into effect, here comes a black guy in a big *[laughs]* car with a Illinois license plate. Pulls in at the Razorback Cafe restaurant. Walks in, looks at the menu, orders from the menu, goes into the restroom and comes back out, you know, and has a paper or

something. He's reading and eating and everything. Gets up, and he notices that people are, you know, gathering in the corners and looking at him and everything. He said, "Oh my gosh." He said, "The Civil Rights Act goes into effect today, doesn't it?" And the guy behind the counter said, "Yeah." He said, "Listen," he said, "I didn't come in here to integrate this place." He said, "I'm a dentist. I'm on my way from Illinois somewhere to Memphis to see my mother or grandmother who's ill," and he said, "I've been drivin' all night," and he said, "I wanted something to eat, and I wanted some coffee. I wanted to go to the bathroom." He said, "So I'm sorry, but you've been very good and nice to me," and left a nice tip and left. *[Laughs]* That was our integration incident. It worked real well.

SL: Yeah, and it was probably as smooth as it could've possibly been.

HH: Yeah, yeah.

[03:32:11] SL: Yeah. You know, one thing we didn't talk about is the Southern Manifesto that happened up in Washington, DC. I forget—was it, like, nineteen senators and I forget how many representatives signed it. But what was that about? What was the Southern Manifesto about?

HH: My take on it is that everybody could feel the court and the

Congress moving toward the side of democracy and liberty, and that it was inevitable, you know. A guy I know who was a farmer and a racist said at a cocktail party one night—I remember him saying this clearly—he said, "Did you ever read the Constitution?" He said, "These people have got a right to government just like you do. These people got a right to buy a cup of coffee just like you do." He said, "There can't be any difference between citizens and"—this guy—I thought, "Whoa!" This was before I was on board that train, you know, and I was really knocked over by it. So I think there was general feeling—this was way before the Civil Rights Act of 1964—there was a general feelin' that the nation was headed that way. But we Southerners were gonna hold up our hands and swear, "No, sir, it won't happen on our watch." And I don't know, but I don't know when—that's kinda interesting about what precipitated it. If you'd've asked me—if we'd been walkin' down the street and you said, "By the way, what precipitated the Southern Manifesto?" I'd say, "Oh, the looming Civil Rights Act of 1964." Not true. Not true. Not true. It was something else, wasn't it?

[03:33:54] SL: It was *Brown v. Board of Education*.

HH: Yeah, 1954.

SL: Mh-hmm. I would guess.

HH: Or [19]52.

SL: I thought maybe that was fifty—I guess it was [19]54.

HH: [Nineteen] fifty-four?

SL: I think so.

HH: That's what it was, yeah. The integration of the schools. Yeah.

SL: May've been [19]52. Yeah.

HH: Yeah.

SL: I just always assumed that.

HH: No, that's—no, that's—that's gotta be it. That's gotta be it and—because I remember—again, and I hate to quote so many cocktail party conversations, but that's . . .

SL: That's good. That's what . . .

HH: . . . where you'd hear these things, you know. And I remember a surgeon saying, "Some people will not have their children"—and he meant himself—"goin' to school with *N*-words." He said, "For some of us, that won't work." I don't know what he did, by the way. I think his kids may've been through public school by that time. I don't know.

[03:34:54] SL: Mh-hmm. Well, in your memoirs I—you labeled the Southern Manifesto. You called it a birth certificate, which I loved. What was it a birth certificate for? Do you . . .

HH: Well, I wrote a column for a little—there's a little alternative

newspaper where I live. I wrote a column last week citing the certification and formalization of the Republican Southern strategy, and that it—the Southern Manifesto antedates it, of course—but that in 1980 Ronald Reagan began his campaign in Philadelphia, Mississippi, and I said, "Well, liberals like me who live on vision and starve on reality thought that was a pretty good sign because that's where these people had been killed in the service of civil rights and everything." That wasn't what it was about, Mr. Haines, it was about racism, because he uttered several times the phrase that means "segregation," when he said, "We've got to protect states' rights." And, oh, our illusions were shattered then, you know. We knew what it was about. So I think the Southern Manifesto, I think, was really the birth of Southern strategy 'cause you didn't have to be very smart, and I wasn't, for God's sake. But to see that if you—if you're faced with states that are historically Democratic, and "Here's a chance—they're handing 'em to you. You want 'em?" "Yeah," you know. You look at that and say, "Well, let—let's have a Southern strategy," which is based only on racism. What else could it be based on—the price of cotton? I don't think so.

Hmm.

[03:37:01] SL: Hmm. Well, so what about Martin Luther King?

HH: Well, a friend of mine who was a Presbyterian preacher was in one of these assemblies over in North Carolina with King, and King said—and this friend of mine's name was Martin, also. And King said, "I don't know where the Civil Rights Movement is going." He said, "They've just about left me behind." And he said, "I intend to catch up." And so a good place to catch up would be black labor, and when the Memphis garbage men went on strike, he came to Memphis, which I think was a good move. I was in Memphis the day he was killed, and I remember—I'm such a selfish idiot—but I remember driving across a bridge and I got the news. I was a student at Memphis State, and I got the news at—on the radio that Martin Luther King had been shot and killed at the Lorraine Motel, and I thought, "I hope a black man did it." Now, that was kind of a dumb thing to hope. A man lost his life, you know. And no, of course a black man didn't do it. And I don't—that day lives with me and always will—and should. And I got home, and I was just upset, almost to the point where I didn't wanna eat. I mean, you know, my stomach was troubled. I was upset. And I had stomach trouble back then, by the way. And the phone rang, and it was Dr. Helen Nunn, and she was a black woman. She had a Ph.D. in home economics from Cornell. And she and I were not friends but were certainly



acquaintances. And she called me out of the blue. She'd never called me before. Never called me again, you know. And she said, "Mr. Haines." I said, "Oh, Dr. Nunn, how are you?" She said, "I called to see if you're all right." And I was so touched. This black woman—I said, "I think I am." I said, "I just got home from Memphis, and I think I'm okay, but," I said, "are you okay?" She said, "Yes, we'll live with this." And that was about the extent of our conversation. I'll never forget that. Never forget that. And I told her—I said, "I wish I'd've thought to call you first."

SL: Yeah.

HH: But I didn't, which is typical. Which is typical. But on the stomach business, they'd cart me off to the hospital about once every eighteen months over . . .

SL: What was going on?

HH: Undiagnosed stomach pains that were terrific. Just terrific. And they—it was always at night. I mean, it was always after supper, you know. And I was smoking then. I drank pretty heavily. I still drink, but I drank pretty heavily then. And I drank this awful freeze-dried coffee [*SL laughs*] up at the office, cup after cup after cup. And my stomach—and with the tension, you know, accompanying the job, my stomach just said,

"Enough of this!" And they never did diagnose anything. They said there's some irritated tissue [*makes clicking sound*] and said, "That hurts sometimes." They said, "But that's all we find." They said, "Hold your drinking down." Hmm. "And cut your cigarettes down." Mh-hmm. "And watch your diet." Mh-hmm. And I didn't do any of it. So in another year, eighteen months, I'd be back on the gurney. I member [*laughs*] I was lying back there on the gurney, and I looked over, and Bob Porter was brought in on a gurney, and he was lying there, and he had his eyes closed, and I didn't have my eyes closed, and I thought, "Gee, Bob looks awful." And they took him on down the hall, and I thought, "And I bet if anybody sees me, they'd say [*laughter*], 'He looks awful,' too." But—so . . .

SL: That's something else.

HH: . . . I had a little adventure like that, which—well, I won't go—yeah.

[03:41:37] SL: Well, okay, so life in Blytheville—early [19]60s, mid-[19]60s—there's some polarization going on. There's . . .

HH: Yes. Let me say this. In view of the popular view at the time, they had every right in the world to come and beat me up or something. The people generally were sweet. They were so good and so kind. And course, I don't remember them so well.

The guys that threatened me, you know, usually over the phone, usually after a couple of drinks, usually after six o'clock in the evening—ding! "Are you the editor of the deleted newspaper?" "Yeah." "Well, I'm gonna tell you somethin'." I thought, "Oh gosh." [*Laughs*] I remember those, but I don't remember all these—I do—at this moment I do remember all these wonderful people, many of them women, and then some whom I know didn't agree with me or who didn't want to say—didn't want to articulate their agreement. And it's okay. That's okay. If we all went around telling the truth, [*SL laughs*] life would be unbearable, you know.

[03:42:57] SL: So you actually got physical threats? Is that . . .

HH: Yeah. Not every night. You know, you would think—the way I'm talking, you'd think, "Oh, he just lived under this constant fear." Oh, it wasn't that bad. It wasn't that bad. But now and then—bang! And I didn't have a lot of courage. I'm basically a coward. But both of my grandmothers I said earlier were German. And I think I inherited their conscience, you know. And I would just get so disgusted with myself. I'd read something in the paper that was wrong—not that the paper had it wrong, maybe, but that the mayor maybe had it wrong—he was just wrong, and I said, "I'm not gonna touch that

editorially." And I'd go in there and shave, and I'd say, "You—hey, you chicken! [*SL laughs*] Are you not gonna editorialize on that? That was embarrassing. That was ridiculous! That was awful!" And so then I'd do it, and it'd come out in the paper, and I'd read it, and I'd say, "Oh gosh, I wish I hadn't said that."  
[*SL laughs*]

[03:43:56] SL: Well, what about the—we kinda dropped the ball on the Klan. Was there ever any activity around town, around that area, with the Klan?

HH: One guy told me, and I don't know who he was, but he called me—I think he was bluffing—and he said, "Well, you know, we still got the Klan." And I said, "Oh, sure." I didn't know any such thing. And he said, "We were talkin' about you the other night." I said, "Oh, well." And he said, "I just wanted you to know that." And about the end of the conversation—and—but I never heard of any Klan in Blytheville. I never heard of any Klan in Osceola. I did hear of it in the deep southern part of the county. Whether it was—that was true or not, I don't know. I know that we got some—or I got, perhaps, some bad mail from the southern end of the county. And so there had been Klan activity down there, but whether it continued, and they didn't—they—there was a small cross burned in my yard, [*SL laughs*]

which really didn't—like I say, I am cowardly—but which really didn't upset me because I was upset—so upset about something else that there just wasn't room for me to be fearful at the time. [Laughs] And it was small. It was about, you know, five feet tall. But that wasn't the unusual thing. The unusual thing about it is I remember when Daisy Bates brought her cross out and the *Gazette* made a picture of it. And I remember the strange configuration. Here was a piece of half-inch by one and a half or two inches running this way [gestures horizontally to his left] and then there was a bolt. And then there was the same strip of wood running back this way [gestures horizontally to his right] and then it was put together in a cross. And it was that double stuff bolted together, which was really unusual stuff, and that's what—my cross looked exactly like Daisy Bates's cross. And I never wrote a story on it or did anything because that's what I think they wanted, you know. So I acted like it didn't happen. I didn't tell my family. I didn't tell my wife or my children because I think they woulda been scared, maybe, and I don't know. But nothing happened. We never had a bomb or anything thrown at our house.

[03:46:35] SL: Did you start gaining any kind of camaraderie with other liberal journalists across the state?

HH: Oh yeah, and that was the payoff, and believe me, it was thin wages. But I'd go to a cocktail party in Little Rock or Memphis, and they would say, "That guy there is a liberal. He lives in the Arkansas Delta." And you know, and say, "Oh, really? Well, I must meet him," you know. [*SL laughs*] And I would bask in the glow, you know, and they would say, "He was courageous," and I wouldn't deny it as I would today. And then that cocktail party would end at eleven o'clock, and that'd be all over, you know. [*Laughter*]

SL: Yeah.

[03:47:16] HH: And it'd last an hour or two. And we—let's see, Hugh Patterson and I were pretty good friends. And I was tryin' to think of the other guys at the *Gazette*—Leroy Donald and Richard Allen and all—Charlie Allbright. And, yeah, yeah, I was friendly with those—I guess those were . . .

[03:47:46] SL: Roy Reed, maybe?

HH: I beg your pardon?

SL: Roy Reed?

HH: I never knew Roy Reed.

SL: Never? Okay.

HH: I never knew Roy Reed. I wish I had've. I wish I had've. But we were—the thing that puzzled me about Arkansas journalists

was for some reason I always thought that Paul Greenberg at Pine Bluff was part of us, but he wasn't. He was sort of a civil libertarian, but he was otherwise a conservative and remains so today. Which—he's a very smart man, a very good writer. His prose is just seamless. But I don't—and I don't know if that was a transformation on Paul's part, you know, and was he once liberal down the line and became conservative, or was he always conservative, but as far as civil rights was concerned, believed in stuff like the Constitution and the law? I don't know.

SL: Don't know. Don't know.

HH: I admire his work.

[03:49:00] SL: Yeah. Well, so how long were you with—how long did you have your paper?

HH: Well, the family had it from 1928 till I sold out in 1983, I believe it was. So I was there from [19]50 to [19]83. Thirty-three years.

[03:49:24] SL: I guess the trend back then was that chains were buying up papers. Is that . . .

HH: Yeah, yeah, and, gee, when I found out—I had no idea our paper was worth anything. I knew it was worth something, of course. But when I found out that it was worth millions, I asked my—I was out looking—I was not out, but I was looking, actively

looking, for a job. And I told my board, and I think I mentioned before, that we were sitting on top of the New Madrid Fault, that if that thing went off that we'd never be able to sell it, and that today we could sell it for pretty good money. They were putting in a small television station, and so they were looking for some capital, so we sold it. Thank you, Jesus.

[03:50:19] SL: [*Laughter*] Well, okay, so now, what about your social life after you and your first wife split up? What happened there? I mean . . .

HH: Well, see, I moved into a little apartment. A little about eight or nine hundred square feet.

SL: This was about when?

HH: In [19]74.

SL: Okay.

HH: January of [19]74, I believe.

SL: Okay.

HH: And [*laughs*] I dated around, you know. They—there really weren't a lot of [*laughs*] people in Blytheville, Arkansas, that I wanted to date. But I dated here and there a little bit and had just about run [*laughs*] out of options when I went to this wedding in Memphis. And I went there for the purpose of meeting a girl, and I went around looking at the third finger on



the left hand, you know. [*SL laughs*] And all of 'em were married. They were all married. And then there was this very pregnant woman, eight and a half months pregnant. She was way out to here. And she and I started talking, you know—and just talkin', you know. And course, she wasn't drinking, you know, and I—I'd get a beer, and we'd talk and—you know. And so, finally, I said—I kept looking around, and I said, "You know, I haven't met your husband." And she said, "Well, I don't have a husband." And I said, "Oh gosh, what is this? 'City Girl Has Baby Without Husband.'" Yeah, okay. And she said, "He's dead." I said, "Whoa!" I said, "What happened?" She said, "Well, he was thirty years old, and he was a lawyer in Memphis, and he got pancreatic cancer." When you get pancreatic cancer, there's not much hope for you. And here she was, about to have the baby, you know. And so I said, "Well," I said, "I tell you, I'm going down to a little club downtown called Jefferson Square and listen to this guy sing." He was pretty good. He was a faculty member at Southwestern/Rhodes College, and he was good. So she went with me, and we spent the evening listening to him and talking, and we got along real well. So I asked her—I said, "What are you doing Friday?" "Oh, nothin'." I said, "Well, I'll tell you"—I said, "Let's have lunch." "Okay." So we had lunch

on Friday. And you know, one thing led to another and—and then her parents hit town. Her parents are a little younger than I am and—a year or two.

[03:52:52] SL: Let's see, now, how old were you at this time?

HH: Fifty-four.

SL: And how old was she?

HH: Twenty-seven.

SL: Okay.

HH: I'm twenty-seven years older than she, and she is twenty-seven years older than our daughter. And she was born on the same day, the same year, as Mark, my best friend, who was the first member of my boxing club. I don't know that this is important. I'm sure it's not. And so anyhow, I didn't go to town after the parents came for the birth of the baby, you know. But they didn't stay forever. Thirty days, they were gone. So she and I started dating. And, lord, I've never dated anyone [*laughs*] since, I mean, you know. We've gotten along very well. She takes good care of me in my dotage.

[03:53:43] SL: So how long was it before y'all married?

HH: One year. We dated from November—October or November of 1980 through [19]81 and got married the second of January of [19]82, so about a year.

[03:54:05] SL: So you sold the paper not long after.

HH: That's true. That's true. And I would—I was—I'm so glad I did. I was able to devote more time to the bébé, whom I adore, and she—she's a great child for an old man [*SL laughs*] because I could go by her bedroom door and couldn't tell if her radio was on or not. She kept it that low. [*Laughter*] And we got along great. And she and—she's my number four daughter. And my number three and my number four daughter were da—were babies I talked to when they were infants, when I could hold them from my hand to my elbow, you know. It was—I would talk to them, talk to them, talk—because I'd read about communicating with babies. They said they can understand more than they can express and it—you know, whereas if you told me that two and two is four, I'd say, "Oh yeah, sure it is." You'd get a reaction from me. They can't give you that reaction 'cause they can't talk yet.

SL: Right.

HH: And they said, "But it's important to talk to them." So I talked to both of 'em. Both of 'em were 4 points. And both of 'em give me great pleasure. [*Laughs*] So do the other two.

[03:55:29] SL: Yeah. Well, so how long did y'all stay in Blytheville?

HH: Not long. Not long. We—my mother was getting feeble, and I

moved her to a nursing home in Memphis.

SL: You had already lost your father?

HH: I'd already lost my father, way back in 1967, maybe. Sometime like that. And I moved Mother into a nursing home. Well, it really wasn't a—it was a—what do they call it? A residence living or something. They've got a name for it. And I moved into her house, and [*laughs*] I moved my books into Dad's books and Mom's books, and I had a room full of books. And I finally called a library. I said, "Can you come?" I said, "I've got about three or four hundred books, and I can't take 'em to the Memphis house," because the Memphis house was full of books. After all, her first husband was a lawyer, you know, so he read a lot of books. And we lived in that house, and finally [*laughs*] Melinda said, "You know, why are we living in Memphis and Blytheville?" Said, "Why don't we just move one place or the other?" I said, "I can't argue against that."

SL: Yeah.

HH: I said, "The reason we're living here is because I have lived here since 1928 and I'm reluctant to leave, but you're right." So we sold the Memphis house and moved to Memphis—I mean, sold the Blytheville house and moved to Memphis.

[03:57:05] SL: You had some friends, though, in Blytheville, some

best friends, didn't you? I mean—and actually I'm now kinda regretting we didn't talk about some of the local characters in Blytheville. We've talked about the sheriff a little bit. Now, you didn't say anything about him explaining—going to all the civic clubs and explaining the sodomy laws. [*HH laughs*] What was the deal on that?

HH: I think George—that was the cap—the police captain's name, police chief's name.

SL: What was his last name?

HH: Ford.

SL: Ford.

HH: George Ford.

SL: Okay.

HH: Great guy. Heroic man. I think George's idea was this: that if you've got a law that's really bad, really no good, enforce it, you know. And so I think what he was doing was tellin' these civic clubs that "this law's on the books, and if we catch you doin' anything with your wife that's not intended to procreate, that you've—then you've broken a felony law and you'll be prosecuted to the full extent of it." [*Laughs*]

[03:58:23] SL: What kind of examples did he give?

HH: Well, I don't want to really go into—he—they weren't crude.

SL: Right.

HH: And they weren't clinical. But he said, "Some men like to fondle their wife's breasts and even kiss their breasts and this." He said, "You can't do that according to Arkansas law." [Laughter]

SL: I bet the room was quietened.

HH: The room was very solemn. [Laughter] There were a lot of guys staring into their plates. [Laughter]

[03:58:49] SL: Now, also there was a—you had a meeting. When was the first time you met Jimmy Carter?

HH: Oh yeah, I'm glad you asked about that because my son-in-law would just kill me. The guy that lives in this house would just kill me if I hadn't—if I didn't bring this story up. Jimmy Carter was about to give the Panama Canal away to the Communists, and the Right Wing and the right-thinking people were on the march to prevent it. And so he decided to have a series of meetings up at the White House, where he'd bring people in from the—some states where he—I think he thought the senators were wavering, maybe. I don't know. And so Bill Clinton, who handled Jimmy Carter's campaign in the South, believe it or not—and Bill was attorney general then. And Bill Clinton was the chairman for getting up a group from Arkansas and bringing to DC. And he—I can't tell you who all he included,

but he included me and David Pryor, who was governor then and, of course, himself, and a labor leader who was a little guy that gave me a pain in the neck, although we were on the same side politically.

[04:00:08] SL: Becker?

HH: Thank you very much. Yeah, it was Becker.

SL: Bill Becker.

HH: And Joe what's-his-name, who is former attorney general . . .

SL: Purcell.

HH: Thank you very much. And Joe Purcell was a—and that's all I remember. There were probably a couple more. So we flew up to Washington. I think we flew up in the morning, and we had an appointment at the White House that afternoon about two o'clock. And so David Pryor and Bill and I were walking toward—as we approached the gate, the same thought was going through my head—"How are these guys gonna identify us and let us in the White House," you know. And I thought, "Well, I've got identification. I've got a driver's license. I've got a Social Security card. Lord knows what else, you know." And so David said, "How are they gonna identify us and let us into the White House—know whether to let us in the White House?" I said, "We're gonna show 'em our driver's license." He said, "I don't

have a driver's license." I said, "David, how can you live and not have a driver's license?" He said, "I'm governor." He said, "A state policeman drives me anywhere I want to go." And I said, "That's right. Okay." And he said, "So what do I show 'em?" I said, "Well, you show 'em your Social Security card." He said, "I don't think I have one." I said, "Give me your wallet!"

Meanwhile, we're getting real close to the gate. I said, "Give me your wallet, and I'll see what you've got in here." He said, "I don't have a wallet." [SL laughs] [04:01:38] And we—by this time we're standin' at the gate, and this guy, you know, has got a clipboard there. I think he's got our Social Security—I don't remember what he had. But anyway, I said, "Bill, take care of the governor here and try to get him through this gate, but," I said, "I'm going in and have a cup of coffee with the president." [SL laughs] And so they came right on—they came in pretty quick, you know. Bill was good about it.

[04:01:59] SL: Well, now, wasn't there another meeting that happened in the Blytheville area or maybe—it seems like you were someplace else. There was a—another candidate or some issue that was up, and it was before Carter became president. Seems like there was a—he was in the room that—and he—it was just kind of a—an aside that he was there.



HH: You may be talking about Lyndon Johnson.

SL: Maybe so.

HH: 'Cause I was at a cocktail party—here we go—I was at a cocktail party in Washington. And everybody there except me was either a judge or a senator or something, and they were all state judges and state senators and, you know, and so forth—minor topwaters. None of 'em big-feeding fish, you know. Topwaters. And so this guy comes—and there's a lot of flow through in the room. This guy—this tall guy comes in. He's holdin' a drink. He said—he kinda reminded me of—I've met Bear Bryant on a couple occasions, and believe me, that guy looks clear down into your soul or your heart and probably sees the back side of it. [SL laughs] I don't know. No, no, you will feel his stare. You really will. And this guy was a lot the same way. Lot the same way. And he came up to me, and he was tall. God, he was tall. And he looked down at me, and he said, "What is your name?" And I said, "Hank Haines." And we shook hands. He said, "I'm Senator Johnson." Well, there were senators crawlin' all over the place, you know. And I was about to say, "Where are you from?" No, I did. I said, "Where are you from Senator?" He said, "This is my wife, Lady Bird." I said, "I know where you're from." And we exchanged a few—Lady Bird said nothing,

[*laughter*] and we exchanged a few pleasantries. But it was a party for—mainly for Arkies, but there was a guy there from the Texarkana paper, and so he had license to invite Texans in, you know, and everything. And so I met Lyndon Johnson briefly that day.

SL: What about your ties with . . .

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Oh, okay, let's switch tapes.

TM: Yeah.

[Tape stopped]

[04:04:18] HH: But where were we when we stopped?

SL: Well, we'd been—we'd just been—we'd just finished with Lady Bird Johnson.

HH: Yes.

SL: And—but we were wanting—I was trying to jog your memory about Jimmy Carter in Atlanta, I guess.

HH: In Atlanta, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Yeah.

SL: Is that where we were? We were . . .

TM: I believe so. Yeah, you were just starting the question, and we'd moved on, I think, from Lady Bird and the party.

SL: Yeah. Okay.

HH: Okay.

SL: Are we good in there?

KK: Yeah, good.

SL: Are we rolling?

TM: Yeah.

[04:04:48] SL: Okay, so tell me about the trip to Atlanta.

HH: That was funny. That was strange. But I was invited to Atlanta along with—I was tryin' to think—there was an attorney from Blytheville and I, and we were invited down there because Hubert Humphrey was coming in to test—to somehow—he was testing the waters on running for president. What were you gonna say?

SL: Now, what was your attorney's name?

HH: Oscar Fendler.

SL: Okay, now, I want to get back to him a little later.

HH: Okay.

SL: But so, you, Oscar . . .

HH: And—well, it was—there was—there were some big shots—like, there was a guy named the J. B. there. And they'd say, "Hey, J. B., you want to have"—we were waiting on Hubert Humphrey's plane. See, Lyndon probably put him in a Piper Cub

to come down. No kidding. Not really. I'm kidding because—  
but it was a twin engine, prop plane, nothin', you know—took  
hours. But anyway, there was a guy there at the—with the party  
to greet him at the airport named J. B., and it was—and I was  
calling him J. B. "J. B., yeah, you want a beer, J. B.? Here."  
You know, and so forth. And found out it was J. B. Fuqua, head  
of Fuqua Industries, who is a heavy, heavy hitter and founder  
and benefactor of the J. B. Fuqua business administration school  
at Duke University. A friend of mine—they were flying over  
Duke, and Bill said—and Fuqua said, "What's that down there?"  
And he said, "Oh, that's Duke University." He said, "It's a great  
school." Bill was vice president. A vice president. They had a  
bunch. He said, "It's a great school." And before he was  
through—Bill's a great guy, Bill Green—and Bill sold him on the  
idea of starting the Fuqua School of Business down there. But  
anyway, I didn't know who J. B. Fuqua was. [SL laughs]  
[04:06:52] And so we waited, and Hubert got off the old prop  
airplane and came in and talked with us a few minutes. A great  
guy. We all loved him, and we were ambivalent about LBJ  
because of Vietnam, you know. And I guess LBJ had announced  
he wasn't running by then. I don't really know. And so we  
went—Humphrey said, "I've got to talk to a regional or national

convention of B'nai B'rith downtown," you know. And he said, "I'll meet you at J. B. Fuqua's house at seven o'clock." So we went downtown, not because they'd let us into the B'nai B'rith, but because we just went downtown. And there was a hotel and Humphrey went in, and there were demonstrators outside, and they had signs. They had signs that were all made up. You could go over there and pick up a sign, you know. And I said, "Oscar, let's demonstrate." I don't know where—I think they were demonstrating against the war, but I'm not sure. I said, "Let's go over there and pick up a sign," and he said, "Okay." So Oscar and I started on that. R. E., his brother, is probably how we were there. R. E. was treasurer of the whatchamacallit county Democratic Party, Atlanta Democratic Party. And R. E. said, "Don't"—and he picked up a finger like [pointing in a scolding manner] "Don't you pick—two pick [*unclear words*]. Don't get those signs," you know, and everything. And he said, "You'll get your picture in the paper is what you'll do." He said, "Put those down." "Okay." The next morning we pick up the paper and guess whose picture is in it? R. E. Fendler.

[*Laughter*] But anyway, we went out to Fuqua's house and were charmed by Hubert Humphrey. He was really good. And then about midnight we were back at the Atlanta Airport, and I said,

"Let's have a beer." I said, "Gosh, you know, we did that drinking earlier, and we hadn't had anything to drink in hours, six hours, maybe." I said, "Let's have a beer." And she—the lady said, "You can't get a beer in this airport after eleven o'clock or twelve o'clock." And I said [*laughs*—well anyway, and I said, "Well, I'll tell you what, Oscar. I know where we can get a beer." And he said, "Where?" I said, "New Orleans." And we put our tickets up, and we said, "Change these to New Orleans—New Orleans to Memphis." They said, "Okay." So we went—we got into New Orleans about two or three o'clock, and we got our beer and oysters. We had a beer and oysters, and then we went out to the airport and got on a plane and went back to Memphis and went to a motel and went to bed.

[*Laughter*] We'd been up for over twenty-four hours. But that was a good trip. Now, what'd you want to ask about Oscar?

[04:09:50] SL: Well, you just talked about him a little bit in your memoirs.

HH: Yes.

SL: And it seemed like y'all were close for a while, but then there was some kind of split that happened. What . . .

HH: That's true. I think two things happened. Oscar changed, and I changed. And Oscar was not prepared to again be a liberal

Democrat. In fact, I imagine he died as a Republican. He died five or six years ago. Very old, ninety-two, ninety-three. And I think that's probably the size of it, becau—and also I remember he said one time—he said, "Are you gonna endorse Fulbright?" I believe it was Fulbright. I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well," he said, "I want to check with you before you write the endorsement editorial." I said, "Yeah," [*laughs*] with my fingers crossed. And I wrote the endorsement editorial, and it ran, you know. And he said, "I see you went ahead and ran the endorsement editorial without checking with me." I said, "I'll be darned. I forgot." So there was that sort of stuff. He wanted to be editor of the paper. And there wasn't room for both of us.

[04:11:04] SL: Yeah. Well now, what about—what race was that you endorsed Fulbright?

HH: Probably what—probably running against Jim Foster.

[04:11:18] SL: Yeah. But then later on you had a relationship with Bumpers, right?

HH: Yeah. Well, we were—I was on a television commercial with Fulbright, and I went to Little Rock for filming. And he was like a little boy with a bad temper. And Mrs. What's-her-name was there, a lady, you know, of fifty years, maybe—some fifty years. She was sitting there, and they said, "Okay, we're rolling," or—

you know, from—the voice from up above said that. He said, "Well, Senator, so-and-so"—you know—and you know—and they said, "Whoa! Stop! Stop it! Stop!" And Fulbright exploded profanely, "Don't you bleeping-bleepers know what's going on?" And it was awful. Now, he had done something similar down in southwestern Arkansas on the same—at the same campaign—on the same campaign. And there'd been a sort of a minority press report on this and, course, there was no press report on this. This was in a television studio. And anyway, I said—we all went out—then we all went out to get something to eat, and we were going in the restaurant in Little Rock, and I said, "I think we'll get Bill re-elected this time, but," I said, "never again will he be re-elected." And Bill said, "What? What? What is that?" And I told him what I'd said. I said, "There are too many people in this state that don't like you." And I said, "You had a terrible performance there in that television studio," and evidently, down in Texarkana or thereabouts, too. And he said, "Ah, it was nothing." Well, of course he said that. And so anyway, it came time—Dale had been—had served, what, two terms as governor? And he and I were talking, and I said, "What are you gonna do? And he said, "I don't know." I said, "Well, Bill Fulbright comes up for re-election next year," and he said, "Now, listen." He



said, "I have been for Bill Fulbright all my life." I said, "I have, too." And I said, "I'm gonna tell you what's gonna happen if you don't run. I know who'll run against him." He said, "Who?" I said, "Jim Johnson. And I know who'll win." And he said, "Who?" I said, "Jim Johnson." And I said, "You and I will have Jim Johnson for a United States Senator the rest of our lives." Not quite true, but almost, you know. "Because he'll—you'll never get him out of there." And so I said, "If that's what you want for Arkansas, then you don't run. But if you think we can do better than that, I would really appreciate it if you ran for senator." So he ran and won.

SL: That's a good story.

HH: I don't know—he may have already made up his—no, he hadn't made up his mind because he was kinda outraged that I would suggest he oppose Bill Fulbright, and I understand that. I understand that.

[04:14:38] SL: Well, sure. What about the constitutional convention? How did you get involved with the constitutional convention?

HH: The Arkansas Constitution was drawn up about 1874—about. At the conclusion of Reconstruction from the Civil War—terrible time to write a constitution. And the thing was awful. I took

real pride in the fact that wherever I spoke in favor of the new constitution, it carried. Now, I'm not a very good speaker, but I'll tell you this: I know enough—when it says the sheriff shall get no more than something like five thousand dollars a year, and he buys three new cars during his tenure, something's wrong, and so do those guys sitting at the Kiwanis Club out there in Wilson, Arkansas, or Paragould. They know it's wrong, too. Now, that was just one thing. The whole constitution was just in terrible, terrible shape, and I thought, "No one wants to run for this." And then, let's see, Hays Sullivan, big farmer—well, he pretended to be a big farmer, anyway—ran. The guy that was head of the Farm Bureau had filed. Nick Rose had filed—big farmer, married to a Lee Wilson Company heiress. So what does that tell you about our representation up there? And I filed, you know. And no one ran against any of us 'cause they didn't know what this was all about anyway. And so anyway, I got elected, and I went up there, and we just—Bob Leflar was chairman. A fine chairman. And he was so proud, and I was proud, too, that the legislature appropriated, let's say, what, a million dollars for the convention. And Bob returned two hundred and eighty thousand dollars, I think, that we didn't spend. And he sat down on the purse strings, which is good,

you know. So anyway, it—we had—I think we had a good document. I really do. I really do. And it didn't pass. I had mentioned earlier that the day before the election a policeman called me from Blytheville. I was in Blytheville. They called. He said, "Listen, they tell me we're not gonna get our pension. The police and fire department won't get our pension if this thing passes. Is that true?" Well, of course it wasn't true. But he'd been called from Little Rock by other policemen and firemen, saying that, "You can forget your pension if this new thing pa"—it didn't mention a word about pension. In fact, pensions coulda been even more liberal, perhaps, under this new Constitution. And then when we heard that all the beer truck drivers and the Coca-Cola truck drivers were all spreadin' word against it, I knew we were pretty well sunk.

[04:18:02] SL: Who was makin' those calls? I mean, what groups were really heavily opposed besides, I guess . . .

HH: The guy who—the policeman who called me—I can't remember exactly what he said, but I kinda got the idea that there is an association of state firemen and state policemen, like a labor union. And that they had put out the word to their members: "Don't vote for this thing and call and say that we don't get it." That's the idea I got. At least that's the way—that's what was

going down.

[04:18:40] SL: So what about Bill Clinton?

HH: I was—Bill was so refreshing. He came on the scene as an opponent to the congressman in Northwest Arkansas.

SL: Hammerschmidt.

HH: Hammerschmidt, who was a good fellow, good man. And I said, "Well, listen." I said, "Bill Clinton's just wonderful, whoever he is." I didn't know who he was. I said, "It's just wonderful that he would run against Hammerschmidt, but"—I said, "he doesn't have a chance." Good gosh, Bill got, what, 48 percent of the vote. Oh my goodness, that's remarkable. The guy was quite a campaigner, and I helped him in his race against—attorney general race. And then from then on out, Bill and I had a off again, on again relationship. I didn't go with him in one gubernatorial race, and I was as wrong as anybody can be. I—there wasn't anybody in that race could even hold a candle to him. I think I kinda got the idea that he was too good or something. Too perfect, you know. And I—I'm sorry—now, he has been awfully nice to me, even since he's been elected president. He sent me a—you know, some autographed stuff, and I got it framed and hanging in my house, you know. And— but we had our moments when he—he'd—with that left hand of

his he'd write me a letter, "Are you crazy?" you know. [SL  
*laughs*] "I've read your editorial. You don't need to mail it to  
me." [*Laughter*] I wish I'd've saved those.

SL: Yeah.

HH: I would have about four or five of 'em, you know, and have 'em  
all pasted up. [*Laughs*] But I was—I really like the guy. I was  
against his appointment of Tommy Robinson. Is that the guy's  
name?

SL: Mh-hmm. The sheriff.

HH: Yeah. He appointed him state highway patrol officer commander  
or—that's not his title, but something like that. And I said, "I  
don't know this guy, but I hear some strange things about him."  
He said, "Oh, wait till you meet him. You'll like him." I never  
met him, but I don't—you know, he seemed to be pretty  
flamboyant to me, and we had—we kinda fell out over that and—  
and, you know, little things go along.

[04:21:20] SL: What about Rockefeller?

HH: [*Laughs*] I—well, I was for him because I was afraid we would—  
we might get rid of the Faubus crowd, but just usher in his  
successors, and things wouldn't improve, and that I was sure  
that things would improve under Rockefeller. And by gosh, they  
did, too. And I was up at his office one day—he was a great

guy. I was up at his office one day, and it wasn't very late in the day. It was more like around noon. It may have been eleven-thirty a.m. And he said, "You want a drink?" [*SL laughs*] And I said—not to stand short, I said, "Sure," like I [*laughter*] always had a drink at eleven-thirty. And he brought out these tumblers of double—they're what I would call double old-fashioned glasses. And he put a few ice cubes in, and then he put vodka in. He said, "Here you go." Whoa! [*SL laughs*] But I finished the drink with him—in his company, and then I went back to the motel and went to bed. [*Laughter*] But he was a good fellow and good for this state. Boy, he spent a lot of money on Arkansas.

[04:22:37] SL: Yeah, his money.

HH: Yes, that's what I mean.

SL: Yeah.

HH: His money, yeah.

SL: When he couldn't get the legislation through or . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . get the bill passed, he'd . . .

HH: And he had all of those guys over in that building across from the capitol. I imagine all those guys were on his payroll.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Most of 'em. So he was quite a fellow. He really was. It's too bad. I mean, you know, I told somebody—I said, "Winthrop Rockefeller's six foot, four inches, two hundred and fifty pounds. You know, he puts on cowboy boots and now he's six-eight or something. He's one of the richest men in the world. He's got an inferiority complex. He doesn't think he measures up." He did. [04:23:22] Did you ever hear the story about Winthrop Rockefeller? He won his—what, a bronze star or a—something. He won a medal for attacking some flames and getting it away from, let's say, the powder magazine of a ship or something.

SL: That kinda reminds . . .

HH: And he burned himself really badly, and he got hospitalization, and they made skin grafts and so forth after the war and everything. And then within a few years after the war, some woman's dress caught afire at a party, and he went over there and patted that out with his hands, which people surmise took a lot of courage, and I agree. He was a fine man. He really was. What'd he die—he died of cancer. What . . .

[04:24:19] SL: I think that sounds right.

HH: Yeah, he died of cancer. He seemed to be young to be dying, to me.

SL: I like how his hair grew out.

HH: Yeah, and he grew a beard, didn't he?

SL: Yeah.

HH: I figure he did that . . .

SL: Yeah, old . . .

HH: . . . not to show his emaciation, maybe.

SL: Well, maybe so.

HH: I don't know.

SL: But his hair got long, too.

HH: Yeah, it did.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Yeah.

[04:24:40] SL: Yeah. Now, I—I'd be remiss if we didn't mention this at some point in time. I've—you know, I have a mutual friend in Greg Simon.

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: And Greg likened you to being like the Rolling Stones of Blytheville, [*HH laughs*] and that he was quite fond of going to your house and you kind of going through your record collection for him and really kind of opening up his eyes. He had a little band . . .

HH: Yeah.

SL: . . . and had a black—added a black player or two to it at one



point in time.

HH: At one point, yes.

SL: When it was probably not the most astute thing to do . . .

HH: No.

SL: . . . locally.

HH: No.

[04:25:17] SL: Well, do you wanna talk about those years? I mean, you definitely made an impression and had something to do with shaping Greg Simon early on. And he's such a wonderful guy, and he's so brilliant. I mean, I know lots of people know Greg. But didn't you tell me a story about Bumpers and Greg Simon?

HH: Oh yeah. Dale said that Al Gore called him and said, "Listen, I'm thinking about hiring Greg Simon from Arkansas, and what do you think? What do you think of that?" And Dale said that "I told him, 'Well, if you want to hire the brightest s.o.b. in Washington, DC, then you hire Greg Simon.'" And I said, "Well, I agree with that assessment of Greg." Greg was a very, very bright guy and I just—I never was around him as much as I wanted to be or he—I didn't have him around me. But I was—I—you know, I had a wife and three children and a mortgage and a full-time job, and he was a student, and we just didn't have that much time, you know. But he was a great guy. I was

a jazz aficionado, and I went to—I used to go to Washington every time—in the Blytheville Chamber of Commerce they'd say, "We need a man to go to Washington," and I'd hold my hand up, and they'd say, "Hank, you want to"—"Yeah, yeah." I liked it. I liked it. I liked going to the art gallery. Whew!

SL: Yeah.

[04:26:55] HH: And I liked the National Archives and the—I was charmed by Washington. And anyway—and I—at night I'd go to the nightclubs and listen to jazz artists, and Art Farmer was playing and Charlie Byrd and different guys. And one night I was up there listenin' to somebody play, and they were good, and they turned their back on the audience, you know, they—with their horn, you know. They turned—and I thought, "What in the world?" And I thought, "Now, that's a metaphor for what's happening with jazz in America at this time. They're playing for each other, but they're not playing for their audience." And I was sick of 'em. Sick of 'em. I wasn't sick of Duke Ellington, you know. But I was sick of these individual artists. And I told—and Jim Mayes, whom Greg will remember and will—came up here on a football scholarship under Broyles—and Jim Mayes and I were walking down—and he's older— younger—much, much younger than I am, twenty years. And

we were walking Blytheville's Main Street one day, and I said—he said—and he played the guitar pretty good, and he said, "What do you like? What—Hank, what kind of music do you like?" I said, "I'm gonna tell you something." I said, "I was—I have been a big fan of jazz." And I said, "I can't stand 'em anymore but the—you know, they—the guys have become divas, and they're temperamental, and to heck with 'em." And I said, "I'm ready to turn another direction." And so he and I started talkin' about rock and roll. And he said, "I'll tell you what you oughta do. You oughta get Aretha's *Lady Soul* album," which to this day—which was just released then—to this day remains her best album. God, I've got half a dozen of her albums. And I got it, and I said, "Oh, this is for me. This is for me." And I was under **Jim's** direction on the next three or four albums I bought. And so that's kinda where Greg's—you know, fits into this picture 'cause he heard every album I bought. [*SL laughs*] And I ended up—I went—I've got about twenty-seven hundred albums and CDs now, and—and all of this beautiful vinyl that I never play.

SL: That's good.

[04:29:08] HH: And I—and I've thought about selling it, you know. And I hate to do it, but I'm gonna die [*SL laughs*—well, if I should make up my mind to die—if I should decide to die, hell,

all those albums are gonna be out there, and no one's gonna want 'em. They're gonna go to the city dump.

SL: I'll try and not let that happen. [*Laughs*]

HH: Well, you need to—you know.

SL: Yeah.

HH: 'Cause I'll guarantee you, you won't like every album I've got. You won't like all two thousand pieces of vinyl I've got out there. I guarantee you that. But boy, there'll be some that you'll cherish. One of 'em is Duane Allman collection. I think it's three pieces of vinyl, you know. Three LPs. It's terrific. Boy, it's good.

[04:29:55] SL: Well, now, were you influenced at all by any of the Sam Phillips stuff—Elvis and . . .

HH: Well . . .

SL: . . . Cash and . . .

HH: . . . sure, sure. I didn't think much of Johnny Cash. He didn't rock, you know. Elvis, by the way, did rock—except when they made one of those dad-gum Elvis movies.

SL: Yeah.

HH: You know, and he would sing "Blue Hawaii." Oh, gosh, you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

HH: But his other stuff—boy, it was good. Gosh darn, it was good.

[04:30:27] SL: What about—oh—I mean, did you ever get to see  
Elvis when he . . .

HH: No, I never saw him. My sports editor dated a woman in  
Memphis, and she managed a cinema, and Elvis used to come to  
the movie house on Cleveland near North Parkway, I guess—  
near the Sears store. Big Sears store. And she would be there  
to see that things went all right 'cause he would come in at  
midnight with his entourage, you know.

SL: Yeah.

HH: And—but I never did see him. I never did know him. I kinda  
knew Charlie Rich a little. Not really knew him, but we were "Hi,  
Charlie" type thing.

SL: Okay, now, I'm gonna refer to this just for a moment here.

HH: Yeah, please do. Please do.

[04:31:30] SL: You've got somethin' here that you regret, and that  
was after all your political stuff in the paper, in later years you  
kinda got lax.

HH: No, I . . .

SL: You let some people get away with some stuff.

HH: I laid—I did—I laid down—I lay down on the job. I was tired of  
fussing and fighting with those damn people. You know, even—I

even made Bill Clinton mad, and it's pretty hard to make him mad, you know. [*SL laughs*] And I just said, "Oh, that's enough of this," you know. Besides, I'd met Melinda, you know. Guess what? I was fifty-four, okay, but I was very interested in this good-looking woman with . . .

SL: You bet.

HH: . . . this little baby. And I just loved 'em both to death. Still do. And I was—you know, and here the mayor was acting in ways he shouldn't, I thought, and I was lettin' him get by with it, you know. But I really, Scott, I really didn't know enough. I, you know, I'd lost contact, so I couldn't intelligently comment on some of this politics because I didn't know enough. There were—in other years I knew more about what was goin' on than that guy did, you know, in other years. But . . .

SL: Yeah.

HH: . . . I didn't then.

[04:32:46] SL: Now, what about the one morning you were crossin' the street going to work . . .

HH: Oh my gosh.

SL: . . . at seven in the morning? What was that story?

HH: Well, there was a guy that—he was a well-known Republican, and he was a racist, and I was crossing the street, Walnut

Street, to my office. And there was a big gray car coming toward me but I—[unclear words]. Come on, it's seven o'clock in the morning, and no one's speeding at that hour. And I [unclear word], you know, and I recognized him. Let's call him Dutch. That wasn't his name. And I waved. "Hi, Dutch." And that guy hit the accelerator and really kinda rattled the—I ran. I could run then. I ran three miles a day. I could run. And really kinda—I could all—feel the wind on my trousers, you know. And a guy had told me, and I didn't pay any attention to him. He said, "You know Dutch so-and so?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Yeah, you might keep an eye on him." He said, "That guy really doesn't like you." I said, "A lot of people don't like me. I"—he said, "I know, just keep an eye"—"Okay." I didn't keep an eye close enough on him. I didn't think that guy would run over me. I think—he—there's no doubt in my mind that he meant to run over me. [04:34:01] I—soon after that—and then I had this black guy that was built like a linebacker. Boy, his shoulders were like this. [Holds hands out approximately four feet] Nice guy. Well-dressed. Dressed with shirt and a tie. And he came in, and he wanted to know who wrote that derogatory editorial—he's black—that derogatory editorial about George Wallace. And, hey, he took off his coat and wadded it up and threw it in a

chair. He said, "Who wrote that?" I said, "The guy that wrote that's in Memphis." [*SL laughs*] He said, "When'll he be back?" I said, "I don't know." And then I went down to Roland Warrington's pawnshop and bought me a little Italian-made pistol, with which I could easily hit that wall [*SL laughs*] somewhere.

[04:34:50] SL: [*Laughs*] And what'd you do with that?

HH: I put it in my top desk—I'd loaded it. I put it in my top desk drawer. And three times is all I remember, a guy came in and said, "Well, I'll tell you one thing, I'm gonna"—yada, yada, yada—and I just cracked the drawer about that far. And you couldn't see the pistol, I don't think. You know, he couldn't from over there across from my desk. But he knew that I was getting ready [*laughs*] for some heavy business, and that cooled him off. Three times that worked. That's the only time. I never pulled it out of the drawer. Never—I surely never used it. I didn't wanna use it. But I didn't wanna let some nut kill me.

[04:35:33] SL: Okay, now, what about the Razorbacks?

HH: Oh, and I wore this pin from—the Razorbacks—I became interested in Arkansas football before any man you'd know, when in 1937 or [19]38, my parents took me to Memphis to see them play the hated Ole Miss Rebels. And we went—I'm telling



you, if you haven't heard the Arkansas band stand in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel and play the Arkansas fight song, you really haven't lived to the fullest extent because, see, it's all Italian marble and glass and stuff, and it just reverberates all—you can feel it. You can feel it in your toes. It's marvelous. And I became an Arkansas fan. I was really an Arkansas fan for forever and ever. And then—but when I got back in [19]63 and after [19]63, when I would get out to the country club or someplace where I had no sense being, and a guy would say, "Well, I don't agree with you and you"—I'd say, "But—let—okay, we'll get to that. But what about those Hogs?" [SL laughs] "Well, I thought we had beat Texas," you know, and on and on. Well, we're off of the race problem now, my friend. And I think, "Thank you, Jesus, for the Arkansas Razorbacks." [Laughter] But I was interested in them before that, but I never missed a chance to support them.

[04:37:11] SL: Well, it is interesting. They are—that has become a unifier.

HH: Absolutely. Absolutely. And the *Arkansas Gazette* woulda been in real trouble had it not been for Orville Henry and the Arkansas Razorbacks.

SL: There's an argument that he actually saved that paper.

HH: I think that's going too far.

SL: Yeah.

HH: I think that's going too far, but I'm tellin' you that I knew people who just hated it, but subscribed to or bought that newspaper every day.

[04:37:44] SL: I heard that when Coach Broyles came to Arkansas, that he and Orville Henry went to every chamber of commerce, every town in Arkansas together. Got in a car, went and talked to all the high school coaches.



HH: Probably did. Frank Broyles was—it's hard to overestimate Frank Broyles. You might not like him. I—you know, I do, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

HH: . . . it's hard to overestimate him. He was—and I remember—well, you know, I spent six years of my youth playing football. I didn't know much about it, and I wasn't very good, you know. Well, I was okay, but [*clears throat*] anyway, I knew when I saw a team take the field and go through pregame drills, I knew if they'd been coached or not. It doesn't take a very smart guy to know that. And I remember when I first saw my first Arkansas football team coached by Frank Broyles, I said, "Oh, boy, this is great. This is great." [*SL laughs*] And they were pretty great.

They won the national championship.

SL: Yep.

HH: Thank you very much.

[04:38:54] SL: Well, again, it—I don't know. I think they were very popular before he came along, but there is—it's—it really—it seemed like to me he just took 'em over the top. I mean . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . he just changed everything.

HH: That's true. That's true. That's true. It became a, you know, a [*unclear words*]. And you could support the Razorbacks, even in Blytheville, where most of the people went to Ole Miss or to Vanderbilt or—you know. Arkansas—the—Fayetteville was a heck of a place to get to from Blytheville, Arkansas, in 1935. Alabama. We had a lot of people go to Alabama. And—but once the program was established under Frank Broyles, you could get up on your hind legs in Blytheville Rotary Club and say, "I think we should all rise and call the hogs." And they probably wouldn't do that, but they should. And they wouldn't have criticized you for supporting the Hogs—supporting the Razorbacks. That was the difference. Before then, you better get 'em to sing the Alabama fight song, you know. They would—but after Broyles was here a couple of years, man—oh, man,

that was beautiful. That was great. That was great. That's the way it ought to be. That was the way it ought to be.

[04:40:04] SL: Okay, now, you've talked a little bit—you—you've put a contrast here. [*Papers shuffle*] You mentioned the Chickasaws and the Razorbacks. Let's see, how do you put it? "Using Chickasaws and UA Razorbacks as diversion." I guess you're talking about the race . . .

HH: Oh, diversion.

SL: Yeah.

HH: We know . . .

SL: In the country club . . .

HH: . . . we know what that's about. [*Laughs*]

[04:40:30] SL: . . . conversation. Yeah, yeah, okay. Well, so what haven't we talked about that you wanna to talk about?

HH: Well, we got the voter fraud and Amendment 51, which were high on my list.

SL: Mh-hmm. We got the Constitutional Convention. We talked about meeting Melinda. Do you want to say any more about your daughters?

HH: Well, only that I love and cherish them. I told a woman once—you—you'll think—this woman was a college graduate, and I said—she said, "Do you have any sons?" And I said, "No." I

said, "My mother told me that boys were no good, [*SL laughs*] and I had four daughters." And she let that just fly right over—right by her. And she said, "I love my sons." [*SL laughs*] I said, "No kidding?" [*Laughter*] "You really do, do you?" [*Laughter*]

[04:41:24] SL: What about your friend, Mark?

HH: Oh, he's—Mark's terrific. I even—Mark was—let's see, I told you something Mark said that was pretty funny earlier. I can't remember what it was. But Mark said—he and I left Blytheville about the same time 'cause after I sold the paper, these guys didn't want to work for the next guy. And I don't know, he was in maybe Benton, Arkansas, workin' for a newspaper someplace, and I was living in Memphis, I think, and he said, "Coach"—well, he called me Coach. He said, "Coach," he said, "don't you miss Blytheville?" I said, "Mark, let's get somethin' straight. When I left Blytheville—at the time I left Blytheville, there was one man I could call and say, 'You wanna have a beer?' And that was you, Mark Bivens. That's who it was." And he was quiet for a minute on the line, and he said, "But I tell you what," he said, "we may not've been too much in quantity, but," he said, "you couldn't beat the quality." [*Laughter*]

[04:42:30] SL: Well, was he the same guy that was kinda givin' you

a hard time about goin' over to Memphis to that wedding?

HH: Yeah. Yeah, he said, "What are you goin' to a wedding for?" I said, "Weddings are full of women. Haven't you ever been to a wedding?" [*Laughter*] And they are full of women. And I'm sure glad I went.

SL: Yeah. It was a . . .

HH: ?Saved my life?.

SL: It was a hot day that day, I think.

HH: Whew! Was it ever. Almost a hundred degrees.

SL: Yeah.

HH: Which was okay, except that I was in that truck for about three hours without any air-conditioning.

[04:43:02] SL: [*Laughter*] You know, what about the delta and what was done to the delta agriculturally? I mean, didn't it used to have—wasn't it—didn't it used to be forested?

HH: Well, of course.

SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about what . . .

HH: Well, the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company, the Three States Lumber Company, and probably one other lumber company, came in there about 1918—around the First World War—around that period—well, they started cuttin' timber. And what a harvest they made. I mean, they were—there was cypress—

huge, hundred-year-old stuff. I guess they grow a hundred years. They'd seem to grow forever. And oak and persimmon, just everything. And guess what? After, what—they started closing down the mills about 1932, which was a really great year to let go of four or five hundred jobs in Blytheville, you know, because they had cut it off. And they left—what they left [*laughs*] was a bunch of stumps with water in the low spots in between 'em, and to farm that land—beautiful land—beautiful land—to farm it, though, you had to remove those stumps and you had to do something about the low spots where the water would collect, you know. And when we got some equipment—I say "we"—I had nothin' to do with it but . . .

[04:44:33] SL: Well, they used to have to do it with mules, didn't they?

HH: Oh, they had mules, and they even had guys who were called dynamiters, and they knew how to place dynamite under a stump and get back and blow the stump up. They used mules to pull it out of the ground, after digging all around it. It was a heck of a job. And when you got it out, you had a hole, you know. And they would fill it in, and it became much less of a job when they started usin' bulldozers and equipment like that. And I remember I was out hunting one day, and they were clearing

some land over there, and they would use a bulldozer, and they'd push the root wads up into a pile, and they'd drench it with diesel fuel or something and set it on fire. And then they'd start filling in those holes with the bulldozers, you know. And I thought, "Boy, that's a job that used to take days or weeks with a crew of men, and now they do it in a matter of hours." And I thought, "Something's changing awfully fast here." And I didn't—I wasn't too much in favor of it. I didn't realize where we were headed as a nation and as a planet, but I knew one thing—that these places where I used to hunt these rabbits were disappearing—and quail. Quail cover just was gone.

[04:46:04] SL: It was the loss of the family farm. It became . . .

HH: Yeah, you couldn't make a living on a family farm. The house I'm in in Tennessee was built in 1880, and it was built on a hundred and twenty acres. It was a farm home. It sits in the middle of town now, but it was farm home. And it wasn't a commercial farm. They didn't take stuff to market. They had a couple of hogs, and they killed the hogs and cured 'em and smoked 'em, and that's what they ate for a whole year, you know. And they had garden vegetables and a cow, and they raised corn to feed the mules and so forth. But it wasn't a commercial enterprise.



[04:46:59] SL: And so after they got the thing clear-cut and . . .

HH: Well, even . . .

SL: . . . the big companies came in and . . .

HH: Yeah. Well, not right away. They used to give a guy twenty acres and a mule, and he'd farm it. Hard work, you know. And maybe he'd sharecrop it or something. I don't know. But these things kept growing because there's—you know, as you know, there's economy in a matter of scale. And then we started gettin' tractors, and we didn't have to have a guy walkin' behind a mule—a double shovel and a mule, you know, to plow it, and so the farms kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger. And chemicals—chemicals which do what? Drain into the Mississippi River down to the Gulf of Mexico, which is dead for eight hundred square miles. Too bad.

SL: Anything else you wanna talk about?

HH: No, sir.

SL: Are we done?

HH: Yes, sir.

[04:48:04] TM: How about—I got one thing. How about bein' in the early newspaper industry and seeing what's going on now with communications, the Internet, and e-mail, and all that? I mean, that's quite a change. Can you talk a little bit about what you've

seen in that time?

HH: I—I'm not sure what to make of it. I know one thing—I read the *Northwest Arkansas Times* online, and yesterday and today I've read it in a printed issue, and I certainly enjoyed it more in print than I do online. I don't know whether that's just a person who's been reading printed material all his life or whether that's a common reaction to it. But it's much more pleasant to read and has more integrity. But it's—but that doesn't answer your question. I think you raise a good question. As to what is the future of newspapers and what is the future of books, printed books, vis-à-vis this media culture that we have on the Internet. I think what they—what the Internet doesn't have, which is—the Internet doesn't have W. O. Powell or somebody as an editor. There are no editors on the Internet. Oh, there are, of course, but so much of it is just somebody's opinion. And I have people that I know, before this Obama/McCain election, were picking up all this garbage. And I said, "Where did you learn that? Where did you hear that?" "On the Internet." As if if I got it off the Internet, it was true. Oh, mercy. So I don't know. I don't know. It's gonna be interesting to see what happens.

[04:50:04] SL: I just read in the paper today that AT&T is now delivering television over their AT&T lines as part of their

broadband . . .

HH: Yeah, that's coming.

SL: . . . U-verse.

HH: I knew it was coming.

[04:50:17] SL: Also, you mentioned Obama, and you know, he did remarkably well with his use of the Internet.

HH: Yeah.

SL: And he raised more money than has ever been raised, ever.

HH: Yeah, right, right.

SL: So you can't help but feel like it's gonna be playing a major role . . .

HH: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . in every asset—every facet of life.

HH: Oh yeah. I noticed where some politician, and I don't remember the details, had said, "Now, so-and-so's got this and this," and said, "that sounds like pretty good stuff." But said, "Such-and-such has access to a vast Internet database of people and donors and everything." And said, "If you don't have that, you're at a disadvantage." And I'm sure that's true.

[04:51:05] SL: Yeah, yeah. So what about this Obama election?

HH: Well, Elizabeth called and said, "Daddy, what do you think?"

And I said, "Well, I can't tell you what I think because I'm not

even sure I know what I believe. And it's almost surreal to me that Obama's elected." And I said, "It's just"—I said, "And Elizabeth, I can't talk about it anymore," because I choke up when I [*unclear words*]. And you know, he is a black man, of course, but he's a hell of a lot more than that. He's a man of considerable education, of considerable intellectual resources, of considerable experience. Yes. And lord knows we need all of that in the coming crisis created by eight years of negligence.

SL: There, you got through it. [*Laughter*] Good job.

HH: Thank you. Thank you.

SL: Good job. Anything else?

HH: Thank you.

SL: We're good?

TM: I think we're good. Yeah.

HH: Thank you.

SL: All right, man.

[04:52:16 End of Interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]