

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

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**Arkansas Memories Project**

William H. "Buddy" Sutton  
Interviewed by Scott Lunsford  
August 4, 2011  
Little Rock, 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 Web site 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 William H. "Buddy" Sutton on  
August 4, 2011, in Little Rock, Arkansas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Buddy, we're here—uh—the Pryor Center is here at your residence in—uh—yours and Susan's residence here in—uh—Little Rock, Arkansas. Today's date is the fourth of August. The year is 2011. And we're gonna be—uh—talkin' about your life from your earliest memories up to the present day, and I hope you're ready for that 'cause . . .

Buddy Sutton: [*Laughs*] All right.

SL: . . . I'm pretty thorough. I'll . . .

BS: All right.

SL: . . . I'll spend some time just gettin' you through grade school, so . . .

BS: All right.

SL: . . . uh—I'll look for those older stories. Now we record in high-definition video and audio. And we'll—uh—give you the—all the raw footage, and we'll give you a transcript—uh—for you to read and for you to look at. And if there is anything in this interview that you're uncomfortable with lettin' the whole world know about, we'll take it out for you. We're—we're not here to . . .

BS: All right.

SL: . . . try to get at you or get stuff out of you you don't wanna talk about. Uh—this is your chance to tell your story, and we think that—uh—first of all, your kids and your grandkids and your great-grandkids are gonna love having this. But we also feel like—um—you have an exemplary career and have done much good with your life with your gift here on earth. Uh—so—uh—we want—we feel like it's time—uh—to let the kids know and everybody know that it's okay to be from Arkansas, and if you work hard and do the right thing, good things happen all around. And so that's kind of our goal. Now we're gonna encourage—um—uh—public school students . . .

BS: Okay.

[00:01:42] SL: . . . to look at this. We're—we're part of the Arkansas history lesson plan now. We're gonna encourage college researchers and students and graduate students to look at this stuff and use it. We'll encourage documentarians—anybody that's interested in Arkansas history—we're gonna encourage that they come to our website and they look at it. And we'll—we'll further their efforts as long as it's an educational pursuit and it—and it serves Arkansas and you and us well. So I think we're gonna be okay. If you're comfortable with all that,

we're gonna go ahead and get started. And if you've got any questions—uh—we can talk about it right now.

BS: Very well. No, that's very generous.

SL: Okay.

BS: I appreciate the privilege.

SL: Well, it's an honor to be sittin' across from you . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . and it's very generous—uh—for you to give us this time today, for many reasons, and I—I—it means a lot to me personally as well, so . . .

BS: Kay. Thank you.

[00:02:36] SL: Uh—we usually start with—uh—when and where you were born.

BS: Well, I was born at—um—Hope, Arkansas, March 13, 1931, right on the kinda front end of the Depression. I'm sure my [*laughs*] parents were glad that I came along at that time. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well now—uh—Buddy, what is your full name? I—you know, I know it's Buddy H.—uh—Sutton, but what does the *H* stand for?

BS: Howard.

SL: Howard.

BS: William Howard.

SL: William Howard.

BS: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: You go by—you were named Bill William Howard, but you go by Buddy.

BS: That's—that's right. Mh-hmm.

[00:03:12] SL: Now how did that come about? How did . . .

BS: Well, my—I had a grandfather named William . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . and—uh—I'm not sure how the Howard got in there. Just somebody liked it and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: . . . and—um—put—put that in there. But—uh—uh—that's really not for anybody, but the William is. Mh-hmm.

SL: Okay. And so—uh—you just kinda got nicknamed Buddy—uh . . .

BS: A sister did that.

SL: Your sister did that.

BS: Yeah, right.

SL: Okay. All right. [BS laughs] Well now, what were your—uh—what was your father's name?

BS: Claud Howard. Claud Howard. When I said I wasn't named after anybody, I wasn't thinkin'. [SL laughs] So . . .

SL: Claud Howard . . .

BS: . . . his name was Claud Howard.

SL: . . . Sutton.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh-huh. And your . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and your mother's name?

BS: Tena. *T-E-N-A*. Yeah. Tena.

SL: And her maiden name was . . .

BS: Hamilton.

SL: Hamilton.

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[00:04:00] SL: And were they from the Hope area? Did they meet  
in Hope?

BS: They were from the adjoining county.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: Nevada County, below Prescott, way—uh—down in the southern  
end of the county. And—uh—just—uh—they were dirt farmers.  
Both—both of 'em—uh—were—um—settled in that—uh—country.  
Uh—some came from Tennessee—uh—I'm told.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: And some came the other route around by—um—Alabama and  
Mississippi. But—um—they—uh—settled in that area below

Prescott.

SL: Well now, were they sharecropping? Is that what they were do . . .

BS: No, they weren't sharecropping. They . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: . . . they were early settlers. They came—uh—mo—most of them came—uh—in a wagon train from—uh—Tennessee.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: And—uh—I'm not sure why they settled—uh—in that area where they did. But—uh—they settled in that area. There's a community named Sutton there, and—uh—that's where they settled.

[00:05:09] SL: Well, now we've been joined by Brooks and . . .

BS: Now, there. We need to put Brooks out. I'm sorry.

SL: Well, [pets dog] that's o—he's okay . . .

BS: Let me . . .

SL: . . . if you're comfortable . . .

BS: No, let me just put him out.

SL: Okay, let's stop tape.

[Tape stopped]

[00:05:18] SL: Do you—did you ever know your grandparents . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . Buddy?

BS: Yes.

SL: Both sides?

BS: I was fortunate enough to know both of 'em—uh—well. They—uh—they lived—uh—until I was almost twenty. The first one died when I was almost twenty, so—uh—I got to know 'em well and experienced part of their lives with them, which was very interesting.

SL: Well, g—good! Well, let's talk—I'd love to talk about them for a while if you can—uh—conjure up some of the conversations and some of the—so I'm assuming that you guys—you and your parents lived in Hope. Is that . . .

BS: That's right. My—my dad—um—and mom—uh—tried to farm for about two years . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . and decided that that was over for them.

SL: Hard. It's—it was hard, wasn't it?

BS: That's right. They couldn't—could not make a livin'. The agricultural depression came along before the—the Great Depression, even, and it was just so hard, and I think the land was worn out and methods were not helpful.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:06:30] BS: And so he got a j—my dad got a job in Hope. Uh—  
automobiles were coming on, and—um—he got a job at a filling  
station in Hope . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . and moved there and—uh—later bought a part of it and then  
bought the—the station and did that for a while.

SL: Okay.

BS: And you know, I've—I've often said, "If we had changed places—  
uh—and I had to make it the way he did, we woulda starved to  
death."

SL: Oh!

BS: [*Laughs*] But—uh—he could scratch. He did scratch to make a  
livin'.

SL: So your mom was a—became a homemaker.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Pretty much raised the kids . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and . . .

BS: She—she always was. Yeah.

SL: And—uh—how many children did they have?

BS: They had four.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: I was the third, and then . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . we had—um—a little sister that came along after I was—  
uh—twelve years old.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: And all of us felt like we were old enough and smart enough to  
raise her. [*SL laughs*] But—uh—she was a sweet—uh—lady,  
and as—uh—we've talked earlier today, she—uh—died with MS  
day before yesterday. So it's been a sad time for us.

SL: That's a hard loss.

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[00:07:49] SL: Well, let's go ahead and get the names of your—uh—  
other siblings there.

BS: All right. My—my—uh—oldest sister was named Roxie . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . and—uh—she—uh—uh—was eight years—um—older than I.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: Then my second sister was named Sue, and she was three years  
older. And then I had the twelve-year-younger sister. Ann—  
uh—the—uh—those above me bossed me, and—and I didn't boss  
anybody. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, you—you were raised with plenty of women around

you . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . all the time.

BS: That's right.

SL: And that probably made you a better guy.

BS: Well, it may have—it [*SL laughs*] probably did. They—they would—uh—they had higher standards than most of us men did.

[*Laughter*]

[00:08:36] SL: Well—um—let's—let's go ahead and talk a little bit about your grandparents.

BS: All right.

SL: Uh—now were they—uh—in Hope as well, or were they—uh—out in the country?

BS: They were—they were in the southern part of Nevada County. They stayed there.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: There is a small town that still has a road sign there now of Sutton . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: . . . Arkansas, and that's—that's where they—uh—settled. And—uh—m—the—uh—the names—other names that were—um—in the family were Bennett and Munn, and—um—they—uh—they

had come—um—before the Civil War and—um—had—um—uh—  
farmed independently. Uh—they—they acquired some—uh—  
land, and—uh—my—my—um—um—maternal grandfather lost  
his—uh—durin' the Depression.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: Very hard, sad—uh—times . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:09:46] BS: . . . you know. And—uh—my paternal [*beeping sounds*]  
—uh—grandfather—uh—made it through. He—uh—he  
was a good manager. Everybody always said that he—he  
managed things very well, and he came through it—um—all right  
but, you know, just with enough to live on. That's—that was  
considered all right, I guess—just gettin' by and keepin' your  
head above water. But—uh—they were hardworking—uh—just  
good Arkansas people, and I guess that's what most of Arkansas  
was at that time, particularly that area—just small farms and  
tryin' to raise cotton. And—uh—it got—got where it wasn't—  
uh—worth anything and it was awful hard to raise on the kind of  
land that . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . they were trying to raise it then. All that's timberland now.  
You know, they don't try to raise much crop on it now.

[00:10:53] SL: Well you know, I've always heard that—um—uh—  
durin' the Depression, the—the folks that—the—the farming  
community generally survived, at least . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . better than—than folks in the cities 'cause they could raise  
their—they could feed themselves and . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . there was a community that kind of supported each other in  
that effort.

BS: That's right. They—they could do that. Now the—the trouble  
came if you had borrowed money, you know, and couldn't pay it  
back. And . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . uh—because the cash crops—just got where cotton  
wouldn't . . .

SL: Wasn't there.

BS: . . . bring anything, and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . it was just very tough.

SL: Would—uh—when you were growing up, would you go visit your  
grand . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . grandfolks?

BS: Yes.

SL: Now we're talkin' about—uh—uh—mostly your—uh—your dad's side.

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

[00:11:42] SL: Uh—and—um—so—uh—what was their—what was their farm like?

BS: Well, it was all mules and—uh—they had—um—uh—farm help.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: They had some—um—African American families that—uh—lived around and—um—uh—worked with them—um—on their—uh—farm.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: And—uh—they—it was still cotton, for the most part, and—uh—you know, to me with the big eyes, it was watermelons. They had [*laughs*]*—had watermelons and—uh—things like that that—*for their own—uh—use. And you're right—I mean, they—they could manage to eat and not starve to death. Uh—you know, milk in the—in the wells. They'd let 'em down in big . . .

SL: Keep it cool.

BS: . . . canisters in the well to keep the milk cool. And—uh—make that bread and make the soap—uh—made their own soap and—



uh—it was a—a hardworking—uh—uh—job. I—I remember my grandmother, who had four children . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . talk about—uh—getting up, fixing breakfast, and then going to the fields. And we ask her, "Well, what—what did you do with the toddlers?" And she said, "We had big iron bed, and they had nightshirts, and we'd lift the iron bed up and put the—the post down on their—on the tail of their nightshirt and—uh—leave 'em on the floor till we got back." [*Laughs*]

[00:13:28] SL: Oh my gosh! I've never heard of such a thing.

That's . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . somethin' else. I . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: You know, I've heard of infants—uh—being taken out in the field and riding on the cotton sacks as . . .

BS: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . as folks picked cotton or . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . chopped cotton or whatever. But—um—I've never heard of that. So you know, kids these days may not realize—um—number one, it sounds like there was no running water in the

house.

BS: No. No running water.

SL: And there was probably no electricity.

BS: No electricity. No.

SL: No natural gas.

BS: Hm-mm. That's right.

SL: I bet the—I bet the road to the place was dirt.

BS: That's right.

SL: And—uh—you've—you mentioned all mules.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So there—there wasn't any mechani—mechanization . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . of the—of the farm. It was done with muscle.

[00:14:10] BS: No, you know, you—you see a lot of pra—uh—  
pictures of tractor farming and all, and I—I presume that was in  
the corn belt or somewhere because . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . around Arkansas you—you didn't see that many tractors  
until well after—uh—World War II. It was still a—largely a mule  
operation.

[00:14:32] SL: You know, [*laughs*] Clyde Scott told me that he and  
his father would take turns pulling the plow.

BS: Yeah.

SL: That they . . .

BS: Really?

SL: . . . actually strapped the plow on . . .

BS: Really?

SL: . . . themselves.

BS: Wow. Now that's something.

SL: That's somethin'.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And it probably helped . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . make Clyde Scott the athlete he was, but . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that's somethin'. So—um—uh—what creek or what river was—was nearby the farm? Uh—did you . . .

BS: Um—not—not—not any real close. Uh . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . the Red River—uh—over in Hempstead County, where we later moved . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . was close.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: And—um—they had—uh—creeks—you know, Cruise Creek and places like that. But—uh—not major river—uh—very close. Camden had the Ouachita, and . . .

SL: Ouachita. Yeah.

BS: . . . that was pretty close. But it was kinda between the rivers.

SL: Between the two.

BS: Mh-hmm.

[00:15:29] SL: Um—so when you'd go visit—uh—would you stay—uh—overnight and weekends or—I guess until you were in school—did you go out there with your mom and dad whenever they could go or . . .

BS: I did that some earlier. Now I have to confess I was a—a homesick kid. I—I wanted to be home. And—um—they—they took me to stay with my grandparents once when I got kind of old enough to think about things on my own.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: And the going to bed before the sun went down bothered me.

[*Laughter*] I remember on a sleeping porch, rai—raising up the canvas and looking outside, and it was still daylight. And that would make me so homesick, I really couldn't stand it. I got

where I couldn't stand to . . .

SL: Well . . .

BS: . . . to do that.

SL: . . . did they get you up before daylight?

BS: I—oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: There you go. [*Laughs*]

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: It was kind of backwards for you.

BS: Yeah, that's right. [*SL laughs*] It was—it was—wasn't somethin' we were—that I was used to, but they were, of course.

[00:16:42] SL: Well, did they have you—uh—help around out there at the . . .

BS: Yeah, I called . . .

SL: . . . farm whenever you visited?

BS: . . . I called it help. I—I probably wasn't much of a contribution, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . I used to try to pick a little cotton in a—in a little sack.

[*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, yeah.

BS: And—uh—glad I did that. It was a—an experience, and—uh—they'd let me handle the—the reins on the—uh—horses—um . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: . . . try to do a little plowing with 'em, and I was—uh—in the way more than I helped, but you know, it was big—big thing for me.

SL: Well, it let you know what it took to do that kinda stuff.

BS: That's right.

SL: You got an appreciation for that.

BS: That's right.

[00:17:29] SL: Did—uh—were you were ever around whenever they slaughtered a hog?

BS: Yes. Yes, that's a . . .

SL: What'd you think about that?

BS: . . . an interesting question. That—that was intriguing to me. I was not turned off by it. Uh . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: . . . it was just one of those things that I knew they did. It was an—an interesting thing to watch, and—uh—you know, they would—uh—uh—slaughter 'em and then scald 'em and pull 'em up on a tree or something and bleed 'em and then cut 'em up and quarter 'em and that sort of thing. And you know, kids back then got in on everything. You—you didn't normally keep children out of an activity because children shouldn't see that

kinda thing. We saw it all, and—and you know, I went to—to funerals when I was five and six years old and knew what—uh—death was and—uh—what suffering was with—uh—people like that. They didn't—they didn't shield you from very much.

[00:18:39] SL: Well, it was a part of life and . . .

BS: Yeah, you—and they didn't have anything else to do with you, you know. You didn't have babysitters [*laughs*] and things like that. You just went where your parents went.

SL: Well, I—I wanna talk about two different things here now. Course, the hog—hog day—you know, they used every bit of that hog.

BS: That's right.

SL: Is that right?

BS: That's right.

SL: And did your grandparents have a—a smokehouse that they . . .

BS: They did. Mh-hmm.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: They did. And you know, my—my dad—uh—gratefully, did not turn loose that. Even after we moved to town, we had one. Uh—we lived—lived—um—usually—uh—out where we had a little room.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: And he always—uh—put up meat until he just got real old  
and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . couldn't do that anymore. But—uh—we loved it so much.  
[Laughs] And—uh—we—we had a smokehouse for our home  
use.

SL: And that's good.

BS: But, yeah, we saw the grandparents do that and—um—those—  
uh—go in there and see those hams and—and make the sausage  
and all that kinda thing was—they—and they made fun out of it,  
you know. I mean, ever—everybody got into that. It wasn't a  
drudgery, or at least it wasn't to me. I thought it was fun to do  
all that.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:03] SL: Well, it was the way that you preserved meat . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and you know, out—they didn't have a refrigerator or a  
freezer . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . out there.

BS: Hm-mm. No.

SL: Did your grandma have a fruit cellar or . . .

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . to store the jars . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . under the house . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . or somethin'?

BS: That's right. They'd have cannin' days and cook all that stuff up and can it and shell peas and all that till they—and made a fun activity out of that. It was hard work, I'm sure, for those doin' it, but it was fun to me.

[00:20:39] SL: Did you ever go to any—when you were a [*BS clears throat*] child, did you—you mentioned the funerals and stuff—did you go to funerals out in the country?

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm.

SL: Now I've had one person tell me that, you know, they would have the body of the deceased in the living room of the house, and they'd have jugs of cold water around the body to keep it cool and from heatin' up. Did you ever see anything like that?

BS: I didn't see the cooling, but my grandfather's body on my mother's side was kept in our house for two or three days. And

it was in the spring, and so the heat was not a problem.

[00:21:33] But yes, that was done, and you know, we didn't think about that being all that unusual. And there he was in the living room, and people would come to see him.

SL: Well . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . again . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that's just the way it was back then.

BS: Yeah, that's the way it was.

SL: You didn't have fancy, big funeral homes and . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . ambulances and stuff. I guess you had horse-drawn ambulance if you were lucky to—or could afford one to . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . come.

BS: By that time, they had ambulances, but it was just a carryover. You know, they felt like that's the thing they should do and . . .

SL: They preferred that.

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[00:22:15] SL: Well, let's talk about your grandparents' house out in the country. What was it like? Was it four rooms, or was . . .

BS: It was . . .

SL: . . . it a big . . .

BS: It was a wonderful house. Exactly four rooms. Exactly symmetrical. Every room exactly the same size. And one of the rooms was the kitchen and dining area, and the other three were all bedrooms. And one of the bedrooms also was the—what you would call the parlor, I guess. Even though they slept in there, that's where you would entertain company. Had two fireplaces back to back. And a wonderful porch that was three hundred and sixty degrees. It went . . .

SL: Boy, I love that.

BS: . . . around the entire house. And great high ceilings and a shingle roof. And to me, I'm sure on a day like we've had in summer here, it would be hot. But to me, as a kid, it was always just a very comfortable place. Big oak trees out in the front yard with—where they'd move cots sometimes in the afternoons.

[00:23:42] SL: Was the porch screened in?

BS: No, no. No, just a . . .

SL: So that sleepin' porch, you were out . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . there in the elements, totally . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . weren't you?

BS: For me, that was the place run track. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, sure. I woulda done the same thing.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, I—I've always dreamed of having a house that had a porch all the way around it.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And I've got an old house, and it's got . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . we got several porches, but they don't all connect.

BS: Yeah.

SL: It's . . .

BS: Yeah.

[00:24:08] SL: So now what about your mother's grandparents?

BS: Okay. They moved to Prescott after they just couldn't make it on the farm anymore. My mother had a brother that continued to live with the parents. He and his wife continued to live with the parents. And he got a nice job in Prescott. The brother did. So they . . .

SL: Okay. So . . .

BS: . . . they moved to Prescott, and my grandfather continued to

farm a few acres right on the edge of Prescott. Still had his mules and that sort of thing, but the son worked in town. So they made it that way durin' the Depression.

[00:24:59] SL: Were they about the same age as your . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . daddy's parents?

BS: Yeah, 'bout the same age and real hardworking people. My paternal grandfather was probably a little more resourceful in looking for opportunities and managing than my maternal grandfather, but my dad always said he did everything the hard way. You know, just plain and simple hard work. And so they . . .

SL: Honest as the day is long.

BS: . . . they—honest. Absolutely. And they never did have anything. Their house burned when I was, I guess, maybe twelve or thirteen years old.

SL: Hmm. The one in Prescott?

BS: Yeah. And they didn't own it. They rented it. But it was a tragic—all their pictures and all that—and I've thought back about that and wondered what the value of all of their goods that burned up were. And monetarily it probably wouldn't have amounted to three hundred dollars.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Furniture and all. But they were good, solid churchgoin' folks  
and . . .

[00:26:25] SL: Did you ever get to visit them?

BS: Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah.

SL: Now before they moved to—how long were they around Hope  
before they moved to Prescott?

BS: Well, they moved to Hope from Prescott.

SL: Oh, from Prescott.

BS: They moved over and—kinda like I have here with my daughter.  
They moved right behind us . . .

SL: Oh, okay. Well, that's great.

BS: . . . over at Hope. Yeah, and that was convenient. But I was  
about thirteen before they did that, and I'd continue to visit 'em  
in Prescott before that. And I—my grandfather was good to take  
us fishin' and do that kinda thing.

SL: Well, that—you know, that's—course, I—I'm still a fishin' guy  
and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and that's kinda why I was askin' about the creeks and  
the . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . [*laughs*] rivers . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . around the house. But the—so you learned to fish. I guess it—was it catfishin'? Was it cane-pole fishin'?

BS: Just kinda pond—cat—pole . . .

SL: Pond? Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . pole fishing. Yeah.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: Yeah. [*Clacking sounds*] Yeah.

SL: And . . .

BS: That's a . . .

SL: Probably the mail, isn't it? [00:27:36] The—what about huntin'?

BS: My dad was a good hunter, and my mother's brother was a good hunter as well. They hunted a lot and very good shots. Quail. Quail hunters. And our tradition at Christmas was to always have a quail breakfast. And it was—I can taste it today. It was so good. But there were a lot of quail back then. And as soon as I got old enough, well, I grew up hunting as well. He was real—very good to take and teach me. He never did teach me to shoot as well as he did. [*Laughter*] But it was a lot of fun. And he had people that he knew that were 'bout half bird dog

themselves. And they had good dogs in addition, and it was just a—just hilarious time to come home from college and get with 'em and hunt the fields where they would know where every covey was. [*Laughs*] It didn't take long to find one, and you'd get a sack full of birds in a half-day's hunt.

[00:29:05] SL: Well, is there anything else that you wanna—do you remember any conversations with your grandparents that kinda have stuck with you over the years? Was there any—I'm always lookin' for the oldest story, first off—if they had some stories that they told, or if they—it sounds like both sets were hardworkin', honest, good people, and you probably picked up on that. But do you remember anything that your—any of your granddads or grandmas . . .



BS: They were just that. You know, just personally, I had a thing going with my paternal grandfather that was a lot of fun. My dad, when he came to Hope and ran the fillin' stations, was a resourceful man, and he saw the future at that time of livestock auctions, and he put in one of the first at Hope. It was a good sale. Still runs today. And he saw the value of that in the middle [19]30s. And he and a partner started a sale barn, and it was a good business. Good cash paying, you know, and so much a head for cattle and hogs. And they sold furniture—

everything—at those things, to begin with. Mules was still a big item in that day. Sold a lot of horses and mules. And he did much better economically. I mean, it was a good thing. He made a real good livin' at that. I grew up around that thing . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . which was an institution. Lookin' back on it, I wouldn't take anything for it. [00:31:19] When I was nine years old, a guy offered me a nickel if I would go and get him a jug full of water 'cause he was hot under that tin roof when those auction sales were goin' on. So I did that, and the guy next to him wanted one. And first thing you knew, I was runnin' [*laughs*] back and forth and collecting nickels, and I made seventeen dollars that summer . . .

SL: Golly!

BS: . . . and bought a heifer with seventeen dollars. And my grandfather—paternal grandfather—said, "All those you buy, I will raise—I will feed and keep for you at no cost to you." Well, I knew that was a good deal. [*Laughs*] Even at nine years of age. So we always had this deal. You know, he was—he wanted to get out his checkbook and talk about buyin' my cattle and, you know, just go through that torture [*laughter*] and have me pick out mine from his herd, which I never could do. [*SL laughs*] But

we had that kinda ruckus goin' on and just so much fun with that. And I grew up and went to the university—kept doin' that with—my dad put me in a section of the auction ring sellin' soda pop. And so I could make a little more money . . .

SL: Well, sure, you . . .

BS: . . . durin' that.

[00:33:04] SL: . . . you were given the concessions . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . for the venue, it sounds like to me.

BS: And when I went to college, I had thirty-four head [*laughter*] of cattle. So . . .

SL: You were a cattle farmer.

BS: That's right. That's right—the easiest way. But that was something that was very precious to me, and [*dog barks*] he—my first one died.

SL: Uh-oh.

BS: And you know, he announced that to me that "of all of these cattle that I'm takin' care of here, yours died." And I thought, "Boy, that's tough." But he said, "Now you get the pick of the litter [*laughs*] from mine." [*SL sighs*] And so he had one that had got his head caught in a fork of a tree and almost starved to death and scarred its neck up real bad. And was the poorest

value of all of 'em, but I picked that one because I wanted to be able [*dog barks*] to [*laughs*] identify it and beat him at the game of "you can't pick your own calf out of here." So I picked that poor one, and it did well.

SL: It did well?

BS: It did well. And . . .

Kris Katrosh: Hey, Scott, I think that the dog is penned up somewhere and is . . .

SL: Okay.

KK: . . . trying to get out.

Trey Marley: Stop tape.

[Tape stopped]

[00:34:34] SL: All right. The dog's in the house now, so . . .

BS: Yeah, okay.

SL: Maybe she'll—he'll be a little happier, and we can keep goin' here. Now you've—you were just saying you got a couple of stories you wanna . . .

BS: Yeah. My grandfather was farming in ways that were clearly wrong. You know, they were not rotating crops. They were not fertilizing properly. Lots of things they were not doin' correctly, just doin' cotton year after year and wearin' the land out. And the government was tryin' to help with that situation. That's . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . the county agents came along and the AAA. And I remember sitting on his porch and nice young man driving up in a car to talk to him about his farm. He was a county agent or with the agricultural department and . . .

SL: Extension or somethin', yeah.

[00:35:34] BS: . . . and he would—my grandfather would always sit there and kinda rock, and before it was over, he always had to ask, "Son, how many acres are you farmin'?" [*Laughs*] Which generally meant he wasn't gonna change.

SL: Yeah, you know, that's—this is your grandparents on your mom's side.

BS: No, on my dad's.

SL: Oh, on your dad's side.

BS: On my dad's side.

SL: Oh, okay.

[00:36:01] BS: Yeah, yeah. And he quit farming about—I guess probably about at the end of World War II. And just before the war started, you know, we had the Louisiana maneuvers through this part of the country, and soldiers were everywhere, all over that part of the country for a while conducting those maneuvers. They were all over his farm. And we were sitting there on that

ol' porch and he was tellin' us, you know, they got in his watermelons and all of that, which was certainly gonna happen and this . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . officer's car drove up to the porch where he was sitting, and a guy gets up and—or he gets up and goes out and meets this officer and chats with him for a while. And he came back and sat down in his chair, and he had a check in his pocket. And he's look—just lookin' there, rockin', and says, "You know, that's the best watermelon crop I ever had." [*Laughter*] I was thinking . . .

SL: He won on that negotiation, huh? [*Dog pants*]

BS: Yeah, they had paid him for his watermelons and paid him generously for what the army had done. But we would interestingly go over the farm and look at where they had been. It was all new kind of things to us—you know, to see how [*dog pants*] the army lived out there on his farm. And they were there for a good while. But you know, none of us had any idea what was comin'. But war was not very far off.

SL: I wanna talk about that.

KK: I think we need to . . .

SL: Do we want the—the dog—I think he's startin' to settle down.

[Tape stopped]

[00:38:11] SL: So you were—I guess you were—you must've been, what, nine . . .

BS: Ten when the war started . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . and fourteen when it was over. Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh-huh. And did anyone in your family have to go?

BS: No. My dad's partner that started with the auction sale . . .

SL: Auction barn.

BS: . . . had two boys, and they both went, and we kept up with them. Both of 'em survived. But one of 'em was in China-India Theater, and the other started with Patton in North Africa and went all the way through to Germany. And so he saw an awful lot of action and was in danger all the time, you know. So we . . .

SL: So did both those guys make it back?

BS: Yeah, both of 'em survived it. Yeah.

SL: I bet they didn't talk much about it, did they?

BS: One of 'em did, and he was a—not a real well-educated man, but he was well read, and he was really interested in what was goin' on—knew who he was and what the issues were at the time and wrote real good letters back home. And he was very interesting

to talk with.

[00:39:53] SL: Let's talk a little bit about the house that you grew up in.

BS: Yeah.

SL: What was it like?

BS: Well, we grew up in more than one. We had a house next door to the service station that my dad ran.

SL: Now that was the second house, though.

BS: No, this . . .

SL: No, that's the first one?

BS: . . . this where I was born.

SL: Okay.

BS: In that house.

SL: All right. Okay.

BS: And he just worked, you know, right next to it.

SL: That's handy.

[00:40:27] BS: And—that's right. That's right. And I was—remember being around that station and, I'm sure in lookin' back on it, was in the way all the time. I remember gettin' hit in the jaw with a cash [*laughs*] register as somebody punched it. [*SL laughs*] And I was standin' there in the way. But I, you know, knew the help and knew the customers and that sort of thing at



a very early age—I mean, four or five—you know, I knew who those people were, and they liked to pick at me. And so [SL *laughs*] it was a lot of fun. The Depression was on, and you know, back then everybody was a Democrat, and afterwards they'd argue the Republican-Democratic issues. My dad would say, "I don't know anything about that. All I know is that I was at that service station and nobody could buy gasoline, and one morning the trucks woke me up honkin' to buy gasoline. And it was some WPA program." And he said, "So I thought it was good." [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, yeah.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Sure.

BS: And nothing was moving. He's—nothing was moving. You couldn't buy anything and couldn't sell anything. And he thought that was important that some of those programs broke things loose and . . .

SL: I don't . . .

BS: . . . kind of got us goin'.

SL: . . . you know, I don't really know anybody that's ever spoken against that stuff at that time.

BS: Some did. Some did.

SL: Did they?

BS: Yeah, just saying it was the end of democracy. And you know, after the fact, people can always point to waste and say, "Well, it was a"—they—and things can look bad. They slaughtered cattle, poured milk out tryin' to help the prices. And that was not a smart thing to do. But you know, they were—nothin' else was workin', so they were trying some things, and not all of 'em worked well. But some of 'em did, I think, and it kinda got the country at least in a survival mode.

[00:43:00] SL: So when you were at the house that you—the house by the service station, did y'all have a radio?

BS: No. We did later get a radio. We had lights and radio. We did not have a refrigerator, and we did have running water. But we had no gas. The stoves were with stove wood and no gas in the house. No telephone. He had one over at the service station that you could take an emergency call on or something, but we didn't have any of that in our house.

[00:44:00] SL: Was the road paved out front?

BS: The road—yes and no. It ended right there. It was only a—see, his service station was on old Highway 67.

SL: Okay.

BS: And there was just a little strip of pavement off of Highway 67.

That's where our house was. Then the dirt started. Interesting neighborhood. The prominent civil rights lawyer John Walker's grandparents lived across the street . . .

SL: How 'bout that?

BS: . . . from us. Yeah, and I remember John playin' in their yard across the street. And both of us frequented Cornelius's grocery store [*laughs*] down the block a ways. We still talk about it when we see each other.

SL: Now was that a white grocery store?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: But my guess would be at that time it was probably Mr. Cornelius or who—was probably extending credit—would extend credit . . .

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . to folks.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Yeah. That's right. Mom-and-pop . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . kinda deal. They lived in the store, and that was our neighborhood.

SL: You know, there was a morality back then and a . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: And friends helped friends.

BS: Right.

SL: They cared about . . .

BS: They did. They did. And I would go—I can remember that lady, Mrs. Cornelius, and she would get me in her lap when I would go down there. And I remember her saying to me, "Someday you're gonna get too big, and you won't wanna sit in my lap." I said, "No, no. [*Laughter*] Don't worry about that. That'll never happen."

[00:45:57] SL: That's great. Such a small world, isn't it?

BS: Yeah, it is.

SL: And so you and John were playmates early on.

BS: We were not playmates. He—I was older than . . .

SL: Oh, a little bit older. Uh-huh.

BS: . . . John. But I knew who he was. He was just kind of a toddler at that time. And—but I remember seeing him out in his grandparents' yard. They were school people and very well respected in the school system there. Course, it was segregated school, but they were—had the reputation of being very good school people.

[00:46:40] SL: I don't feel like I'm quite done with the house, but we may as well go ahead and talk about that segregation back then. So there were white schools, and there were black

schools. And you know, I've had some folks say that before they were school age, the kids—black and white kids would play together or—you know, and—but once schooling started, why, the . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . social divide started . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and the friendships kind of lessened and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . it was an interesting separation of relationships that had started quite honestly and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . openly and—is that—did you . . .

BS: Yeah . . .

SL: . . . experience that?

[00:47:24] BS: . . . you know, and it's just all that we knew at the



time. And what you said is correct. I had friends that lived down that street. Across the street from us was black, and the next house on our right was black, so you know, I—we lived in that environment and neighborhood. Now, you know, when it came time to grow up and go to school, I'm sure it never occurred to anybody that it would ever be any different from the

fact that the whites would go to the white school and the blacks would go to the black school. I mean, the whites, I'm sure, never thought about that ever changing. And it's just the way it was. And Hope was considered to be a tolerant place, I think. You never know what everybody else is thinking, but I think they had the reputation of gettin' along well. We had friends that—you know, I played football and loved to go and watch Yerger High play.

SL: That was a black school?

BS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Because they had some really good football players. And they would come and see ours, and we'd talk about, you know, the games that they had and that we had and all of that kind of thing, with not any animosity that I could recognize. But . . .

[00:49:11] SL: Yeah, you know, Rodney Slater said the sort—same sort of thing when he was growin' up. That the different football players would . . .

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

SL: . . . go watch the separate schools play.

BS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: 'Cause . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . they liked to watch the game and they . . .

BS: Yeah, right.

SL: . . . respected the talent that . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . it took to play it.

BS: They would usually play on Thursday night, and we would play on Friday nights.

SL: Would y'all sit in the stands? I mean . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . the black players could sit in the stands and watch the game? The—Rodney said they kinda stood by the fence and . . .

BS: That's right, they did. That's right, they did not come up and go to the regular seating as a rule. They—ours had a kind of a poled—a pipe fence around it, and they would stand and—a fence within the fence. They would get close to the field, and you know, I knew 'em well enough to know they were hollerin' at you and, you know, callin' you by name and that sort of thing. So it just was something that you—you know, I'd—I never thought about it bein' otherwise. It was just we—our consciences didn't enter into it at that time. [SL sighs] It's just that's the way it was, and I didn't know that it would ever

change. Didn't think about it changin'.

[00:50:50] SL: Basically the relationships were good, but they—  
there were just boundaries, weren't there?

BS: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

SL: It got along . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . 'cause that's the way it had always been.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And everyone kind of—I mean, did you ever receive any kind of  
instructions from your family or from . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . your mom and dad or . . .

BS: No.

SL: It was just kind of . . .

BS: It was just . . .

SL: . . . accepted and . . .

BS: Yeah, that's right. Just—it was—you know, I think, mainly, we  
were guilty of thoughtlessness more than any kind of hate or . . .

SL: Animosity.

[00:51:28] BS: . . . animosity. It was just thoughtlessness. Yeah.

You know, I—we had the maid that was with us from the time I  
was about five years old. Stayed with us till I'd gone off to

college, and—you know, I just—I thought she was part of the family and she just lived somewhere else. And knew her children, and I just—it was a thoughtless thing.

SL: Okay, well, let's get back into your . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . house here by the station.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Now were there any musical instruments in that house?

BS: Piano.

SL: Okay.

BS: Yeah, we had a player piano . . .

SL: Good.

BS: . . . at one time. But my sisters wanted a piano, and they got one, and neither of 'em ever played it [*laughs*] very much. But we had a piano. None of us were really very musical. They were in the band. They—my sisters were in the marching band, one of 'em clarinet, one flute. And they were interested in that. I never played anything except the player piano. [*SL laughs*] I could play the . . .

[00:52:47] SL: Well, I mean, do—the piano will play without the . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . drum, too. I mean, it . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you could still play the piano . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . like a normal piano. Well, did y'all gather around the piano and sisters . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . play it and you sang . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . along and all that stuff?

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Mostly hymns?

BS: Yeah, and you know, you'd have guests that would come in, and very often one of them could play. [*Laughs*] So, yeah, we had that kinda thing.

SL: Now you said that you didn't start with a radio, but . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . it came along.

BS: Yeah, we somehow got—acquired a radio, and we—in lookin' back, it's hard to imagine how you filled your day. But the adults did working, of course, but the children just played outside. And you could figure out somethin' to play inside on bad days. My mother read to me well, and I, lookin' back on

that, appreciate that a lot. She was—she read the Bible to me. Get me on the bed—and that's the way I took naps, and I can still remember that, her reading.

[00:54:19] SL: Was there a favorite story that you had her read over and over?

BS: Well, just—I can remember being taught John 3:16 from very early days. And then she bought me a Bible storybook and all about Joseph and Moses and Samson, who was one of my favorites 'cause [*laughs*] he was strong. And David, you know . . .

SL: Goliath. Uh-huh.

BS: Yeah, all of those Old Testament heroes.

[00:54:59] SL: Well now, it—so it sounds like to me that religion and the—and church was maybe a central part of your . . .

BS: It was.

SL: . . . upbringing.

BS: It was. Yes, my folks were country—really, really country people, but they were churchgoing, and they—I think on my mother's side is kind of a—almost an inferiority complex about, you know, people that were wealthier and that sort of thing, not wanting you in their church. And when my folks moved to Hope, my mother told me this story that we lived two blocks from the

First Baptist Church. And one day she got somebody to stay with us, and she got dressed and went up to the—that church and talked to the pastor and said, "I need help with these children. I wanna get 'em in Sunday school and all." And she said she was expecting to be treated second class. And that didn't happen, you know. And she was . . .

SL: Grateful.

BS: Yeah, grateful for that—a guy with a doctor's degree, you know, welcoming her and the children and all of that. So, yeah, we were started pretty early in church and religious work.

[00:56:41] SL: Well now, were your folks—did they finish junior high school or . . .

BS: No, no.

SL: They went to elementary school?

BS: My mother's area only went to the eighth grade.

SL: Well, okay. Mh-hmm.

BS: And she finished that . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . at age fourteen.

SL: Okay.

BS: She was married at age fifteen . . .

SL: Golly!

BS: . . . and had a child at age sixteen. So . . .

SL: Well, that was . . .

BS: That was the way it was.

SL: . . . not unusual. Yeah.

BS: Yeah, she had nothing else to do in those—she had no other schooling that she could do. And they just did that. And my dad was twenty-one, and they got married, and you know, it's a miracle that they had such a great [*laughs*] marriage and family, but they just—they were mature people.

[00:57:43] SL: Did your dad finish the eighth grade?

BS: No. Well, yeah, he finished the eighth grade, and he dropped out after that. He was in an area that—where he could've gone to the twelfth grade and didn't. He felt like he should . . .

SL: Needed to work.

BS: . . . get a job and work.

SL: Not unusual.

BS: He was big enough.

SL: No, in fact, that actually probably more common than . . .

BS: Yeah, right.

SL: . . . folks going on.

BS: Right. But both of 'em became great believers in education and just saw what a marvelous thing it was. And they supported

education very strongly.

SL: So . . .

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[00:58:31] SL: Okay, Buddy, we're on our second tape. You got one hour under your belt. You're . . .

BS: All right.

SL: . . . now a bona fide victim of the Pryor Center. [*Laughter*] You've survived that first hour, so . . .

BS: [*Unclear words*].

SL: And we've heard some good stories. We've talked about your grandparents—both sides—and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . and the effects of the Depression at the time and some of your farm experiences out there. And we've talked a little bit about the service station and how you got hit in the jaw one time with the cash register.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And, also, we talked a little bit about the segregation and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and what your experiences with that. And it's not atypical of

other folks that I've interviewed. The—and we've also talked a little bit about the sales barn . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

[00:59:31] SL: . . . that your dad and his partner—now what was his partner's name?

BS: His name was Aubrey Collier.

SL: Okay.

BS: And everybody around the sale barn, it seems like, had a nickname, and his was Hard Luck.

SL: [*Laughter*] Hard Luck Collier.

BS: Hard Luck Collier. Yeah, yeah.

[00:59:48] SL: Well, did your dad have a nickname?

BS: Yes, they called him The Main Spring. [*SL laughs*] And they shortened that to Springs. [*Laughs*] Here come the Springs.

SL: Springs Sutton.

BS: Yeah.

SL: That's good.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Good. And so—that's interesting. That's good.

BS: Or The Mains. A lot of 'em called him The Main.

SL: The Main.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: So is that in reference to water, or is that . . .

BS: The . . .

SL: . . . in reference to the . . .

BS: A watch.

SL: A watch.

BS: The main spring of a watch that runs it. [*Laughs*]

SL: That kind of implies he had good energy and he was punctual.

Is that kind of . . .

BS: It—yeah, he had good energy. He looked like always that he was moving at a slow pace, but he got a lot done during the day, and he was efficient in his own way.

[01:00:44] SL: You know, before we get back to the sales barn and the community and stuff, maybe we oughta spend a little bit more time talkin' about your dad and your mom.

BS: Okay.

SL: I mean, we've established their lineage a little bit and some of their activities, and I love that story about your mom goin' to the church, and that paints—starts to paint a good portrait of her and what she was like and how she read the Bible to you and you'd go to sleep and—so that's—we're startin' to get a picture of how your parents were. And, obviously, your father was a hard worker.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Say—I have a feeling he came by that honest.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And he got that from his folks.

BS: Yeah, and she was, too. She was very conscientious. And when he started the sale barn, she would help out in that by running a restaurant in connection with it, along with his partner, Collier's wife. They ran a restaurant just one day a week, but they didn't have any other way to feed the buyers and sellers, and so they put in a restaurant and would serve lunch and supper. That thing would last from about ten o'clock in the morning to sometimes late into the night—sometimes eleven or twelve at night. They would auction those things through all that period of time, so there was a need to feed 'em. And they pitched in and handled that part of it. So she worked very hard at that and then was a—just a very conscientious mother and housewife the rest of the time.

SL: You know, I gue—it sounds like the sales barn was a really—a kind of a mom-and-pop enterprise between the two families—the two partners. They—you know, it was a small business, but it sounds like it was very popular.



[01:03:05] BS: It was. It was an unusual thing. You know, you

didn't have as much entertainment otherwise as you do today. And that was a place of entertainment. They had grandstands built for people, most of whom didn't participate in the sale. They'd just come to watch. And other than your football games and really special activities, that was the biggest crowd in town, week after week. You'd have a lot of people come to those things and just watch cattle and things being sold.

SL: How close was the sales barn to the service station and where you lived?

BS: Well, at that time, it was only about three blocks, and it was in the city limits, you know. And my dad was conscious of the fact that he need to move [*SL laughs*] and was always planning to do that, and he did. But you know, the barn that he took over to start the thing was an old livery stable. And we weren't that far off—even though it was into the [19]30s, we weren't that far off of the livery stable day. Right down the street was the blacksmith, and you could hear that anvil and that blacksmith working all day long shoeing horses and things like that. And my dad turned the livery stable into an auction—a sale—and built more and bigger and bigger and then moved it out of town after that. But it was almost downtown. [*Laughs*]

[01:05:07] SL: Well now, you don't remember the blacksmith shop,

do you, or . . .

BS: Oh, of course.

SL: You do?

BS: Sure.

SL: So . . .

BS: Yeah, sure. Yeah, I knew the guy's name. I don't remember what it was now, but I knew the guy's name and had my own—you know, I had a horse. You just grew up—more of an animal [*laughs*] society than it is now. Most kids by then that had a paper route did it on bicycle, but I did mine on horse a lot 'cause I had a horse.

SL: What was your horse's name?

BS: Danny.

SL: Danny. [*Laughter*]

BS: Yeah.

SL: Is that like Danny Boy or . . .

BS: Yeah, that's right. That's right, yeah. But horses were still pretty much to be seen. I'd ride him to school and, you know, do things like that.

SL: Was it—and did other kids ride their horse?

BS: No, not many.

SL: Not many, but . . .

BS: Not many. Yeah, a few.

[01:06:02] SL: Now maybe we should also talk a little bit about your school.

BS: Okay.

SL: So it was Hope Public School or . . .

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm. Right.

SL: And did it have a name other than Hope High School or Hope . . .

BS: Well, the lower schools did. I went to a school called Brookwood and then a school called Paisley. And Oglesby was the middle school. Then when you were in the seventh grade, you went to high school.

SL: Yeah. Well, what were those early schools like? Were they . . .

BS: Well, I heard Dale Bumpers make a speech once on our generation bein' the beneficiary of prejudice. You know, women—smart women couldn't get jobs doing many other things, so they taught school, and we were the beneficiaries of that.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And I fully agree with that statement. I felt like schoolteachers were the—one of the greatest assets. In my life, I had several that were just splendid and marvelous and wouldn't take

anything for them. And they were well educated themselves—a lot of 'em were—and very, very devoted to what they were doing.

[01:07:38] SL: Do you remember the first schoolteacher that you kind of identified with or . . .

BS: Oh yeah. I remember in—Miss Allison in the first grade. And sweet lady. But I guess the one that is the most prominent with me was in the third grade. I had a lady by the name of Miss Carrigan, who, until a few years ago, lived right down the street from me. And she was the daughter of the—one of the outstanding lawyers in Hope. Beautiful thing. I was so much in love with her.

SL: Yeah.

BS: She was so pretty [*laughs*] and smart and thoughtful. Such a wonderful teacher that I'm forever grateful for her even in the third grade, you know. So I thought she was just splendid. And there were a bunch of 'em that . . .

SL: You really can't discount the early stuff . . .

BS: No. Hm-mm. No.

SL: . . . for kind of gettin' you on the path.

BS: No, that's right.

[01:08:54] SL: Well, what about the school itself? What—how big

was the school itself—that first school that you went to?

BS: The school itself was first through four, and populationwise I don't know. I would judge that you had two second grades, probably, with twenty-five kids in each grade, so—and then there was a school across town about the same size, so that's about the school population.

SL: Did each grade have its own classroom or two?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: So it wasn't . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . like a one-room school or a . . .

BS: No, no.

SL: . . . two-room school.

BS: Hm-mm. No.

SL: It was . . .

BS: It was not that. And, of course, one teacher taught all the subjects. She had you all day, and all of mine were women up until high school. So—but they were all real—very good.

[01:09:55] SL: Was that first school two stories or one story?

BS: No, it was single story. Pretty nice facility as I remember. Hope had a good school system, and I think they did really very well.

SL: It had running water and . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . electricity.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: That's good.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, good buildings. And good teachers. When the Japanese were relocated in Arkansas, they took the superintendent of the Hope schools and moved over to Jerome or somewhere like that to head up the Japanese system. And we were all kinda mad about that.

SL: Now how far was that from Hope?

BS: That was, oh, probably a hundred fifty miles.

SL: Oh.

BS: Yeah, it was . . .

SL: Big move.

BS: So she was gone, you know, but she was a good school woman, I thought, and I thought they got—and later lookin' back on it, I thought they got her because that's just about the best money could buy and . . .

SL: Huh. That's interesting.

BS: She was a very, very good school person.

[01:11:12] SL: Let's see. The—I guess it was basically reading, writing, and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . arithmetic.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And then recess. Did you bring your lunch to school?

BS: Well, that's an interesting question. At that—and when I started, they did not have meals served. I guess when I was in about the fourth grade they started a hot meals program, but before then we did bring lunches to school. And I always remembered the embarrassment of having biscuits, not knowin' that that was the best thing goin' 'cause the others had light bread. [*Laughs*] Sliced bread.

SL: Right, right.

BS: And we didn't have that to begin with at home.

SL: Well, so was the school a pretty good distance from your house?

BS: Not real far, but it was probably ten blocks.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And we would walk that. Railroad—we walked the railroad track.

[01:12:27] SL: Okay, now I'm gonna ask you about that railroad track. How close did it come to the sale barn?

BS: It was not very close—maybe five or six blocks.

SL: Okay.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Well, why don't we go back to the sale barn for a little bit here?

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: So was it open only one day a week?

BS: Yeah, it had sales every Tuesday.

SL: Okay.

BS: And as I said, they'd start 'em about ten in the morning and go until—in the summertime, normally the sales would drop off because that's just not the time to market as a rule, but by the summertime, they'd probably be through by five o'clock. But in the fall, they may go past midnight and just really, really [laughs] sell cattle and . . .

[01:13:26] SL: So you know, for kids that don't know, the sale barn was a covered facility, and there were, like, stockyards . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . around it.

BS: Pens.

SL: Pens.

BS: Uh-huh. Right.

SL: And the farmers or ranchers would bring in their livestock . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . and then line 'em up, and they'd go through the covered facility . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . and people would bid.

BS: Yeah, they'd bring 'em into an auction room one at a time or however the seller wanted to sell 'em. But usually they would be one at a time or cow-and-calf pairs and things like that. But you'd usually start with hogs—sell them first. And then your cattle and horses and mules. And in the—see, this was 1937, and when that started, there were a lot of people going broke and moving to California.

SL: Okay.

BS: They would bring their goods by—their household goods on a trailer and park that thing out in front of the sale barn and sell everything they had. And get back in the truck or the car or whatever it was and go to California.

[01:14:59] SL: Well now, was that actually a part of sale barn business or . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . was just kind of a—so . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . once they were on that property, it kind of—it came under your dad's . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and his partner's . . .

BS: They would ask the auctioneer to auction it off.

SL: I see. I see. Okay.

BS: And dogs and—we liked to talk about all the things that had been sold there. We brought a monkey home once. My dad bought it himself. [*Laughter*]

SL: I bet that was a mess, wasn't it?

BS: Yeah, he was—and the next morning, we all woke up, and he was across the street in a neighbor's planter pullin' up her flowers and throwin' 'em. And she would run out there with a broom, and he would fight her [*laughter*], and she'd run back in the house. So we had to get rid of him.

SL: Yeah.

[01:15:51] BS: But they had alligators.

SL: Alligators?

BS: Alligators, yeah. Just everything that people would like to see. They wanted to show off. Whether they sold it or not, they'd bring it by the sale barn. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, no wonder it was entertainment.

BS: It was. It was, yeah. And all of those characters were great. Yeah, I told you they all had nicknames, like Tight Britches and [*SL laughs*] Poor Boy and . . .

SL: Isn't that great?

BS: . . . Sweet Willie. [*Laughs*] And just all of 'em a bunch of characters tryin' to make a livin' durin' the Depression.

SL: Now you were tellin' me when we were on break somethin' about some folks called truck jumpers.

BS: Yeah, truck jumpers.

SL: Now what was that about?



BS: The farmers didn't have radio or anything else—you know, the REA didn't come in with electricity to farms until really pretty late. After World War II, for most areas. And so they had no communications. They had no idea what their cattle were worth. And they would bring 'em in and approaching the unloading area, these people who did know what they were worth would jump the trucks and all and start hasslin' them to sell their cattle to them. And then they could just turn around and go home. Forget about it. And a lot of 'em would do that. And you had people that made money off of 'em by just jumpin' their trucks and buyin' their cattle, and then they would run 'em through the sale barn. [01:17:49] Pick up a nice profit, and then they would make money off of the guys primarily that didn't know what they were worth. So it was a—after a while, they got educated . . .

SL: They got wise.

BS: . . . to that, but for a while, it was an abusive thing, and lots of people would do that just to get a bird in the hand and . . .

SL: Yep.

BS: . . . they'd sell it and be gone.

SL: I guess if it were actually competitive prices, it would be thought of as a service. But in this case, they were really taking advantage . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . of folks that didn't know better.

BS: Yeah, they were takin' advantage. Yeah. Mh-hmm.

[01:18:33] SL: That's interesting. Well, I love all these nicknames that you've [*BS laughs*] run off. I could probably spend an hour goin' over nicknames with you. It sounds like a song.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: You know [*laughs*] . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: So now you also were tellin' me that there were some celebrities that would . . .

BS: Well yeah, people—everybody that came to town, just about, would go. And a lot of people were just interested in cattle and cattle prices. Ross Perot's father over at Texarkana raised cattle

and was just interested in cattle. And he would come to the sales over at Hope. We went to the sales in Texarkana. I'd go with my dad over there. But little Ross, who I didn't know at the time—but little Ross would come with his dad over at our sale at Hope and have on his little boots and cowboy hat. [*Laughter*] And, of course, he was just a little shaver. He was . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . he was a little boy, but he liked that kind of thing. Liked to go with his dad to those. So my family would remember him comin' over.

SL: Small world again.

BS: It is.

[01:20:02] SL: It's a small world. So this—where y'all were situated, I'm guessing, was on the edge of town, since the pavement kind of ended right there by the service station. Is that . . .

BS: That service station was really almost uptown. Now we moved further out of town . . .

SL: Really?

BS: . . . later on. Mh-hmm.

SL: So there was dirt road that close to . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to uptown?

BS: Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. Back then it was not unusual to have the highway come through a town, and it would be paved. Maybe a crossroads would be paved and then a major street or two, but a lot of people that lived in the city lived on a dirt or gravel road. They didn't pave everything by a long shot.

[01:21:00] SL: Well, after the livestock was bought . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . what happened next with the livestock that—I mean, you know, I asked about a railroad nearby. I just wondered—were they put on a railroad and shipped somewhere or . . .

BS: They had some of that. My dad, for a while, would buy cattle himself and take 'em to St. Louis, and that generally got where it didn't work out too well. You could get about as good a price for 'em one place as another. But they—when they would buy 'em at our place, it was either for a packing house or for another farm operation, depending on what the buyer was looking for. He may be looking for something to put on his pasture lands, and he would buy in that manner. But a lot of it was for the packing houses where they would buy 'em and take 'em by truck, as a rule, to the slaughter pens and things. They had them locally.

SL: Oh, okay.

BS: All around. Yeah, you had local butchers, and a lot of the stores around places like Hope had their stuff slaughtered right there in the—maybe a mile out of town or so. They had slaughter pens.

[01:22:44] SL: Okay. Well, I just thought we should go through the whole process there.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And you know, I love the idea—I love that your mom and your partner's wife—your dad's partner's wife . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . had the kitchen there and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: So that probably generated some income, didn't it?

BS: It did, but primarily it was just for the convenience of havin' the men who were buyers and . . .

SL: Keepin' the buyers . . .

BS: . . . gonna be there all day.

SL: . . . and the sellers on site.

BS: Yeah, makin' them happy. Mh-hmm.

SL: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And then I would assume—you know, when business was good

at the sales barn, it was probably pretty decent at the service station, too. Is that . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah. They were really not that connected. A lot of customers were the same, I guess, but my dad didn't stay with the service station very long after that.

SL: Okay.

BS: The barn became a full-time thing, and we moved our house from that location across town to a better place and . . .

[01:23:51] SL: Did you pay much attention to the radio in that house next to the service station?

BS: Yeah. Yeah, I . . .

SL: What were some of the programs you remember listening to?

BS: We—you had a lotta preaching. You had a lot of Light Crust Doughboys and [*laughs*], you know, "Orange Blossom Specials."

SL: Yeah.

BS: Fiddle—fiddlin' groups singing like that. And then—and I don't know when this filters in—but my sisters and I used to like to listen to Bob Hope.

SL: Yeah.

BS: He was early on the radio. *Fibber McGee and Molly* and Fred Allen.

SL: Yep.

BS: And then Red Skelton, who was kinda new—kind of a fresh, new approach to it, was on, and he was one of our favorites. And they would do the—things like the Lux Theater—they would do a movie on the radio, and you know, I could just see that movie like I was at the theater [*laughs*] as . . .

SL: They . . .

BS: . . . they played it out.

[01:25:09] SL: It was—those productions—those early productions were very, very—they were complicated and . . .

BS: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . had all the sound effects and . . .

BS: Yeah. Yeah. They had Kay Kyser and amateur shows. Things like that.

SL: What about news?

BS: News? Yeah, yeah, they had good—I thought, good newscasters. As I got a little older, I appreciated that more. I can remember on D-Day, for example . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: D-Day, I woulda been thirteen, I guess, by that time. But I remember our folks comin' through the house and getting us up that morning. It was early afternoon in Europe by then.

SL: Right.

BS: And they got us out of the house very excited—or got us up in the house—and gathered around the radio. And I can remember this newscaster saying that he'd been standing on the beach at Omaha since early that morning, and he was describing the airplanes comin' over with the highway markings on the wings and that new twist to it and saying that there had not been a break in all of that time where there was not an airplane comin' over—that they were makin' the—their runs and goin' back, gettin' in line, gassing up, and comin' again—and just a constant flyover of airplanes without any breaks. So that was just very dramatic to me in tryin' to imagine what all that looked like. And he was doin' a pretty good job of describing it.

[01:27:14] SL: Well, don't you think the radio kind of changed the culture a little bit?

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: I mean, before radio, people were either always workin' really hard just to scrape by, and if there was social time, it—you had to either sit on the porch and visit or around the table and visit, and people kinda communicated locally among themselves. Or like you say, they went to the sales barn or maybe somethin' at the church.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: But once the radio came along, you know, the—I keep thinking that of all these people all across the country listening to the same stuff, and they're . . .

BS: Right.

SL: And the families are gathered round, and they're experiencing this entertainment together as a very convenient source of entertainment and information. And it just seemed to me like it would change the dynamics in a household in some way. I . . .

BS: No, I . . .

SL: Maybe it kind of creeped in a first, but . . .

[01:28:18] BS: I think that's right. And you know, you had religious things that were that way. You had entertainment and good, funny entertainment. Well, you know, that—most people were not exposed to that otherwise. And of course, from a serious standpoint, there was nothing like gathering around a radio and listenin' to Franklin Roosevelt talk on the radio. I think there's no way to weigh how much value that was in givin' people confidence and kinda settlin' 'em down, that somehow we're gonna all work through this together and survive this Depression. And then the—durin' the war years, there was—man, you'd gather around that radio—you know, children. I was ten to fourteen, and I kept up with what was goin' on in the war.

I looked at that map every day on the—in the paper to see where the lines were—where Sicily was and North Africa and Italy and all of that, and what kind of progress was being made. And listening to that radio was a big part of that. [*Rustling sounds*]

[01:29:58] SL: You know, of course, the—working through the Depression and then into World War II—it really kind of pulled the country together.

BS: It did.

SL: And I can't—it seems to me that people don't realize how—what role the radio played in that because it—all of a sudden, everyone was getting the news at the same time and getting the same messages . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . and enjoying the same fun and also experiencing the same sadness and the . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . same drama. And so the whole nation was all of a sudden kind of in the same room, almost.

BS: Yeah, that's right. I remember my folks talking about Amelia Earhart being lost in the Pacific, and that's where they were gettin' that, of course, on the radio, and some in the newspaper.

But I thought Amelia Earhart must be one of our neighbors.

[Laughs]

SL: Because they . . .

BS: There was that much concern . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . for her. I felt—I thought my folks knew her, and that was just really . . .

SL: Well, the whole country felt that way.

BS: Yeah, that's right. Right.

SL: Well, we haven't talked anything about films yet. I mean, you know, there was also—the movie houses were . . .

BS: Mh-hmm. That's right.

SL: . . . were coming on as well. [01:31:24] I mean, you know, of course, it started out with silent films. Did you ever get to go see a silent film?

BS: I've seen some, but not in their day.

SL: Not in their day.

BS: Right.

SL: So do you remember the first movie that you went to see?

BS: I remember some of them. You know, we would go see the B-class Westerns . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . [*laughs*] on Saturday.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And I remember Bob Steele and Johnny Mack Brown.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And I was later impressed—Johnny Mack Brown was a football hero at Alabama, but to me he was a movie star. And then later, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

SL: Rogers. You bet.

[01:32:15] BS: That was about my depth of movies for a long time.

Then, you know, I saw *Gone with the Wind* fairly early, and I was entertained by that, but didn't know how to appreciate it as much as I later did. But the movies were big—the—you know, there was some great Walt Disney stuff that came along about that time. *Wizard of Oz* came along . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . when I was really gettin' into movies, and so there was some great stuff to watch.

SL: Do you remember how much it cost to go to a movie?

BS: Yeah, cost a dime. And if you had a dime and a nickel for the popcorn and a nickel or a dime for a Coke—if you had a quarter, it was a big day. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well now, you could—you know, speaking of a day, you could

spend a lot of time in the theater. It was, like, there'd be . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . you know, trai—there'd be movie after movie—little short movies, you know, and there'd be the feature film, but there'd be other stuff playing . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . ahead of it, too.

BS: Yeah. And I would stay and see the same one twice.

SL: There you go.

BS: Very often. Yeah.

[01:33:48] SL: Now they probably weren't air-conditioned.

BS: Not to begin with. They became air-conditioned, and that was a good thing, you know, on days like we've had this summer. It was a good thing just to send your kids to the movie and let 'em stay.

SL: Now I heard early, early on, those systems were literally big blocks of ice and fans.

BS: I didn't experience that.

SL: You didn't know that?

BS: Hm-mm. Hm-mm.

SL: Also—now this is another segregation thing. Was there—was—did Hope have a black theater?

BS: Oh, they had a black theater, but what I remember the most were the balconies. The blacks sat in the balconies and . . .

SL: That was the same way in Fayetteville. [01:34:41] I also can remember people smoked in the theaters.

BS: I didn't—I don't think we ever had that . . .

SL: You didn't?

BS: . . . at Hope. I think it was prohibited from the beginnin'.

SL: That's progressive.

BS: At least when I came along . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . it was.

SL: Okay, well, I guess we need to—let's talk about meals at home.

BS: M'kay.

SL: Now I'm assuming your mom was a good cook and . . .

BS: She was great.

SL: And were you expected to be at the table, ready for each meal? I mean, for . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . breakfast, there was a time that you were supposed to be at the table, ready to eat, and especially for dinner?

BS: That's right. That's right. That's right. And never gave it any thought that, you know, you'd eat at some separate time from

when all the others ate. Now I don't know that we had a designated time because it all depended on my dad, and he didn't always get home at the same time. But when he got home, that was supertime. [*Laughs*]

SL: That was time to eat.

BS: Yeah, and you'll watch for him, and you never were that far away, so you knew when that was.

[01:36:03] SL: And so I'm goin' to assume that your mom did—and the—your sisters did most of the prep and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . cleanup . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . from the . . .

BS: That's right. I never did any of that, and you know, I don't know why, but that's just, again, somethin' the way it was. I never did any housework to amount to anything. Little bit of pea shelling, and I would kill chickens sometimes, which . . .

SL: Wring their neck?

BS: Yeah. But—and she made me, one day, pluck a chicken, and that was so distasteful for her, [*SL laughs*] she never made me do it again. She was determined that I was gonna pluck a chicken. I put that thing in hot water and smelled it [*laughs*],

and I could not stand it. I mean—and she would say, "You're going to do that." Well, I finally did, but it made me and everybody else sick. [*Laughter*] So she never made me do that again. My jobs were to mow the yard and to go get the cows . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . and drive them up for the milking and work in the garden and things like that.

[01:37:23] SL: Did you make your own bed?

BS: No. No, did not.

SL: Isn't that amazing?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: It's—that division of labor . . .

BS: Yeah. [*Dog barks*]

SL: . . . was . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . somethin' that was just kept—passed on generation to generation and . . .

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: . . . the women were expected to keep the household, and the men were . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . expected to go out and earn . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . a livin' or bring in the food.

BS: That's right.

SL: You know, the meals.

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[01:37:47] SL: I'm going to assume that each meal there was grace said.

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm. Yeah. Yeah, we did that, and ever—our normal regime was a great breakfast—biscuits, meat, eggs—all of that kind of thing and then . . .

SL: Jams.

BS: . . . ham—right—sausage. And a great lunch that we would all come—you know, my dad came home for lunch. When I got where I could—[*dog barks*] and by that, I mean walkin' or runnin'—I would come home for lunch . . .

SL: From the school.

BS: . . . from school. Yeah.

SL: I was gonna . . .

BS: Yeah, because it was always great—hot and several vegetables and good meat, and then, you know, you slow down for supper. Warm up warm-overs and things like that as a rule for supper.

But lunch was the big meal.

[01:39:03] SL: Did the family members take turns saying grace?

BS: No. No—yes, they did. I'm sorry. Yes, they did. They would do that. [*Unclear word*].

SL: Was your dad the primary guy?

BS: My dad did not—no, no, he was not.

SL: No, it was your mom?

BS: Hm-mm. No, he was very, very silent. Now he would, but he usually liked for somebody else to.

SL: So let's talk a little bit about church . . .

BS: M'kay.

SL: . . . when you were growin' up.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Now it sounds like your mom went to bat . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to get y'all accepted into that congregation.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: And despite any class differences, she was concerned—she was concerned about the class differences.

BS: That's right, just from a—you know, she was not angry about it or anything. She just had a sense that maybe she didn't belong. And she'd been—I think her family had contributed to that. And

from early on, she just said she was surprised, and then she took to it real well. She really enjoyed her church life.

[01:40:23] SL: So I would assume that you had Sunday school—or Sunday clothes . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that were always nice and . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . and hung up durin' the week and . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . you dressed for church.

BS: That's right.

SL: And you probably had Sunday school . . .

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . as well as the church service.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And were there Sunday afternoon or evening picnics or pie sales or . . .

BS: Not much.

SL: Not much?

BS: Hm-mm. No. No, it was Sunday school, church, and then Sunday evening training union for children or not, and Sunday preaching service. So you always got two sermons on Sundays.

SL: Morning and night.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

[01:41:20] SL: And what is training union?

BS: Training union was a thing the Baptists had. Most others—Protestant churches did as well—have something like it. But they would have a meeting before the church service where you would just—it was similar to Sunday school, but it was more of a thing of you take a part and you, you know, read this part and be prepared to discuss this lesson and kind of lead—tryin' to teach kids to lead.

SL: So it was . . .

BS: It was . . .

SL: . . . a youth . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . organization.

BS: Yeah.

SL: A youth . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . service.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So it . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: Not like—I guess Methodist was MYF.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Methodist Youth Fellowship or . . .

BS: Same thing. Very much same. Yeah.

SL: Same sort of thing.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And then Wednesday nights?

BS: Wednesday nights. That's right. Prayer meeting Wednesday night. Yeah. We at first didn't do that with regularity and later did. So that was something we kinda grew into.

[Tape stopped]

[01:42:39] SL: Now you said that your mom—did your mom get further involved with church activities and church . . .

BS: She did. She belonged to women's groups within the church, and she had cradle roll. She felt like, you know, she was more qualified to take care of the toddlers and all of that. And her—she had Bill Clinton.

SL: Is that right?

BS: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: Now, see, there are some other celebrities out of that town, aren't there?

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: So she had Bill Clinton as a toddler and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . she took care of him while the church service was going on.

Is that . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah. She would—even before he became Bill Clinton, she would say, "That's the prettiest little baby I've ever had."

SL: Oh my gosh. [*BS clears throat*] We were in trouble from the beginning with . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that guy . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . weren't we? [*Laughter*]

BS: Right.

[01:43:38] SL: Well, what about Mack McLarty?

BS: Mack McLarty was, of course, younger than I, but I very much knew who he was. I had a job takin' care of the park durin' the summer, passing out athletic equipment and things like that. And Mack McLarty and David Watkins and Vince Foster and some really pretty well-known people like that were in those—some of those programs. Mack was always a little gentleman. You know, he—to me, he looked as a kid just like he looks now—very—always very appropriate and courteous and well behaved.

A fine kid.

SL: Well now, his—didn't his father have a car lot or a . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . car dealership?

BS: Yeah, his father and his grandfather.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Yeah, he had the Ford Motor Company there in Hope and at  
Texarkana. And the grandfather had the Ford Motor Company—  
he managed the Ford Motor Company.

[Tape stopped]

[01:45:09] SL: It sounds like to me that your—that your mom was  
pretty thrilled and pretty excited to be accepted into the  
church . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and it really was gratifying to her to be of service . . .

BS: That's right, she was.

SL: . . . to that. And so the whole church influence was rewarding  
for . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . for her, and it probably spilled over into the household, I  
would guess.

BS: Yeah, that's right. She was very spiritual. Very serious business

with her. And that's right—she instilled that in the rest of us, that that was important business and not just a polite thing, but really, really important.

[01:46:03] SL: Did y'all ever have the pastor over for . . .



BS: Oh yeah. Yeah, we did that, and we had an experience along in the [19]40—war—[19]41, [19]42, [19]43. We had a young Mexican evangelist, Angel Martinez, come to our town when he was a teenager and preach. Gracious, that kid then could preach. He wasn't—didn't weigh a hundred pounds, I bet. Poor kid—hot day, and he was preachin' in wool tweeds [*laughs*], you know, because that's all he had. But he was articulate and brilliant and later became one of the prominent evangelists in the country and later moved to Fort Smith, where he operated until his death. But he was—for three years he came to Hope with revivals, and his brother was my age, and he would come and stay with us durin' those revivals. And the—I, you know, had the privilege later on of watching him grow in prominence and all of that. And he was a straight-out guy, you know, not a "send me a dollar" television preacher. He was—he did nothing but church revivals, and he had a photogenic memory and just had memorized the New Testament and [*laughs*] was a fantastic person—somebody that was important in our lives, and our

pastors were as well. [*Clears throat*]

[01:48:18] SL: Maybe we should talk about revivals just for a . . .

BS: M'kay.

SL: . . . little bit. You know, we—some kids might not have any idea what a revival is.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So were these held in tents, or did it go inside the church or both or . . .

BS: This young Mexican—from San Antonio at the time—came up, and he had a tent. And a storm came and tore his tent up [*laughs*], so he just had it out in a field where they nailed some pine boards together, you know, to make benches and had it in a field. And crowds began to grow until he just overgrew everything almost. People were real—would really turn out to hear him preach because he was something unusual. But [*clears throat*], yeah, that's the way they would do it. Now sometimes it'd be in the church, but a person like him would just pick out a vacant lot and have a revival. And of course, you had all kinds. You had shysters and, you know, people that were after a dollar. Crooks. And legitimate people preached that way, too. So it was not always easy, I guess, to judge who was for real and who wasn't.

[01:49:51] SL: Mh-hmm. [*BS clears throat*] But the—this whole—it was all—it was almost like a circuit, wasn't it?

BS: Yeah.

SL: I mean, these are traveling preachers . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . or [*dog makes shaking noise*] traveling individuals and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . some were studied and were good and were tryin' to do the Lord's work, I guess.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And others—they depended on it for more than just their livelihood.

BS: Yeah, yeah, they were . . .

SL: It was a business.

BS: They would clean the crowd up. I mean, try to get every dollar they could.

SL: And did they—did the same dollar-grabbers come more than once, or did the community catch on pretty quick, or . . .

BS: I would say most of them were one-timers. But you had some that were not. And of course, like you have 'em on—in my opinion—on television today, you had 'em on radio then. They were not askin' for a dollar, but "send me a dime, and I'll send

you a tract," and that kind of thing. And, again, some of 'em were legitimate, and some weren't.

[01:51:07] SL: So the revival movement kind of morphed into the TV evangelism, I guess.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: You have good ones . . .

BS: But you know the . . .

SL: . . . and bad ones.

BS: . . . Billy Graham, who, in my opinion, is completely straight and valid. Billy Graham apparently was won by one of those men, Mordecai Ham. And Mordecai Ham was a well-known traveling evangelist and [*clears throat*] very effective and very legitimate. And he had his following, which included Billy Graham. You had—earlier, I guess, the Dwight L. Moody's and people like that that had somewhat the same style—draw tremendous crowds.

SL: That's interesting. I mean, you know, you—that kinda—it—you know, some of the—you hear about the medicine shows. Did you ever have any medicine shows? Any . . .

BS: We did at the sale barn. It's interesting that you'd mention that 'cause that's one of the priceless things that I got to witness. They would come to those sales and take advantage of that crowd.



SL: Sure.

[01:52:41] BS: Before the sale started or somethin', they would invariably have a box with a limited supply [*SL laughs*] in it. And they would make sure they got that point over. These ol' buyers were nobody's fool. You know, cattle buyers and traders. That guy would start, and they would elbow each other and laugh and carry on. Before it was over, every one of 'em . . .

SL: Bought a bottle.

BS: . . . would be struggling to get a bottle [*laughs*] of that medicine that would cure anything.

SL: Yeah, if it didn't kill you, it'd help you.

BS: That's right. [*Laughter*] And they were good. And I thought, "Boy, I have seen somethin' that's valuable here. These guys are good."

SL: Sell a drownin' man a glass of water.

BS: That's right.

SL: That's funny. [*BS sighs*] That's funny. You are lucky that you got to see that.

[01:53:38] BS: That was very fortunate. Yeah. Yeah, I saw the—first guy I saw with the walnut shells and the pea was at the sale barn. And I thought—you know, I watched him as a kid. I watched—I knew exactly where that pea was and every

[*laughs*—until he got serious about it, and then he'd beat you with it.

SL: That's entertainment, you know.

BS: It was.

SL: You know . . .

BS: It was.

SL: . . . I mean, it does take advantage of folks . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in some ways, but . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . they enter into it . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . and they think they know better and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: It—that's funny. That's funny.

[01:54:26] TM: Hey, Scott, just so we have a full story on that, can we talk about exactly what that was about—what was goin' on on that?

SL: Oh, on the . . .

TM: The pea . . .

SL: Pea—the shell?

TM: Uh-huh.

SL: Okay.

BS: Yeah. The walnut halves and the pea was the thing where the man'd put the board out in front of him and he would show you the pea. And then he would have three shells, and he would say, "If you can guess, you know, which shell the pea is under, well, you win." Well, the first two or three times he would do it [*laughs*], any fool could tell what walnut shell it was under because he'd just show it to you. He'd give it away and act clumsy, and he'd drop it and all that kind of thing till you were confident that you could tell. And then when he really—when you put the real money down there, he would move those things around, and either you would lose on the one out of three odds, 'cause he could hide it so well, or some people thought that he would even pick the pea up . . .

SL: Palm it.

BS: . . . and put it in his hand and it'd not be under any of 'em.

SL: And slip it under . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to show you where it was.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. It was an art.

BS: Yes, it was. It was.

SL: Showman. Showman stuff.

BS: And the whole thing—the setup, the manipulation, the suckering, draggin' 'em in was—all of it was a skill. [*Laughs*]

[01:56:11] SL: How big a town was Hope when you . . .

BS: Hope was eight thousand.

SL: Yeah?

BS: Mh-hmm. And durin' the provin'-ground days, it got up—probably—I don't know—fourteen or fifteen thousand. Lots of people came in there to build a military base for the army.

SL: So what was the proving ground? They were testing ordnances?

BS: Testing shells and bombs. And it looked like, you know, we had our own war goin' on out—over there at night. You could look up in the sky and see these tracer bullets everywhere, and of course, you could hear the rumble of the shells and the bombs as they were exploded. And they had people doin' tests on 'em and trying to build a better shell and bomb, I guess. During that period of time as a major, Klipsch came into Hope with the army. He was gonna later make the Klipschorn—you know, the . . .

SL: Paul Klipsch?

BS: Paul Klipsch. Yeah. That's how he came to Hope.

SL: Is that right?

BS: Yeah, he was a major in the army.

[01:57:31] SL: And so when he retired, he just stayed in Hope . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and he built . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . arguably the world's most . . .

BS: Yeah, he bought some of the surplus . . .

SL: He did build the world's most efficient speaker.

BS: Mh-hmm. Built some surplus army buildings out there and set up his operation. [*Clears throat*]

SL: So this was going on during the war?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

TM: Hey, Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay. We've done two hours.

BS: Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[01:57:54] SL: Well, Buddy, we're startin' our third hour here.

BS: All right.

SL: It goes by pretty fast, doesn't it?

BS: It does.

SL: We were—I think we left off talkin' about the proving grounds . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and what they were doing out there and how it affected the community of Hope. It was a boost . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . economically . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . in most regards. And there were—it seems like you mentioned one major that came in with the group and ended up staying in Hope, and that was Paul Klipsch.



BS: Paul Klipsch. That's right. He came with an ordnance group, as I recall. Was a—he was a major. And people got to know him around town as Major Klipsch. He was an interesting character around town because he seemed to always be working out some kind of figures in his head at church and wherever you saw him, he seemed to be working on somethin'. And so people laughed about that and all. But he stayed there and, after the war, set up his Klipschorn operation and built this wonderful thing. I guess they called it high fidelity at that time—but built such wonderful equipment, and I believe his entry was our entry into the 1958 World's Fair for equipment of that kind. So that was an interesting time.

[01:59:44] SL: I've always heard and read that he was pretty

eccentric.

BS: Yeah.

SL: That he was pretty much a perfectionist.

BS: Yes.

SL: And he did, by the way, design the most efficient speaker that's ever been designed.

BS: Yeah.

SL: It was a Klipsch corner horn.

BS: Yeah.

SL: It had a—if you unfolded the horn that was in that speaker, it'd be twenty-nine feet long.

BS: Huh.

SL: Took one watt . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to make a hundred dB of sound pressure, which was unheard of at the time.

BS: Yeah.

[02:00:14] SL: So you could have a little tiny amplifier and have really big sound. And it was . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . clear and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . beautiful sounding. It's—he's quite a story.

BS: Yeah, he was.

SL: Quite a guy. [*Clears throat*] So the—we're still—we're just into the war years, I guess. Now the service station—you were—you—that was all through the Depression. Is that right?

BS: That's correct. Mh-hmm.

SL: And did it ever really do very well? I mean, was it . . .



BS: No, it was just a living. And sometimes wasn't even that. You know, this one was owned by Lion Oil, who were good people to do business with, but they had their problems. They closed it at one time, and so my dad was out. We had to move, and we moved to what we always referred to in the family was the black house. We called it that because it didn't—it was unpainted and old and that it was black in color. So it had no water at all. My sister was old enough at the time—maybe nine years old—where she carried water for the family from an adjoining place over the hill a ways. And I didn't know anything about that at the time, but I know that that was somethin' that the family always referred to as the bottom. That's when, economically, we hit the bottom. They'd lost their furniture. Just didn't have anything. And my dad walked into town, which was a long, long walk, and worked for a dollar a day, and tryin' to support three children on

a dollar a day was what we always referred to as the bottom.

That's as bad as it got.

[02:02:30] SL: So did y'all have to sell all—everything that you had  
or . . .

BS: There wasn't anything to sell. We lost—they had bought some  
things on the credit, which they lost. And there wasn't anything  
to sell. And you know, my dad was a fiercely loyal person. He  
went to a very good man in Hope that was well-known family,  
Mr. McRae, who had a hardware. And Mr. McRae had his own  
problems, but he told him about ours. And Mr. McRae let him  
have a stove and enough things to get by on on the credit,  
although didn't have much goin' for us in credit. And my dad  
always dictated, "When you have something to buy, you buy it  
from Mr. McRae [*laughs*] from then on" . . .

SL: Well, of course.

BS: . . . because he was . . .

SL: Grateful.

BS: . . . he was good to us.

[02:03:35] SL: So do you know how old you were or what year that  
was?

BS: Yeah, that would—I woulda been a year to two years old at the  
time.

SL: So you barely . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . have any memories of that service . . .

BS: And, yeah, I don't really remember.

SL: . . . station and that life. So the sale barn and all that stuff happened later.

BS: Later. Mh-hmm.

SL: And . . .

BS: Lion Oil came back. Got the thing together again—moved him in again, and this time it got off the ground for him.

SL: Was it the same service station?

BS: Yeah, same place.

SL: How 'bout that?

BS: Same house.

SL: Moved back . . .

BS: It was . . .

SL: . . . to the same house?

BS: The house belonged [*laughs*] to them.

SL: I see.

BS: They let us . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . have it again.

[02:04:17] SL: I see. Okay. So how long was that period there where you were out of that—he was out of that and then back in?

BS: 'Bout a year, I think.

SL: 'Bout a year?

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Boy, that's somethin'. So . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you don't really have very—these are things that you've been told. You don't . . .

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

SL: You really don't have a whole lot—so do you remember moving back in at all or . . .

BS: It seems like I have a memory of being on the truck that was carrying our furniture back, but I'm not sure about that. Mh-hmm.

[02:04:52] SL: Boy! It was that way for the whole country, wasn't it?

BS: That's right. That's right. It was really tough. There was a family that was close to us. We loved every one of 'em. Good people, really, but they got so desperate that they said—and I guess it was true—that the man stole somebody else's

chickens—couple of chickens—and went to the penitentiary for it. And that family was left to get along with him being away in the penitentiary. And was always talked about how hard they had it. We thought we had it hard, and so we'd always say that they've got it harder. Mh-hmm.

SL: There's somethin' about that. So the church involvement that your mom went to the pastor about—was that before or after the . . .

BS: That's after we moved back.

SL: After you moved back?

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: So . . .

BS: Got kind of a fresh start. Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: So I can—this all kind of fits now . . .

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

SL: . . . as to her concerns about . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: Boy, that's hard times.

BS: Yeah, it was tough.

[02:06:16] SL: So—but it bounced back.

BS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: And things got better.

BS: Things got better. We bought a—my dad bought a newer—a better house at another location where we lived for about three or four years. And that was a great experience because I had a bunch of cousins that lived in that neighborhood. Boys that were three to five years older, I guess.

SL: Oh. Yeah.

BS: And they baptized me good. [*Laughter*] That's when I got interested in athletics because they were all interested in it and playin' football. And I always felt like playin' with the older boys was a big advantage to me and . . .

SL: Yeah, well, I'm sure . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the long run it is.

BS: Yeah, it was.

SL: So you kinda toughened up.

BS: Yeah, they—it was toughen up or die.

[02:07:22] SL: Well now, was it just football, or did they . . .

BS: Everything.

SL: Everything. Baseball, basketball . . .

BS: Yeah, baseball. Mh-hmm. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, we'd be Red Grange one day and Babe Ruth the next. [*Laughs*]

SL: You know, those were the heroes, weren't they?

BS: They were.

SL: And was most of that [*BS clears throat*]*—*you're gatherin' all that off the radio and off the newspapers, weren't you?

BS: That's right. And, course, with me, I was gettin' most of it from them.

SL: Yeah.

BS: They were knowledgeable about that kind of thing when I wasn't. And*—*but, yeah, you get into it and start readin' the papers yourselves and listenin' to the radio.

SL: Well now, were you big for your age?

BS: No.

SL: No?

BS: No. Everybody assumes that, but I wasn't. I was undersized until about the tenth grade.

SL: You had big intentions. [*Laughter*]

BS: Yeah, yeah, that's right.

SL: You thought . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you were big.

BS: That's right. [*SL laughs*] Yeah, that's right.

[02:08:23] SL: Well, so these*—*was there any organized sports?

When did you start . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . playing organized sports?

BS: There were not any organized sports, and for me, that was even later than most because durin' the war they eliminated junior high sports—or at least they did in our town. You didn't have any football except the senior high football, and so I started goin' out for that in the ninth grade. And before that, nothin' was organized.

SL: I guess we ought to talk a little bit about the war and its effect in Hope. I guess by this time you were aware of rationing and . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: So the things like sugar and gasoline . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . and flour—was flour rationed? I can't remember.

BS: Flour—it was either rationed or it was short, you know.

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

BS: You just—some things you'd just get short. Cornmeal would be short. You just couldn't find it sometimes.

[02:09:30] SL: Yeah. Do you remember the ration . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . tickets?



BS: Yes, very well. I—my dad acquired grocery stores along the

way, and by then—by the time I was thirteen, I was working in one of his stores all the time, so we handled the rationing books and things like that. So . . .

SL: So your dad became entrepreneurial?

BS: Yes. Mh-hmm.

SL: And was that from the success of the sales barn?

BS: Well, that fed it. That gave him some capital to do some things with. And he got in the grocery store business, and he would—he had a lot of nerve. He would just take a plunge at almost anything. When the provin' ground came along, you know, everything's in a hurry.

SL: Yeah.

[02:10:28] BS: And they wanted to sell all the houses—all the crops that were on that land that was being taken for a provin' ground. And so they would auction it and give you until a certain date to get it out of there. If you didn't have it out by then, they'd just burn it or do something with it. So a lot of people were afraid to bid on it, but he did. He bought a lot of that stuff. Bought a lot of lumber from there and crops and got teams of men and trucks and went out and . . .

SL: Salvaged it.

BS: . . . hauled up all he could before the deadline. No way to get it

all . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . but we—he got enough material to—he built the family a house from that and then filled his barns up with corn and crops and that sort of thing. [*Laughs*] Yeah, he was . . .

SL: That's smart.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, he did—he was . . .

SL: Some folks at the time may not have . . .

BS: He . . .

SL: . . . felt that way, but . . .

BS: . . . he was a hustler and, course, I don't have that. As I said, if our roles had been reversed, the family woulda starved to death.

SL: You wanted a safe bet.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

[02:11:46] SL: Well, so—gosh, what a turn . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . of fortune for the family.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, it was. It was. And you know, there was not any wealth like we speak of today, but a comfortable living was just enough to breathe . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . back then, which so many were havin' a hard time with.

SL: So you—your dad—did—he bought this house shortly after he went back to the filling station in that house.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And you lived there for about three years.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: And was he building out of the salvage material during that three years?

BS: Not during all of it, but toward the end of it he was buying material for the other house. Yeah.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: Mh-hmm.

[02:12:44] SL: And this second house that you were in—or I guess it was third house . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that you were in was close to your family—to relatives—cousins and older . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . older kids.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And you got indoctrinated into . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . the games that kids play.

BS: Yeah. Learned how to smoke chew tobacco.

SL: Oh my gosh! Did you get sick?

BS: Oh my, yes! Yeah. [*Laughter*]

SL: Did you get a scolding?

BS: Yes, got caught at it and further paid for it, but—yeah.

SL: Well, you know, we hadn't talked much about any of your mischievous activities or any of your disciplinary actions that were taken. Were you an okay student? Were you well behaved in school, or did the teachers have to teach you some extracurricular lessons that . . .

BS: No, I was not a discipline problem.

SL: Good.

BS: I wanted [*laughs*] to get along with the teachers, and I didn't have any trouble that way.

[02:13:55] SL: Well, you said that you were fortunate you had great teachers.

BS: I did. Mh-hmm.

SL: And so it sounds like you gave them the respect that . . .

BS: I did.

SL: . . . they had comin'.

BS: I did. I thought they were all just princes and queens, and they were.

SL: Well, was there—so did you prefer football over all the other . . .

BS: Yeah, I liked the other sports and played all of 'em, but football was the one that appealed to me the most. Yeah.

SL: Uh-huh. And so you actually got to join a team . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . an organized team, but not until ninth grade?

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm. That's right. We had ninth grade and, course, it was just kinda go out and watch the big boys play while you stayed [*laughs*] out of the way. And occasionally the coach would come over when he had time and teach us and assumed that we were learning something just from watching it. And we'd do the hard stuff with 'em. Do the running and . . .

SL: Conditioning.

BS: . . . oh—conditioning. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, but we didn't contribute much to playing. I didn't play any durin' the ninth grade. Just sat on the bench the whole time and . . .

[02:15:24] SL: You were okay with that . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . 'cause that's . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

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

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . all the kids your age.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: The older kids play, and the younger kids watch.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: That's interesting.

BS: That's right. I had heroes that were doin' the playing, and so that was all just fine . . .

SL: What was . . .

BS: . . . with me.

SL: . . . what school was it that—was it Hope High School?

BS: Hope High School. Mh-hmm.

[02:15:46] SL: And do you remember your first coach's name?

BS: Yes. First coach was Foy Hammons, and he was older—you know, I thought older. He really was not very old. But he was talking about being old; and as soon as the war was over, he was going to quit, which he did—got out, retired. And then we had just a marvelous pair come in—Joe Dildy, who was a protégé of Bear Bryant.

SL: Uh-huh. Yeah, I've heard that name.

BS: Hope was so lucky to get him. But he got out of the navy or—and came to Hope to coach. And he was new. He knew things and been places, you know, that we'd never dreamed of—had

played in the Rose Bowl. And had played center for Alabama. He later became head of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission . . .

SL: That may be where I've heard . . .

BS: . . . here in Arkansas.

SL: . . . his name, too.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[02:17:05] BS: Yeah, his brother, Jim, worked for the power company.

SL: Okay.

BS: Entergy. And he played on the same Alabama team. They went to the Rose Bowl and, I'm told, had five Arkansas boys in the starting lineup. So that was wonderful. He was a great coach. The hardest man I've ever done anything under. I mean, really hard man. But it was that measured "know what I'm doing" kind of thing that really did love his kids and kept up with me the rest of my—rest of his life and just a wonderful person to be under. Clean man. Clean language. Wonderful behavior. Wonderful ambition for his players and just a real fortunate experience.

SL: Makes a difference when your coach is—coach sets a good example . . .

BS: It does.

SL: . . . day in and day out, every . . .

BS: It does.

SL: . . . every time . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and anywhere . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . he is.

BS: Yeah.

SL: He's . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . leading by example.

BS: That's right.

[02:18:33] SL: So this happens your—I guess your . . .

BS: Tenth grade.

SL: . . . sophomore year.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: And I bet you're startin' to see some time—some play time.

BS: That's right.

SL: And you mentioned there were a good—a couple of guys that came in that were good. Was there another coach?

BS: Yeah, Nolan Tollett.

SL: Okay.

BS: He's related to all those Tolletts around Nashville, as was Coach Dildy. They were both originally from Nashville, Arkansas.

SL: *T-O-L-L-E-T-T?*

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: So he's kin to . . .

BS: Related to Leland . . .

SL: Leland?

BS: . . . and that group of Tolletts. Yeah, yeah, really fine man. He was the younger of the two, and then after Joe Dildy moved on, well, Nolan Tollett became the head coach. So I loved both of them and great experience.

[02:19:31] SL: So what position did you finally get to play at?

BS: Well, I was what you would call a tailback on the single wing. We ran a Notre Dame box is what they called it, but actually it was like a single wing where you take the ball yourself deep and either run with it, throw it, or punt it or whatever. And they wanted me to do that, and you know, I started as a substitute for just a splendid athlete that was supposed to made all-state and won all the honors that year. And about the fourth game out, he got a broken collarbone. So that moved me up, and it was a tremendous [*laughs*] growing experience because I'm—I

was not ready. You know, I had to try to grow into it, and with his help, I think I managed to do that at least acceptably.

SL: So not only grow fast, but had you started to get some of your size . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . at that time?

BS: Yeah, but I was still about a hundred and forty-five pounds . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

BS: Somethin' like that. But . . .

SL: Yeah.



[02:21:02] BS: You know, it was such an unreal year. That was

1946, and people were returning from the service. And I'm sure the authorities did not enforce the rule of age . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . and shouldn't have—shouldn't—these were boys that had left high school . . .

SL: To serve.

BS: . . . to serve, and then they came back. They got to play. And I—at age fifteen, I played with five war veterans on my team.

SL: Boy!

BS: [*Laughs*] That was . . .

SL: You . . .

BS: You talk about men and boys.

SL: That's what I'm sayin'. [*Laughter*] You know, you—I mean, you talk about tough.

BS: Yeah, that's right. That's right. And they were all wonderful people. You know, just—I wouldn't take anything for that experience, because they were people who had been somewhere [*laughs*] and seen some things and just wonderful people.

[02:22:09] SL: It—you know, that—their presence had to elevate the entire . . .

BS: It did.

SL: . . . program.

BS: It did. Yeah.

SL: Not only were they older and experienced, but they had been through . . .

BS: They had been through it.

SL: . . . stuff that . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . as hard as it gets on a football field . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . it ain't nothin' like where they'd come from.

BS: That's right. And they—you know, they would talk to the coaches about their—share their military experience, and the

rest of us sit there and listen with our mouths open at all of that.

And it's just an unreal year.

SL: You know, I guess the other side of the coin is that other teams were getting that . . .

BS: They did.

SL: . . . experience, too. So . . .

BS: Oh, absolutely.

SL: . . . the whole—everywhere across the country, all of a sudden football—or any sport . . .

BS: Absolutely.

SL: . . . had these men-boys that . . .

[02:23:01] BS: Yeah, absolutely. I had one of these older cousins that I was talkin' about that lived in the neighborhood where I moved in. He was four years older than I. He was one of 'em that had come back. And playing in a game, you know—and I got into the game, and he says, "Buddy, don't let this guy get a hold of you. He'll kill you." [*Laughter*] Which is kind of an encouraging note.

SL: Oh boy!

BS: But you know, he said to the quarterback, "You call the plays where I block that guy 'cause I don't want him hurtin' Buddy." And, I mean, he did. He did. [*Laughs*]

SL: He knew how to block him.

BS: He did.

SL: He knew what he . . .

BS: He did.

SL: So—golly! [*BS laughs*] You know, and the truth is he knew how to kill, so . . .

BS: He did. He did.

SL: . . . you know, it could be a very painful experience.

BS: That's right. [*Laughter*]

[02:24:08] SL: Oh brother! So how did the team do your sophomore year?

BS: Well, there—we did well. We did—we had not had a winning team the year before, and that year we had ten and two.

SL: Big turnaround.

BS: Yeah, we got beat by Texarkana and El Dorado, who had bigger schools than we did. But, still, a good season and great learning experience. [*Laughs*]

SL: Who else was on—who all was on that team? Can you remember some of the players that were on that team?

BS: Oh yes, I remember all of them and, you know, the—a boy that had been one of my heroes back before he left—Jack Bell was on that team, and he played one year there at Hope and then went

to Ouachita and was a good player at Ouachita. Buster Rogers was the boy that got hurt, and he was a extremely good football player. Dennis Smith went to Tulane and played. And then my cousin didn't go anywhere. I think he could have, but just didn't go anywhere. But—and I had young people my age—Tommy Britt went to the university at the same time I did. Played for the Razorbacks. And so we had some athletes that were comin' along.

[02:26:02] SL: All right. So now what happened your junior year?

BS: Junior year—most of those men had moved on. But we still had a couple [*laughs*] of war veterans, and we went nine and three that year. Dropped down a little bit. But those were—you know, Hope was in an unusual situation. Back then the conference was called the Big Sixteen, and that went from towns like Little Rock down to places like Hope. So most of the people that we were competing with had a bigger school system, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . in 1948, my last year, we lost to Little Rock, and we lost to Smackover, which had a very good team. And we played—and I played with a lot of those men in—at university and had to listen to that for the next four years. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, did you ever get a—did you ever play against Clyde Scott?

BS: No, never did play against him. I played against his brother, Benny, at—who was still at Smackover. And then I played against him as a freshman. Benny was on the Little Rock Junior College championship team—the junior college championship team that Jimmy Karam had here. And they whaled the tar out of us as freshmen. That was our first game, and Benny played in that one. Yeah. And the . . .

[02:27:55] SL: Whooped you pretty good.

BS: And then Clyde had a brother, Tracy, that was still at the university when I went up there. And I was a freshman when he was a senior, so we didn't . . .

SL: Really cross paths that much.

BS: Back then, they didn't let freshmen play.

SL: Right.

BS: But we scrimmaged against 'em a lot and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm. Well, what were your stats like comin' out of high school?

BS: Stats?

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: I don't remember many of 'em. They didn't—I don't know that they kept 'em all that well then. But I had twenty-one touchdowns, I remember that, as—in the last year. And my

runnin' mate, Tommy Britt, had nineteen, so . . .

SL: Y'all were . . .

BS: . . . the two of us had forty. Yeah. And . . .

[02:28:52] SL: That's enough to have a good season right there.

BS: Yeah, we had a good time. He was very fast and a [*clears throat*] slippery guy, and so we teamed up well.

SL: Were you playin' twelve games a season?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Yeah, we went ten and two that year and got—I got—we scheduled Little Rock, and course, [*laughs*] Little Rock was just one school back then . . .

SL: Right.

BS: . . . essentially, and they were—man, they were good.

SL: Who was coachin' Little Rock then? That wasn't . . .

BS: Wilson.

SL: Wilson.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Wilson Matthews?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. [*Clears throat*] Yeah.

SL: Big school, tough coach.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Well now, so this is nineteen forty . . .

BS: Eight.

SL: . . . eight.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: So you didn't have any black players on your team.

BS: No. Hm-mm.

[02:29:57] SL: And did y'all—were there any teams that did have  
black players . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . that you played?

BS: Hm-mm. No.

SL: So segregation was still pretty much in full force back then  
and . . .

BS: Oh yeah. Yeah. [*Clears throat*]

SL: But as you said earlier, you would go watch black teams play.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: And they'd come watch y'all play.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Were there any exceptional black players . . .

BS: Yes, there were.

SL: . . . that you were aware of?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. We had a star at Hope named Palmore, and

I'm sorry I don't know what happened to him. But he was some kind of athlete—just a wonderful football player. And I expect coulda played anywhere. But I don't—he didn't.

SL: Yeah.

[02:30:52] BS: You know, a little later than that, Pace and Bobby Mitchell from Hot Springs—Pace from Little Rock—went on up and played for Michigan and Illinois, respectively, I think.

[*Clears throat*] But you—I don't think by—I'm sure by that time there were no mixed high school teams. They were all either white or black, and none of the colleges. I mean, none.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And, course, the university did not have a black player until [19]69, I guess it was.

SL: So were you playing any other organized sports when you were in high school?

BS: I played basketball and baseball.

SL: How'd you do there?

BS: And I liked both of them and just a—it was just a—you know, year-round thing. Just as soon as you got through with one . . .

SL: You went into the other.

BS: . . . get into the other. Yeah, and I liked 'em all.

SL: But you were recruited for your football.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

[02:32:11] SL: And talk to me a little bit about—I guess your grades were good . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in school?

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: No problems there.

BS: Right.

SL: You had gotten a good start with your teachers early on.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And that . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that lead to you continuing to do good in school. So let's talk a little bit about the recruiting that you experienced. How'd that work?

BS: Well, back then the recruiting was, I guess, largely by word of mouth. The high school coaches sent back word a lot of times to schools, and it just got out somehow or other. They didn't have the film exchange and that kind of thing that they have today. It was a lot less sophisticated, but I had good offers from Alabama and Oklahoma, Oklahoma State. Tulane was a big school then. They were in the SEC at that time. LSU. Those

were the major ones, I guess, and at one time I was probably goin' to all of 'em. [*Laughter*] Startin' with the furthest away from home.

[02:33:39] SL: Well now, really—let's talk about that a little bit. I mean, your mom and dad are still alive, and you're . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . in high school.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Business is good.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Your dad's built a house that . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you're all livin' in. Is it a good house?

BS: Yeah.

SL: You like the house that . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . he built and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

SL: . . . and it's got all the conveniences.

BS: Yeah.

SL: It's got electricity and gas . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . water and . . .

[02:34:00] BS: Yeah. He was a sheriff by that time.

SL: Is that right?

BS: Mh-hmm. And actu . . .

SL: Now, look. Listen to that. That's [*BS laughs*] good, isn't it?

BS: Yeah.

SL: That's somethin' else.

BS: He was elected sheriff in 1946, and we actually moved to the courthouse quarters. The sheriff at that time had an apartment on the fifth floor of the courthouse, and across the hallway was the jail. So we did that. [*Laughs*]

SL: You and all—and the—and all the girls and—livin' across from the jail.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: Across the hall from the jail.

BS: That's right. That's right.

SL: How 'bout that?

BS: Yeah.

SL: Now was that on the town square or . . .

BS: No, it was . . .

SL: No?

BS: . . . it was several blocks off the town square on—just on a block by itself. And I'm not sure why we did that, but that's what my dad wanted to do, and that's what we did. And it was an enjoyable experience for me. I kinda got to know the run of the courthouse and could see him more than usual because he was there. He still had the sale barn, but he would spend most of his time in the office at the courthouse.

[02:35:30] SL: So how many stories up was it?

BS: Five.

SL: Five?

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: So you had a big view.

BS: Yeah.

SL: That's one reason . . .

BS: Yeah. It started—I was just a kid when we started up there. And I would make model airplanes and fly 'em off [*laughs*] of the top. Put a firecracker in 'em and watch 'em blow up. But . . .

SL: Well, did you ever as a kid go to any of the courtrooms and . . .

BS: Oh . . .

SL: . . . listen to any of that stuff or . . .

BS: Not much. He wanted me to stay out of the courtrooms, which I

did. And—but I had some great experiences—I—that he would clue me in on. I remember sitting in his office one day where a gr—a fighting group was in there, 'bout fifty-fifty. They were out in the northern part of the county, and they were in a squabble. And back then they'd just voluntarily all come to the sheriff, and you know, things were a lot different. I remember him sitting there and listenin' to this one tell their side.

SL: Yeah.

[02:36:49] BS: And then the other side. And then when they were through, he says, "All right, here's what we're gonna do. [*SL laughs*] You're gonna move from that community. I want you out of there by next Saturday"—or whatever it is—"and you go live somewhere else." And to this one, "I want you to do so-and-so-and-so-and-so." And they would all nod their heads and say, "Okay, okay." And that's the way they settled that [*laughs*] little dispute that they were having up there.

SL: You know, I know we've got a lot of stuff to cover, but I don't really wanna leave this just yet. You know, it speaks very highly of your dad . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . for him to be elected sheriff.

BS: Well, thank you.

SL: And there's a—at that time, you had to have respect and people had to trust you to vote for being your—the . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . sheriff.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And the sheriff knew everybody.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And they kind of counted on him to do the right thing. I mean, that's . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . just a . . .

[02:38:00] BS: Well, let me tell you—you kn—and they had so much freedom. I mean, the sheriff had so much freedom in doin' what he wanted to do. I just thought of this story, but a few years ago in my law office I got a call from the switchboard, and she said, "There's a man here by the name of Floyd Top to see you. He doesn't have an appointment. Do you know who that is?" And I said, "Yeah, I think I do."

SL: Floyd Thomas?

BS: "I think"—Floyd Top.

SL: Oh, Top. Okay.

[02:38:39] BS: "I think I do." And I got up and went out there, and

it was what had been a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old black boy that was in a gang that was arrested at Hope. They caught 'em and incarcerated 'em at Hope. And they were out of Indiana, and they were being extradited to Indiana, and my dad says, "I'm sending 'em all to you, as the extradition calls for, except the little one. I'm keepin' him." And so he sent the others off, and he brought Floyd home with him. And we put him up in the—an area that my dad made for him in his office—not at the courthouse, but his—the office area of his sale barn. And we lived together and played together and did all those kinds of things for a period of time. I don't know how long it was. And then I grew up and went off to school, and he left. And I hadn't heard from him anymore until that day. And he came in my office and said, "I wanted to tell you what your dad did for me, 'cause I didn't know whether you knew or not." And I said, "No, I didn't. I never even knew what you were charged with." And he told me about all of that and told me that he told 'em that he was not giving up the little one. [*Laughs*] "And he brought me home and said, 'I'm gonna give you a chance 'cause, see, if you go back, you'll be dead in a year, and I wanna give you a chance.'" And when I went out to see him in the lobby of the law office, he had on the collar of a minister, and he was at—a

pastor of a church over at Lonoke. [*Laughs*] And we had some good days together and some meals together and grandchildren got to know each other and that kind of thing later on. And Floyd died about seven or eight years ago, I guess. He had diabetes and died, but that was the kind of sheriff—the kind of man he was, that he would do that for that young man. And he was—he had a lot of losses. He bet on some that lost, you know, but he bet on some that came through and justified his faith in 'em, and Floyd was one of those.

SL: That's a great, great story.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: That's really good.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

[02:42:08] SL: You know, it coulda—you know, your father could've seen the opportunity to serve.

BS: Yes, he did.

SL: Serve the community.

BS: He did.

SL: And he took it seriously.

BS: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: And it sounds like he did [*laughs*] a really great job with it.

BS: Well, he did. He did. He did.

[02:42:28] SL: So do you think that be—just bein' around the courthouse influenced you in any way toward your future career at all? Were you . . .



BS: Well, yes. Not from the—just the court and things like that. I did watch those lawyers, but I really didn't think much about becoming a lawyer. My dad would tell me sometimes what a good man somebody like James Pilkinton was, who was the prosecuting attorney there and later became a court of appeals judge [*clears throat*] in—for the Arkansas. And then Lyle Brown, who served on the Arkansas Supreme Court here.

SL: Yeah.

BS: He would tell me what good men those were. And so I expect—respected that a lot and learned a lot. And you know, I didn't realize how well he was doin' this, but as people were comin' and goin', my dad would simply say, "He's a good man." That's all he'd say about him. That's all he needed to say, you know. And I knew exactly what that meant. And once in a while he'd say, "He won't do." [*Laughter*] And I knew what that meant, too, and I realized he was givin' me a pretty good education.

SL: That's a great, great story. So when you're in high school playin' football, are y'all in the courthouse then? Is that . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[02:44:18] SL: And so we're—we kinda—we were talkin' about how you were recruited, and you gave a litany of schools that were powerhouse schools, and you had your choice. Now was Bear Bryant at Alabama . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . at that time?

BS: No.

SL: No?

BS: Bear Bryant was at Kentucky.

SL: At Kentucky.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: That's right.

BS: That's right.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: That's right. And you know, they [*laughs*] did a lot of things then that . . .

SL: Can't do now.

BS: . . . you can't do now, and maybe couldn't have done then, but you cou—you know, Bud Wilkinson was the coach of the college all-stars at that time. And they always played the championship pro team from the last year, and played 'em in July—somethin' like that.

SL: Yeah.

BS: [*Clears throat*] But he invited me to go—since he was coach of the all-stars, he invited me to up to Chicago. And I stayed out at Northwestern with the college all-stars—just a wonderful experience. Clyde Scott was one of the players that year.

SL: Is that right?

[02:45:38] BS: Yeah, and to see all those heroes and live with 'em for a week was a wonderful thing. And I never will forget there was a great Alabama player who'd been captain of Alabama's team, named Jim Cain, from Eudora, Arkansas. Jim Cain came around to me and said, "You know, if you're gonna live in Arkansas, I think you oughta go to Arkansas." And implyin' that if he had it all to do over again . . .

SL: He would've gone to Arkansas.

BS: . . . instead of all that Rose Bowl experience and all that that he'd had, he would go to Arkansas. So that meant a lot to me and . . .

SL: [*Sighs*] Now didn't Clyde Scott come visit you when you . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . were finishin' up high school and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . tryin' to decide where to go?

BS: Yeah, he did.

SL: Well, tell me about that.

BS: Well, he would—Barnhill was the coach—John Barnhill.

SL: Yeah.

[02:46:48] BS: And he used Clyde Scott in that way very effectively, and Clyde, of course, was willing and wanted to do it. But he came to Hope and visited with us and talked to us. And I'll never forget something he said, and I talked to him about the Olympics and all of the stardom that he had had. And he said, "Buddy, it doesn't get any better than Friday night [*laughs*] in high school." He says, "That's the top of the list."

SL: Listen to him.

BS: "And goin' to the drugstore after the ball game. It's the best part of it. You've already lived through that." [*Laughter*]

SL: "You already peaked."

BS: Yeah, that's right.

[02:47:49] SL: What a guy. Well, you know, he was a star.

BS: Yes, he . . .

SL: He was a big star. Now, you know, we were talkin' about the radio earlier. So when Clyde Scott was playing for the Razorbacks, he was already famous from his work at Navy, right?

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: And he had—I guess he had already done the state record for the low hurdles. He'd gone out there—had never been coached . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . runnin' track. Built his own hurdles to practice on and . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . went out to LA or UCLA or something and qualified for the Olympics.

BS: That's right.

SL: And his . . .

BS: Set some records out there.

SL: Yeah.

[02:48:33] BS: And then went to London with the Olympic team, which, to me, was just bigger than life. And you know, every day in those races that were—that they were running preliminarily, he'd win one day and one of those other great hurdlers would win the next.

SL: The next. Yeah.

BS: So it was just kind of a . . .

SL: Back and forth.

BS: . . . toss-up as to who was gonna win it. And, as I recall, he ran

second, and—which was just a tremendous honor—and then played football that next year and made a lot of the all-American teams, and you know, he was just the most beautiful hero that you could have. Handsome man, clean-lookin' and was clean and married to Miss Arkansas and just a good student and . . .

SL: So on the radio, you would—in your high school years, you were probably listening to the Razorbacks play.

BS: I did. I listened to the Razorbacks, and I had listened to Army and Navy play . . .

SL: So you knew . . .

BS: . . . the last year Scott was there, and I never forget about—the announcer couldn't get over the fact that Glenn Davis, the great Army football player, the most prominent football player in the United States at that time, could not catch Clyde Scott [*SL laughs*], who caught a shallow pass . . .

SL: And outran him.

BS: . . . in Davis's territory. And Davis had the whole field, just about, to run him down, and he couldn't catch him. And this announcer said, "That's not supposed to be," and, "He's supposed to be the fastest man in football." And this Smackover Scott he couldn't catch. [*Laughs*]

[02:50:42] SL: Well, you know, I—I've heard that one of the main

reasons that War Memorial Stadium got built in Little Rock was so people could come see Scotty play. Is that . . .

BS: Well, he got—he would just put us on a different level, and you know, we'd never had anybody with that much prominence to come and play for Arkansas. And he was such an ideal hero. That's true. The people came to see him play, and the last year he got a knee all bungled up. And [*laughs*] the crowds didn't understand that, and they would just holler for—to put Scott in the ball game, and he really couldn't go in in some of those games. But that's who they came to see play.

SL: Well, you know, back then, players played injured . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . quite often.

BS: Yeah.

SL: I bet you did, too.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: So, my gosh, what a honor to have him come . . .

BS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . look at you face to face.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, it was—it—that—that's unreal. [*Laughs*]

[02:51:57] SL: So was that kind of what sold you on goin' to

Arkansas? What else—was there any other factor? Closer to

home, I guess, and . . .

BS: As it came down to it, you know, I just wanted to be closer to home, and all the glamour of being far away from home left.

[Laughs]

SL: Yeah.

BS: And it was just—you know, I was Arkansas, and that's where I wanted to be. If I had any contribution to make, that's where I wanted to make it.

SL: So you pack up, and you go to Fayetteville.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: And Barnie was still the . . .

BS: Barnie was . . .

SL: . . . head coach.

BS: . . . still the head coach.

SL: And let's see, was Ferrell . . .

BS: Ferrell came the next year.

SL: Okay.

BS: Bill Ferrell.

SL: Uh-huh.



[02:52:50] BS: But Barnhill—I did not know it at the time, but I guess the year I went up there, Barnhill had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. And, fortunately, he had a slow, mild

case of it. As you know, he continued for athletic director for years and . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . and looked like he was pretty normal, but it was—coaching was too tough. And the people were kinda clamoring for a more exciting pro-style team. And I was up there under Barnhill for a year, and then Otis Douglas came from the Philadelphia Eagles, and I had all three of my playing years under Otis Douglas.

SL: What was he like?

BS: He was a good man—good fellow. Did not relate, in my opinion, to college boys. He was used to . . .

SL: To men.

BS: . . . the pros and didn't instill the emotion and discipline into the college game that you have to have. I don't care how good they are; you still have to have it. But you know, I thought I played with the most loaded team, maybe, they ever had . . .

[02:54:35] SL: Well, let's talk about that team.

BS: . . . from top, talentwise, and didn't win. But we—the class in front of mine was really the strong class. That had Pat Summerall, Dave Hanner, Fred Williams, Bob Griffin—just wonderful, wonderful ready-made pro prospects. And we didn't know it at the time—I didn't know it—but all those people made

the pro team their first year. You know, just great, great football players. And the class behind mine was Lamar McHan and Floyd Sagely. And then in my class was Lewis Carpenter, who was a splendid pro player for years—had played with the Packers and just an ideal football player. We had all of those and didn't win. And you know, we should've won most of our games, even if they didn't feel like playin'. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, so you think it was the—was it the offense that he tried to put in or . . .

BS: No, I don't . . .

SL: . . . you just think it was just a lack of understanding the college—or kids?

BS: I think it was the discipline thing. Now you take players like Pat Summerall and Dave Hanner, who I had the privilege of playin' right behind. They were on my side of the line. Now, they played every Saturday. They were full-out great football players, and the others were great, but you know, they may not show up and give it all that they had every Saturday. And when I say that, I don't mean all of those that I didn't just mention, but it just somehow or other didn't ever pull together.

[02:57:05] SL: Well, you know, I suspect that there was probably a pretty good difference between Hope, Arkansas, and

Fayetteville, Arkansas.

BS: There was. There was.

SL: And if you don't have that discipline, why, activities take the toll . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . on your abilities and on . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . your [*laughs*]*—*you know, it's hard to play the next day if you're hungover.

BS: Right.

SL: Or it's hard to play if you didn't sleep or . . .

BS: Right, right.

SL: . . . you were out all night and . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . all that stuff. And . . .

[02:57:38] BS: And I always thought Otis Douglas had maybe a little too confident—too much confidence in himself. He didn't hire very strong assistants, and it's been proven that those . . .

SL: That's what they . . .

BS: . . . those are guys that you get you ready.

SL: That's right.

BS: Those great assistants, and we did not have that—even in

number, we didn't have many coaches. And . . .

SL: Yeah, that turned around when Broyles came.

BS: Yeah, right.

SL: That was . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . the difference there.

BS: Right.

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

[Tape stopped]

[02:58:13] SL: Okay, this is tape four?

TM: Yes.

SL: You're about to enter your fourth hour here . . .

BS: All right.

SL: . . . as a Pryor Center victim. [*BS laughs*] You're doin'—you're holdin' up really great.

BS: Thank you.

SL: And you're helpin' me quite a bit.

BS: Thank you.

SL: You're bringin' up the stuff that I hope we can—all right, so, let's see, now where were we? We were talkin' about the . . .

BS: The football.

SL: . . . coaches and the . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . football.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Now . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

[02:58:39] SL: So you felt like . . .

TM: [*Unclear word*].

SL: . . . Coach Douglas just didn't really tie or connect with his players like he should have and there was a lack of discipline.

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

SL: Now, you know, of course, you were comin' from a upbringing that was pretty disciplined, it sounds . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . like to me. And it was . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: I mean, you had a mother that read to you from the Bible starting . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . early, early on. And you had—you'd been through some stuff where consequences were dire. And hard work—you understood hard work, and you saw it in action. And there was—you could see people workin' with people. Your dad in

particular . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . people came to him, and he was empathetic, and he could read people really well and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . so you were probably pretty prepared to be out there in the world on your own, I bet. I have a feeling you were—you had a pretty good image and a pretty clear picture of what you wanted out of life.

BS: I probably did, and at the same time was awfully ignorant and unlearned myself. And you know, on the things like the football team—when I give my opinion of that, I don't know what our problem was. And I've laughed with my roommate some, Dean Pryor, because we counted nine people that played in the pros and two of us that didn't. So I said, "Where do you think the weakness on that team was?" [*Laughter*] But . . .

SL: Well, I—it certainly wasn't the talent.

BS: No. No, it wasn't talent. We were loaded.

[03:00:29] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about the difference between Hope and Fayetteville.

BS: Okay.

SL: What—first of all, did you come up by car or . . .

BS: I came up by car the first time. My folks delivered me up there, and I didn't have a car, you know, on campus and—at first. And when I would come home, I would hitch a ride with somebody and then very often come back on the bus, and it was an all-day trip to go to Fayetteville. I would go to Texarkana and catch the bus, and it stopped everywhere. [*Laughs*] And then a long layover in Fort Smith. It would take forever to get to Fayetteville, but such as it was.

SL: You got to know Highway 71, didn't you?

BS: Yeah, right. Right.

SL: Now you just said something that made me think of a question. Well, gosh, it's slipped my mind here. Well, what was that drive up like with your mom and dad? I mean, you know, this was not quite their baby, but you know, this was their only boy.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And . . .

[03:02:01] BS: Well, of course, I was excited about it. I didn't know I was gonna be homesick in a few days, so I was—driving up, I was all excited and ready to get into it and ready to go. And it—just thought I'd gone to heaven for about two weeks, and then [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Reality set in and . . .

BS: . . . then reality set in, and I thought, "Well, home wasn't so bad after all." But I've learned to love Fayetteville, and it was a great place for me. I enjoyed the school time up there immensely.

SL: So let's see, now what year was that when you came up?

BS: [Nineteen] forty-nine.

SL: [Nineteen] forty-nine.

BS: Fall of [19]49. Mh-hmm. Yeah.

[03:02:49] SL: Now let me think for just a second. Was—when did Silas Hunt attend law school up there?

BS: He—my memory is that—a year or two before then. [Nineteen] forty-seven, I believe.

SL: Is that right? I wanna say it was [19]48, but it . . .

BS: It may be [19]48.

SL: He had already . . .

BS: May be. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . kind of come and gone . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . I guess.

BS: Yeah.

SL: 'Cause he died . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . not too long after he attended, but . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . there were other African American students that were integrating the law school at that time.

BS: Yeah, and it seems like—now I was not there and don't really remember, but it seems like Silas Hunt had his entry, and seems like there mighta been a few years' gap in there. But I don't know that to be the truth.

SL: I think that's probably right. There—or let me think. Actually, Shropshire may have come right on his heels, maybe, and . . .

BS: Yeah, I just don't know how that . . .

SL: And then there . . .

BS: . . . was.

SL: . . . was George Haley and the rest of 'em. Now—so you said earlier that—when we were talkin' at lunch that you had never played a team that had any African Americans . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . on it until you got to college.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Is that right?

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

[03:04:23] SL: Now the Southwest Conference wasn't integrated

yet.

BS: No, it didn't. It had no blacks. The first black that played in a game that I played in was from Arizona State. They came to Fayetteville and played, and they had two or three, probably, that played. Not many, but two or three.

SL: Well, I mean, teamwise, was that ever an issue, or did you-all ever talk about that in the dressin' room or . . .

BS: We talked about it some, and you know, I know that I thought about that. By then, I thought that it would happen, but I didn't know, of course, how long it would be. I really thought—you know, just as a naive person, I thought at first that it would happen a lot quicker. Then I wondered if it ever would. And then the 1954 decision came along and kinda sped things along for people who were reluctant.

SL: Yeah. The—so was there any malcontent when Arizona State came into town and had black players on their team?

BS: No. No, I don't think so.

SL: No, it wasn't a big . . .

BS: No.

SL: Fayetteville was kinda . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the hole.

BS: Yeah.

SL: First of all, the African American population was very minimal.

BS: That's right.

SL: And they were so much a part of the community that it really was kind of a non-issue for the most part.

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

SL: So—okay. What about—now you said that you were ignorant—I doubt that you were ignorant, but you were—you may have been a little naive coming into Fayetteville.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Right.

SL: You know, I guess there were the fraternities, and there were the nightclubs, and there was Dickson Street and George's and Maxine's and all the bar scene and stuff. Did you just simply avoid all that stuff?

BS: Yeah.

SL: Never messed with it?

[03:06:54] BS: Yeah, pretty much. I used to laugh with my roommate and say that neither of us learned it was coed for a year or two [*laughter*], but I was just kinda over there in a corner as far as I was concerned. Not an unhappy corner. I just—I was happy over there and just—the football team was kind of a family, and that's really what I was interested in. So I

didn't have much of a life other than that.

SL: Was H. D. McCarty the team chaplain by then?

BS: No.

SL: No.

BS: Hm-mm. No.

SL: Did you join a church when you got to Fay . . .

BS: I joined the First Baptist Church there.

SL: Okay.

BS: Yeah, Dr. Johnson was the pastor there, and so I joined and attended some, and some I missed. I got interested with D. L. Dykes at Central Methodist, and I went to his church a lot and listened to his sermons, which I thought were very good.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Yeah.

SL: I remember my parents talkin' about him.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And of course, First Baptist was just across the street.

BS: That's right, just—yeah.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Yeah. Yeah.

[03:08:18] SL: It's interesting that they're on one end of Dickson Street.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: University's on the other end and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's that no-man's-land in between.

BS: Yeah.

SL: That is funny.

BS: That's right.

SL: Well, let me see now. I guess we ought to talk about your school.

BS: Okay.

SL: Your schoolin' there.

BS: Yeah.

[03:08:36] SL: Did you meet with success? Did you feel like you were prepared?

BS: I felt like others had done their part very well to prepare me. To be honest, I did pretty well the first semester and found out I could do it, and then I kinda slid into "where's the embarrassment line?"

SL: Oh.

BS: And [*laughs*] if I could . . .

SL: Got a little lazy on it.

BS: . . . if I got over the embarrassment line, I was pretty well

satisfied with that and didn't work very hard in school, to begin with. Well, not after the first year I didn't. And had a lot of things goin' on that I was havin' fun with. And I would usually be a little more respectable in the spring semester and bring it up a little bit, but . . .

SL: In the off-season.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: What did you do in the off-season? What'd they have you do . . .

BS: Well . . .

SL: . . . athleticwise?

BS: . . . when you say the off-season, you know, you would go from December through January, and we would—by February we'd be getting into spring practice.

SL: Okay.

BS: And so that'd pick it up again, and you'd have six weeks or so at the end with some free time connected with it. But it—you didn't have all that much off-season or free time.

SL: Did they . . .

[03:10:16] BS: Now today they don't have any. You know, they've got 'em in there workin' with weights and things like that that we shoulda been doin' but didn't know about that and didn't have

any direction on it. But—and nobody else did, either. But they have a much busier program today than we had.

SL: So your fall semesters academically were not as high performing as . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . your spring semesters.

BS: That's right. Mh-hmm.

SL: And do you attribute that to all the activity—added activity that the team . . .

BS: Yeah, and you know, I don't know that it was all that much time and activities. Just a matter of emphasis. I was so much into football. That's where my world was, and my mind was there.

*[Laughs]*

[03:11:11] SL: Well, you made a pretty good name for yourself there.

BS: Well, I was really not a—and I'm not just sayin' this to be modest—I was not a very good football player and didn't know it at the time. But as everybody knows when they get better, you coulda been better.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And didn't know a lot of the things to do to get better and—but you know, I made the team and enjoyed it a lot and got more

praise, really, than I deserved. I knew that all the time. But people were—in Arkansas—were good to you over those [*laughs*] kinds of things.

SL: Well, how did—how was your record—I mean, your personal stats? Were they . . .

BS: Well, you know, being on a losing team . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . they were not that good. I played a corner defense as a sophomore the first year that I played. And I felt like I did a credible job as a sophomore. Had some passes caught over me. Lost a game or two, I think . . .

SL: Well . . .

[03:12:35] BS: . . . for our side. And then the next year I went both ways and played offense and defense and enjoyed that a great deal. And that year I guess Pat Summerall and I probably tied for about thirty-six points apiece, and you know, there are some that score that many in one game now.

SL: Yeah. Yeah. [*Laughter*]

BS: And—but our offense was really stingy. It—we didn't score much. And nobody scored all that much.

SL: Right.

BS: We had a lot of 13-7, or you know, 10-6 or somethin' like that

games. But that's—that was not much production for a year, but it just kinda worked that way, and it evened out more than it does now. You have people carry the ball thirty times a game now, and back then you were pretty active if you got to carry the ball eight or nine times in a ball game. So it was a different game. Three yards and a cloud of dust.

SL: Yeah.

BS: [*Laughs*] And . . .

[03:14:00] SL: Well, defense was pretty—preached upon quite heavily, too, wasn't it?

BS: Yeah.

SL: I mean . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: And you say you played corner your sophomore year. What defense alignment is that? Is that a 5-3 or . . .

BS: Five-four-two.

SL: Five-four-two. Mh-hmm.

BS: Yeah. And what my position was, was a yard outside our defensive end and a yard behind our defensive ends. And you had the responsibility for containment on the end run. So I was almost an end on defense. Just . . .

SL: Kind of a walkaway . . .

BS: . . . a yard deep.

SL: . . . linebacker.

BS: Yeah, just a yard deep from the line of scrimmage. So—and you know, [*laughs*] we look back on it and get kinda angry at our coaches not knowin' better. They had us tryin' to cover a fast receiver by ourselves, wherever he went on the field, and we didn't know you can't do that. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, yeah.

BS: And fortunately you didn't always have a quarterback that could get it to him.

SL: Right.

BS: So it didn't hurt you all that much, but . . .

SL: Can't do it these days.

BS: . . . it coulda been better done . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . than that.

[03:15:21] SL: Yeah. Well, so what was your—did you have a major that you went in?

BS: I was a business major. And really kinda not knowing what I wanted to do. But I took general business. Didn't much like that business courses, but I loved history.

SL: Okay.

BS: And literature and things like that a great deal. And I just tolerated the business courses.

SL: So did you end up with a business degree?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Yeah. And I—you know, toward the end of it, I had some friends that were in law school, and I thought, "Gee, I wish I had done that. But I didn't, and it's too late for me. I'm gettin' out." And so I didn't worry much about it. And I got out and went in the automobile business with my father-in-law, and I was told that we'd never be called up for the Korean War, which was winding down at that time, and we could go home and not worry about it. I was in ROTC [*clears throat*], and I got in that business. And within a year I was called up and went in the air force. And for me, it was a good thing. I thought, "Okay, I'm gonna get the GI Bill." And I was one of the last to get it for that war. And I said, "I'm gonna get that, and I'm gonna take advantage of it."

SL: You bet.

BS: And so we really did save money and lived with that in mind. I had two children by then.

[03:17:17] SL: Okay, now we better talk about some of that . . .

BS: [*Clears throat*] Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . 'cause that's a big deal.

BS: Yeah.

SL: You start havin' kids, so . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . did you marry while you were in Fayetteville?

BS: Yeah.

SL: You met your wife in Fayetteville and . . .

BS: I married as a junior in college. I married my childhood sweetheart.

SL: From Hope.

BS: From Hope, yeah.

SL: And what was her name?

BS: Peggy Pentecost.

SL: Pentecost. [*Laughs*]

BS: Yeah, really. Yeah.

SL: What a name.

BS: Yeah.

SL: My gosh.

BS: Yeah.

[03:17:41] SL: And so you knew her growin' up in Hope.

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: Y'all were—when did y'all become sweethearts?

BS: Well, seriously, seniors in high school. Yeah. We'd been—I'd

been kinda sweet on her a long time.

SL: Well, y'all were the same age.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And did she go up to Fayetteville the same time you did?

BS: She came up a year after I did. [*Clears throat*] And then we were married in my junior year. And she didn't attend anymore. She just . . .

SL: Lived in Fayetteville while . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you finished up school.

BS: Mh-hmm. Right.

[03:18:18] SL: Where did y'all live in Fayetteville?

BS: UARK Courts . . .

SL: You mean . . .

BS: . . . there over the theater.

SL: Oh, over the theater.

BS: Or by the theater.

SL: Yeah.

BS: By the theater, yeah. Yeah, and . . .

SL: I've known some kids that lived in there.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So that's the—is it—[*sighs*] I can't think of the man's name.

Holliman? Not Holliman.

BS: Yeah, Holl . . .

SL: I shouldn't have said Holl . . .

BS: Sono—Solomon.

SL: Sonneman.

BS: Sonneman.

SL: Sonneman, yeah.

BS: Sonneman. Mr. Sonneman . . .

SL: Mr. Sonneman.

BS: . . . was a character. He was still living then.

SL: Yeah.

[03:18:51] BS: And those apartments belonged to him, as far as he was concerned. He had a key to each one of 'em. [*Laughter*] And so he might just come right on in without knocking or anything. And he was very friendly to my wife and me. And every once in a while he'd just bring us somethin'—some prunes that he had fixed or somethin' like that. But the first you'd see him there, he'd be standin' [*laughs*] there in your livin' room or somethin' and say, "I brought you these things." And real nice gentleman to me. I don't know how other people got along with him, but . . .

SL: Oh, I think you'd probably get mixed reports. [*Laughter*]

BS: Yeah, that's my understanding.

SL: Yeah. Yeah. So did he also own the UARK . . .

BS: I think so.

SL: . . . bowling alley and . . .

BS: I think so.

SL: . . . that building—I remember my parents used to go to Coupler's up above and . . .

BS: Yeah.

[03:20:01] SL: So maybe we oughta talk about some Fayetteville characters. Surely you ran into some of the Fayetteville folk at that time. I mean, Sonneman—pretty [*laughter*] good—big player. Who else did you meet in Fayetteville?

BS: Well, I really didn't run into anybody much. Judge Pitak . . .

SL: Yep.

BS: . . . reigned over traffic violations and things like that. And I had to go see him once in a while. And he would always tell me how sorry he was that he didn't recognize me until he had already gotten my money.

SL: Yeah.

BS: But he was one of the characters, and I didn't know many people in Fayetteville, though.

SL: Now let's see, where was Fulbright at this time?

BS: Fulbright was in the senate.

SL: Already.

BS: And—yes. When I was elected president of the student body my senior year in college, and he asked to have lunch one day, which was such a nice thing to do. And so we went over and had lunch in the Student Union, and I remember him askin' me how old I was, and I said, "Twenty-one." And he said, "That's about the last time I've really been happy" . . .

SL: Really.

BS: . . . "[*laughs*] is when I was about twenty-one." And he didn't mean, you know, anything about family or anything like that. It was just—that's when the problems—when life got too serious.

SL: The responsibilities . . .

BS: [*Laughs*] Yeah, right.

SL: . . . started piling up. Yeah. Mh-hmm.

BS: Right. Right. But that was such a generous thing for him to do, and I enjoyed that a lot.

[03:21:56] SL: Well, you know, we'd better talk about your run for the student body presidency.

BS: Yeah, okay. [*Laughs*]

SL: What was the deal there?

BS: Well, I had served in the student senate before and was kinda

interested in that kind of thing, and Walter Niblock—I don't know whether you . . .

SL: Sure.

BS: . . . knew Walter or not.

SL: Absolutely. I rented from him—had a little studio when my band . . .

[03:22:26] BS: Walter was my sponsor, and in just the strangest kind of way, he met my sister on a train on just a short trip—fifty-mile trip for her. And he talked to her, and she said, "I've got a brother going to the university. I want you to look him up and take care of him." And I guess he's one out of a million people that said, "Okay, I will." And he looked me up. [*Laughs*]

SL: My dad used to call him Nib.

BS: Yeah, Niblock. Nibs—yeah.

SL: And he wrote . . .

BS: Hot.

SL: . . . my dad's lease for the rent houses.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah, yeah.

BS: Really good guy.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: But he came over and met me as a freshman, and then as a

sophomore, he says, "I want you to run for the student senate," and so I did and kinda put my case in his hands and then ran for president my senior year, and we won that. And he was—he liked to manipulate and all, and he was a leader in one of the parties, and he put my name up for the senate. And they rejected and chose somebody else, and it made him mad. So he came back and says, "I wanna form a new party [*laughs*], and I want you to run on that new party." And I said, "Well, okay, whatever." So he did, and it became the dominant party, for whatever that was worth, on campus politics for a few years and parlayed that into the president's office. [*Laughs*]

[03:24:25] SL: Well, that's pretty good company, though.

BS: Yeah, it was.

SL: There's a lot of good folk have been . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . president of that student body.

BS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes, there have been. Yeah.

SL: Well, you gotta be—that had to be some kind of—I mean, that had to make your parents proud, for one thing.

BS: Well, I'm sure they were proud of it. I was working at home in the summers, and we had a guy that worked with us there—an old African American man that'd been around for a long time,

and the time came around to mid-August, and I said, "I've got to go back to the university, and football is starting." And he said, "Football?" He said, "Since you are the president, I wouldn't think you'd have to play." [*Laughter*] But not everybody understood what that was—how lowly a job that was.

SL: Oh! Well, did you have a campaign slogan? What was your platform?

BS: I don't remember what it was. I'm sure we had one, but I don't remember what it was. I always regretted that the candidate on the other side was a good friend of mine. You know, you do that a lot in . . .

SL: Politics.

BS: . . . in school politics and all.

SL: And real politics.

BS: Yeah, yeah, in real politics. Yeah, nice guy and—but it—he decided to run on [*laughs*] on the other side, so . . .

SL: Now—let's see now—wasn't—Ray Thornton was also . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . a president of his class.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Now was . . .

BS: Mack McLarty was.

SL: Mack McLarty. And Dave—wasn't David Pryor?

BS: David Pryor. Yeah. Yeah, I was in some good company.

SL: You good company there, Buddy! [*Laughter*]

BS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

[03:26:40] SL: Well, okay, so you met your—or you married your  
sweetheart . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . your junior year.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And y'all proceeded to have—did you have two children by the  
time you graduated?

BS: No—didn't have any by the time I graduated . . .

SL: Oh.

BS: . . . but by the time I was in the military I did.

SL: How long were you back in town before you got drafted? Was it  
a year?

BS: Yeah, about a year. Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh-huh. And what was going on in Korea at the time?

BS: Well, they were winding it down but still talking, and occasionally  
some something would break out. Some . . .

SL: The talks would break down and . . .

BS: . . . shooting and all. But the hot war was basically over. And—

but they decided to keep the military strong for a while and still kept a lot of men in uniform.

[03:27:43] SL: Now I guess we oughta say what your kids' names were at this time. What were the first two children you had?

BS: The first child we had was Rebecca Jane. Rebecca is just a named we both liked. Jane was for my oldest sister, Roxie Jane.

SL: Kay.

BS: Mh-hmm. And so she came along, and then William Richard. Richard was a name we just liked, and the William, I guess, comes from me.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And he was born in the service. Cost us seven dollars and fifty cents. I told him a lot of times, "I wonder whether you were worth that." [*Laughs*]

SL: Well now, did you actually go to Korea?

BS: No.

SL: You were stationed here . . .

BS: No, I . . .

SL: . . . in the States?

BS: That's right. I spent my time in Georgia and Panama City, Florida—Tyndall Air Force Base.

SL: And Georgia would've been Benning?

BS: Georgia woulda been Moody . . .

SL: Moody.

BS: . . . down right on the Florida line.

SL: Okay.

BS: [*Clears throat*] And what they were doin' is—we—I was in radar, and what we were tryin' to do was pick up incoming bombers and jump fighters off to go meet 'em and guide 'em in on a . . .

SL: Target.

BS: . . . broadside pass, if possible. That was the strategy back then. Not very complicated, but that's what they were tryin' to do.

[03:29:20] SL: Now you'd been in ROTC.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So did you enter as an officer?

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: But you still had boot camp. You still had some kind of . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . boot camp.

BS: Yeah, I did.

SL: Now I've heard folks say that the sergeant—drill sergeant—his hands were kind of a little bit cuffed 'cause . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, he was talkin' to his superiors. And so I've always heard that the officers didn't really suffer quite as much or at least not the brutality and the language that . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . a boot would, you know.

BS: Yeah, ours was not very tough. It was at El Paso, Texas, and you know, they would get us up and drill us in the sun, which was not really brutal, but not all that comfortable.

SL: Yeah.

BS: But there was not much abuse . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . you know. We got treated pretty nicely.

[03:30:18] SL: So how long were you in the service?

BS: Two years.

SL: Two years.

BS: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: And your family was there with you.

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: Stationed there with you.

BS: Yeah.

SL: You lived on the base, I would guess.

BS: Yeah—no, right off the base . . .

SL: Right off the base.

BS: . . . at a military—where a lot of military people were. Mh-hmm.

[03:30:37] SL: Well, did you-all enjoy your time?

BS: Yeah, I did. I learned something there. I got sent to that base.

My furniture did not arrive. I got there about four o'clock one Saturday in the summertime with nothing but the baby bed and the baby's things and just thought, "What am I gonna do?" And by sundown, these people were streamin' over—never seen 'em before in my life—and they would all ask, "What do you need?" They knew I needed somethin', and "What do I do?" By nightfall, we had bed, table—you know, something to get by on that those people had brought out of their houses to give to somebody they'd never seen before. And I was impressed with that.

SL: No kidding. So were they military . . .

BS: Yeah, military.

SL: . . . personnel?

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Everybody lookin' after their own.

BS: That's right. That's right. I thought, "Boy, that's impressive to me. I wanna remember that when strangers move [*laughs*] to town."

[03:31:56] SL: Yeah. [*BS clears throat*] That's really good. So—  
but you—eventually, your furniture showed up and . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm. Yeah.

SL: . . . it was good. And then you had a good—you already had a  
good set of friends . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . from the . . .

BS: Yeah, enjoyed 'em . . .

SL: . . . first weekend.

BS: . . . a lot. And we have a reunion with 'em every once in a  
while.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And it's been a good group.

SL: So you had a good, positive experience.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And you got to collect on the GI Bill.

BS: Got the GI Bill.

SL: Which is like one of the greatest things on earth, according to  
Dale Bumpers.

BS: Absolutely.

SL: And I'm . . .

BS: Absolutely.

SL: . . . sounds like it probably is for you, too.

BS: Absolutely.

[03:32:36] SL: How did you deploy your GI Bill? What did you do with it?

BS: I got a hundred and sixty-five dollars a month, and that was, of course, not enough to live on, but it was pretty close. Doesn't sound like it, but it was pretty close to enough. I entered law school. I'd first gone to Baltimore to try to play pro football.



SL: Let's see, that's the Colts.

BS: Yeah. And had a great experience . . .

SL: What happened?

BS: . . . there. That was the year that Johnny Unitas came to Baltimore. They picked him up for the ten-cent phone call because their second-string quarterback left, and they were desperate to get somebody. So somebody suggested Johnny Unitas had gotten cut by Pittsburgh the year before, and he's over there playin' sandlot ball, so he would probably come over. And [*laughs*] he did.

SL: They dropped a dime, and he came.

BS: That's right. That's right. And they were gettin' that championship team ready. And I had the privilege of bein' with 'em for about ten weeks and got cut in the first week in

September and headed out for law school. [*Clears throat*] But my departing conference with the coach was, "If you're havin' trouble defending against Unitas and Raymond Berry, who was on the second team," [*laughter*] and two or three of those people that came—became household words after that, "then you can't play in this league." And I agreed with him, but I said I had lots of fun in later years sittin' on the couch and punchin' my wife and sayin', "He's havin' trouble, too." [*Laughter*] But I came right on—went to—got in law school immediately.

[03:34:45] SL: Here?

BS: In Fayetteville.

SL: In Fayetteville.

BS: Yeah, didn't . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . didn't really have one here.

SL: Well, I know that, but . . .

BS: But I . . .

SL: . . . I meant in Fayetteville.

BS: . . . I wanted to go to Fayetteville anyway. And got in law school, and after a while, E. J. Ball, who had taught business law up there before and was kind of a friend, asked me if I'd like to work for him—do some research for him and all. And so I did,

and he was workin' on some important cases and teaching business law. And he just almost turned his business law classes over to me during a period of time that he was really in hot water tryin' to get his cases ready for trial. [*Clears throat*] And so that was a grand experience, and E. J. was very generous to me.

[03:35:47] SL: You know, it's incalculable what a difference maker E. J. Ball was . . .

BS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . in so many lives.

BS: That's right. That's right. Very generous, thoughtful man.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: Yeah, and always embarrassed about helping you, but he would.

[*Laughs*] Just fine, generous person. Yeah.

SL: So I guess y'all got to know Gladys . . .

BS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . his wife and . . .

BS: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm. Yeah, yeah.

SL: You know, Fayetteville—there were all kinds of things developing in Fayetteville back then . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . about that time. And E. J. was one of the—I don't know how

you'd—one of the fathers . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . of modern Fayetteville, I would say . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . at that time.

BS: He was just comin' into his own. He was workin' with Rex Perkins a lot and just comin' into his own.

[03:36:49] SL: Were there offices on one corner of the square up there above, I guess—oh, what was across the street? The Woolworth Building, maybe, or . . .

BS: You know, I can't remember. I kind of wanna put E. J. over there by the theater, but the—but that . . .

SL: Well, the theater was over on . . .

BS: Okay.

SL: . . . that side of the square.

BS: Okay.

SL: Mh-hmm.

BS: Okay. I can't really remember. [*Clears throat*] But that was a godsend for me and just a good relationship.

[03:37:21] SL: Well, let's talk about the law school a little bit.

BS: Okay.

SL: What was goin' on with the law school back then?

BS: Law school was very—I thought, very strong. Joe Covington was the dean . . .

SL: Okay.

BS: . . . at that time. Course, Robert Leflar was in his heyday.

SL: He was commuting.

BS: Scared me to death. [*Laughter*] You know, you're talkin' about a paper tiger. He would scare me to death. I thought, "Now, look, you've played football. You've been in the service and all that. Don't let that man just scare you to death." But he did. He would make me—I got introduced to cold sweat. I mean, he would make me sweat. But great, you know. He had a way of making you remember what he said. [*Laughs*] And he was just terrific. I thought the law school was just really strong and wonderful. Al Witte came durin' that period of time, and Dean—later to be Dean Barnhart . . .

SL: Barnhart. Mh-hmm.

BS: . . . was teaching there. Frederic Spies.

SL: Spies.

BS: Yeah.

SL: I went to school with his boy.

BS: Did you?

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: And Ray Trammell.

SL: What . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . what a lineup!

BS: Oh, they were so strong. Man . . .

SL: You know, that's like the best offensive line that you could . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . ever run behind.

[03:38:57] BS: Absolutely. They were just wonderful. And you know, I still had the privilege of there only bein' about twenty-five, I guess, in the class by the time we graduated. Started with a class of about forty and got—it got down to maybe graduating twenty-five of 'em.

SL: Were there any women in the law school yet?

BS: There were, and they were kinda in and out, you know? They—not very many . . .

SL: Survived.

BS: . . . survived, or not very many start to finish, and seems like they'd come in and get discouraged and leave.

SL: Now there's one lady—I don't even know if—I'm not sure she's still alive, but there was one lady that attended around that time that's a real firebrand. And I think she's . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . here in . . .

BS: Huh. Yeah.

SL: I think she ended up here in Little Rock.

BS: Yeah. My mind's foggy, but I'll come up with that in a minute.

[03:40:05] SL: And as I remember, the women's room was across the street. The women had to go across the street to go to the bathroom. Is that—do you remember . . .

BS: It had changed by the time I was there.

SL: It had changed by the time . . .

BS: Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah.

SL: Now, were there any African Americans attending when you were there?

BS: Yes.

SL: C. C. Mercer, maybe?

BS: Mercer was not. We had a man that had lost a leg in a railroad accident, I guess.

SL: Hmm. I don't know 'bout him.

BS: And he was a student there at that time. And I don't know what ever happened to him. I don't believe he ever did practice, but he was in my class.

[03:40:56] SL: Well, so how's family life while you're in law school?

Did you add any more children or . . .

BS: No.

SL: No?

BS: I didn't add any more at that time. I went through with two children, and I had a lot of classmates in the same shape. You know, they were doin' the same thing—veterans—been in school and had come back. So there were a bunch of us. None of us felt poor or abused. [*Laughs*]

SL: Do you remember some of your classmates?

BS: Oh yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: Well, let's talk about some of the classmates.

BS: Mh-hmm. Well, Phil Dixon was one of our good friends. He was a Little Rock man and had been in the navy and had come back. Dennis Shackelford at El Dorado was in business school with me all the way and had been in the service and came back. H. L. Hembree was in that . . .

SL: H. L. Hembree.

BS: Yeah, he was in that class. Bob Dudley—later on the Arkansas Supreme Court. Darrell Hickman, who was on the Arkansas Supreme Court. Ted Boswell, who was in that group. So had some really strong students in there. Good lawyers.

[03:42:22] SL: Now Ted was a character, wasn't he?

BS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, Ted was very ambitious and backed it up.

[*Clears throat*] He had a very—has a very successful practice.

SL: Well, okay, so how did you do in law school? Did you—well, first of all, you graduated, and so that . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . says a lot because not everybody—I mean, the attrition rate was pretty—almost half would . . .

BS: I did pretty . . .

SL: . . . fall . . .

BS: . . . well. We didn't keep up with it as closely as they do now because it seems like there was still not that much emphasis on grades. But I had dropped the attitude of "just don't be embarrassed." I worked as hard as I could . . .

SL: Well, I think . . .

BS: . . . and did the best I could in law school. And I was—I don't know what quadrant I woulda been in, but I know that I wasn't one or two [*laughter*] or three. But somewhere after that—not too far down the line. I made pretty good grades.

[03:43:40] SL: All right. So you graduate from law school.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Are there any Leflar stories or Witte stories or—I mean, they're such—and Barnhart—I mean, they're all such storied

personalities. Surely there's some classroom—at least classroom stories. Now I know, you know, there was also the social side of law school, too, and I don't know if you were—participated—you and your wife participated in any of that. But do you . . .

BS: Well . . .

SL: . . . have any law school stories that you can tell?

BS: You know, I really didn't know who Dr. Leflar was and things like that. The first day of class in my class, Richard Atkinson—later became chief judge of the supreme court—was in my class. His name being *A*, he was called on first, and I'm sittin' in there kind of relaxed, and Dr. Leflar calls on him and ask him what the word on the fifth line of page so-and-so-and-so-and-so was. And he looks at it and says, "I don't know. It's Latin." [*Laughs*] And Dr. Leflar just gave him the worst look, you know, and—"And you didn't look it up? You read this case, and you didn't look that word up? Now come on, you went to the movies last night, didn't you?" And Atkinson—"No, sir, no!" He said, "I studied." And Leflar says, "Well, you should've gone to the movies. It was pretty good. And you'd know just as much as you know [*laughter*] without knowin' what that word means." And I thought, "Gee, man, this is gonna be tough." But he was so good to put the screws in you and just make you sweat down.

[03:45:52] SL: Well now, did you have Witte for anything?

BS: Yeah, I had Witte, and Witte was good in that way, too. He—you know, being older—and Witte was, I think, thirty-four—somethin' like that—when he came there. He was—mighta been younger than that. He was very young.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And he would come over to my house and stay all night—talk all night. I think he was a bombardier . . .

SL: Correct.

BS: . . . durin' the war, and I [*laughs*] think he would—it just soothed him to talk some all night, so he would do that. So I got along with him well. Now Phil Dixon, my good friend, liked to joke with him, and we left his class one Saturday morning because there was a ball game. And he would—had run a little bit late and—but we were filin' out of there. And when he was comin' in and everybody just spoke to him and kept on goin'—went to the ball game. And so the next week he said, "You know, that's all right. We're gonna put that behind us. But if there is a repeat of that, I am going to reciprocate." And Dixon says, "Does that mean you're gonna walk out?" [*Laughter*] So he . . .

SL: He wanted to clarify it.

BS: . . . had to laugh. He had to laugh. But he was—had a great sense of humor, but usually he was—he had a sharp stick, too.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And used it.

[03:47:38] SL: Well now, what about Barnhart? I—you know, I've only heard some stories . . .

BS: Well, always . . .

SL: . . . as a dean, but . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . how was he as an instructor?

BS: We always laughed at Barnhart and said, "Nobody knows whether he knows anything or not." He never would say anything. [*Laughter*] When you'd ask a question, he would—his response always was, "Well, what do you think?" [*Laughs*] So, no . . .

SL: That's a great answer.

BS: . . . he was a smart guy.

SL: Yeah.

BS: He was a very, very nice man and smart guy. And we were lucky to have him.

[03:48:16] SL: Well, that's good. Any other law school—I mean, you know, the law school is pretty well respected . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . up there. And as near as I can tell, it has been for a long, long time.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, we were very lucky. At that time, Leflar was teaching at Fayetteville and flying back and forth to New York to teach . . .

SL: Torts.

BS: . . . a class to judges.

SL: Yeah.

BS: To appellate judges in New York. So you know, he was on that kind of level.

SL: Yeah.

BS: Yeah.

[03:48:50] SL: He'd actually made a splash in New York . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . as well.

BS: Really. Really.

SL: Uh-huh.

BS: And ever—all of us knew how lucky we were to have somebody like that at Fayetteville, and it was just love of Fayetteville and the university. It wasn't money or anything like that. He coulda gone anywhere, I'm sure. But he was a real star, and we were

lucky.

SL: I guess—did you ever hear that story from Al Witte about doin' training on the very ground that the law school was built on?

BS: No.

SL: He was—he—yeah, when he got put in the army air force, he—they—he ended up down in Florida, and they put him on a train. No one knew where they were goin'. And they landed—they ended up in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and they stayed—their barracks was the men's gym, and they did their training out in the yard . . .

BS: No.

SL: . . . there where the law school is.

BS: I'll be. I didn't know that. I'll be. Hmm. Well, you know, we did ROTC training there when I was in school.

SL: There you go.

BS: It was just a lot when . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . I was in school the first time. They built the law school while I was gone to the air force.

SL: How 'bout that? Small world.

BS: It is. It is.

[03:50:18] SL: Okay, so you graduate from law school.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Got a wife and two kids.

BS: Right.

SL: What do you do?

BS: E. J. Ball had offered me a job.

SL: Okay.

BS: Stay in Fayetteville. I was—I had to accept it. Gonna take it.

Judge Lyle Brown at Hope said, "I want you to do me a favor and interview with Mehaffy, Smith & Williams because I think they do the kind of thing you wanna do." So I told E. J. about that and that I was gonna do that, and I did. And I didn't think much about it. I was doin' that as a courtesy to him. But I came up to Little Rock, and, boy, they were busy in those offices. They were redoin' offices, and place was busy. And Judge Brown was a trial judge at that time. He said, "These men are the best-prepared, most courteous, really impressive lawyers that practice in my court. And so I want you to interview with 'em." I did that, and I didn't think much more about it. I went home, and as I thought about it, I thought, "I hope they do offer me a job, because I think that is the kind of thing that I would really like to do." [03:51:53] E. J. was tellin' me, "You know, you'd have to do a lot of other things other than try cases," which is

what I wanted to do.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And he was a little bit worried about it.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And keepin' me fully employed. But after about a month—they took their time—but after about a month, they did call me and offer me the job. And so I decided to take it, and E. J. was very gracious about that and said, "I think that's the right thing for you to do." And so I joined Mehaffy, Smith & Williams, which was ten men at the time. [03:52:38] No women. Ten men. Eight of 'em were veterans. Seven of 'em had gotten their legal education via the GI Bill. And relatively speaking, they were young. I was older than most students then. I was twenty-eight. And the—most of the—those men were in their middle thirties, probably. One other was my age. And so I joined them, and you know, it was just a—as it turned out, a remarkable group of men. I mean, Mehaffy became a Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals judge later on. He's just one of these people that just had an instinct for the right answer, you know, and do the right thing, make the right decision. Smart guy. Knew how to build a law firm and had all of that. And then Judge Smith was a stickler for first class—you know, look like a

lawyer, dress right, don't ever be sloppy. He would [*laughs*] take your file when you brought it in to him and say, "Let me have that file." And he—we pinned 'em together back in those days, and he would take that thing and shuffle it and straighten it all up for you—make you feel, you know, lower and lower. And say, "Now you give it back to me." [*Laughs*] But he was that way about everything. Everything has got to be done right. He took my tie off one day in the elevator and retied it for me and [*laughs*] . . .

SL: That's impressive.

BS: Yeah. And would come by and suggest you shine your shoes, and it was really good training. But a good man, you know. Good man with all that. And then Herschel Friday and Bill Eldredge—trial lawyers like that—they were just so good and so helpful and generous in trying to take out their—of their time to teach you the right way to go. So I was—I never regretted for a minute makin' that decision to go with 'em. [03:55:30] One practiced with Mehaffy 'bout three and half years, and then he went on the bench and Smith became head of the firm. And he brought that kind of demand for excellence forward even more. Then when he retired, I got to train some more under Herschel Friday to see how he operated and just what a wonderfully

different style he had and could make you jump in the fire, you know, just out of kindness. [*Laughs*] Not wantin' to disappoint him. Wonderful leader type. A compassionate man. Had all those personal problems with—you know, a child with a terrible birth defect and then lost his beautiful daughter when she was in her early twenties to just a [*snaps fingers*] overnight disease. It came up and took her life right quick. And tolerated all of that and all his disappointments and yet was such a wonderful, generous man. So I've been very fortunate with all that. And then to get to succeed him when he passed—was killed in an airplane crash—was more than I'd ever hoped for out of the law practice. But it's been a wonderful ride and experience for me.

SL: So . . .

TM: Scott—sorry, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[03:57:29] SL: Okay. Well, Buddy, I can't thank you enough for all this time you've given us today. And our schedule has it where we really need to kind of try to . . .

BS: Okay.

SL: . . . wrap this up here within the next hour.

BS: Okay.

SL: And we're—we've kind of ascended to the Friday law firm, and I guess it was the right [*laughs*] decision that you made, even though you'd gotten an offer from E. J. Ball in Fayetteville. And as near as I can tell, you don't have one single regret about that decision, that you've been very pleased and very happy—satisfied there.

BS: That's right. That's right. You know, I started in law school like a lot of people start—thinking maybe might like to look at politics or somethin' like that down the road. But for me it turned out that practicing law was what I really wanted to do, and the part of it that I wanted to do was a courtroom lawyer—trial lawyer. And somebody said, "Did you just love to try cases?" And I said, "No, I hated it, but I loved to be a trial lawyer." [*Laughter*]

SL: Well now, how—what's the difference there? Was it just . . .

BS: Well, it's just the preparation and the . . .

SL: The prep.

BS: . . . and the hard, hard work and preparation and the anxiety about whether you're gonna get embarrassed or just get somebody hurt real bad by mishandlin' their case. I hate that part of it, but the pride of being a trial lawyer, which I think is a good thing to do, is somethin' that I enjoyed.

[03:59:25] SL: Well, Buddy, what—are there any cases that the—

that you or the firm or you as a part of the firm took on that kind of helped shape things in Arkansas in any way or made a difference in someone's life that you could point to?

BS: Well, yes and no. We didn't have dramatic personal cases in that way so much and things that might have gone to the US Supreme Court and made some new law. But our role, largely, was with clients and whatever was of interest to them. My—the firm has been built around representation of, first, Missouri Pacific and then, later, after a merger with the Union Pacific Railroad. So the things that concerned them were big concerns to us, and some things were way out of date. I thought the full-crew law that we had dragging on us for years was a bad thing. You had to have more men or personnel by quite a bit to run a train by law than it really took to run the train safely. For example, you know, the law was passed at a time when they had firemen feeding coal into the engine, and you didn't need that person on board anymore. And with the communications being what they are and all, you didn't need as many people. And that fell kind of our lot to run that campaign to get that law removed by election, and that was a big chore. We took a couple of swings at it before we were successful in doing that. So that was a big thing. [04:01:52] I personally had a thing

that was important to me in that the lottery of 1990 was just an awful bill. It was a—an attempt by five people to have the lottery legalized so that they were the czars of it with no check. No checks on 'em anywhere. They violated the law in getting their petitions—getting adequate signatures on their petitions—and we didn't know that at first. But you know, it was such a scandalous thing [*laughs*], and we knew there was scandal in the mind from the way it was structured. But we thought we were gonna lose it because the public wanted the lottery. And we couldn't get anybody to listen and—as to the details of it, which were [*laughs*—really, the devil was in the details. But shortly before that came off, we had a group of women appear at our office and agree to give testimony that they had been paid to sign signatures over and over again at—around a table and just pass the signatures around—everybody [*laughs*] sign 'em as fast as you could. And they were—they gave affidavits and were willin' to testify to that, and we gave that to the media, who did a good job on it and got that thing turned around. And . . .

[04:03:59] SL: It kind of reminds me of—before the signatures thing came up, it kind of reminds me of the medicine show outside the sale barn.

BS: Yeah, yeah, that's a—that does.

SL: And they were preachin' . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and everybody was . . .

BS: [*Laughs*] Yeah, right.

SL: . . . doin' this . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . and they knew there wasn't much to the bottle, but in the end . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . they were able—they were about to sell it to everyone in the audience.

[04:04:21] BS: John Robert Starr referred to me every day as the hypocrite that was against the lottery. And one day my phone rang, and he said, "This is John Robert Starr." I really didn't know the guy, really. I knew, of course, who he was but never had any dealings with him. And he said, "I've just now read this bill, and it's awful, and you're exactly right. What can I do for you?" And I said, "Well, I'd appreciate you beginnin' by stoppin' callin' me a hypocrite." [*Laughter*] And he laughed. He said, "Oh, you're way too sensitive for this business."

SL: Boy, he was—he—I don't know about that guy. I—but . . .

BS: Well, I tell you, he had a following because . . .

SL: He did.

BS: . . . he said, "I'm gonna hit it every day until there's a resolution," and he did. He hit it every day, and things began to change. But when he said it was crooked, the people started [*laughs*] listenin' to him. But that was a interesting thing for me. The—some of the issues, you know, like closing down some of the rail stations in smaller towns was a—an unpopular thing that we needed to do for the railroad because it was such a drain that we'd taken off—they took off—wanted to take off all the passenger trains because there wasn't enough business to support 'em at that time. And so gettin' that done was a—kind of a painful, unpopular thing to do, but I think in the end, it was a—somethin' that helped the railroad survive to get more profitable so that they could build their tracks back and do that kind of thing. So that was interesting. [04:06:36] Then the mergers of railroads came about, and not everybody was in favor of that.

SL: Yeah.

BS: And that was kind of a tricky thing to get done, and we had something to do with that and trying to get that done. I guess those were the main things that I had to do on my watch and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm. You know, I've interviewed lots of folks that used to use the railroads to travel.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: I mean . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the early days there were lots of trains . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . that were going . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . across the state and into Little Rock and up . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to St. Louis, and it—I forget how many trains went through Newport or Jonesboro every day.

BS: Yeah.

[04:07:31] SL: It was just constant. And a job on the railroad was kind of a coveted thing . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . early on. And then it did slack off.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And I guess the automobile . . .

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: . . . probably had as much to do with that—and roads.

BS: Roads.

SL: Gettin' the . . .

BS: Better roads. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . roads built and paved, and so that singular ability to go wherever you wanted to . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . by hoppin' in your car and goin' kind of supplanted the mass transit . . .

BS: That's exactly right.

SL: . . . of folks. But you know, it's kind of being revisited now, isn't it?

BS: Well, you know, yes it is. And it makes sense. [*Clears throat*] I wish the people hadn't quit ridin' 'em. When I started to work for the railroad, that was a big benefit to me. I could put my children on the train and send 'em to their grandparents and feel perfectly safe in doing that, from here down to Hope. And you're right; they ran several a day down there—really nice trains. Beautiful way to travel, but the people just quit doin' it. And at our hearings and all, the only question you ever had to ask an irate witness was, "How long has it been since you've ridden the railroad?" [*Doorbell rings*] [*Dog barks*] And the answer was always, "Well, I can't remember." But [*dog*

*whines*—I'm sorry about that.

SL: It's hard to argue that. I mean, it's . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . hard to get around that.

BS: Yeah.

SL: So we'll let her answer the door here and . . .

[Tape stopped]

[04:09:15] SL: The railroad is a transport of goods now. Isn't there  
a . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . uptick on that now?

BS: Yes. Turned around. You know, there was a period of time during my years of practice where the government encouraged railroads to lease track from one another and take up their own track and sell it—do whatever they would with it. And that was a terrible mistake. They did that, and Missouri Pacific did that in some cases, and it was really a bad call because the thing was gonna turn around and you needed all that track, plus more.

SL: Yeah.

BS: You know, what they'd really like to do now is double-track everywhere so that you could—you wouldn't have to pull off the tracks and wait for another train to go by. And that takes a lot

of land and right-of-way to do that.

SL: Yeah.

BS: But that's probably what it's gonna come to—already exists in a lot of places, but may come to more and more of that.

SL: Yeah, you're right. I know that some railroad right-of-ways have been converted, to, like, trails . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . you know, between—and . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . we see a lot of that in northwest Arkansas . . .

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: . . . happening right now.

BS: Yeah.

[04:10:40] SL: But I still—I just sense—and I—maybe not in my lifetime, but I just sense that massive public transit by rail is gonna come around again.

BS: Yes, it will.

SL: And they're gonna wish that they'd . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . held on to the—to that real estate.

BS: They already are. That's a fact. And . . .

[04:11:01] SL: I was wondering if there's a—is there a—you know, I

look at the real estate between the interstate—you know, the median.

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And sometimes it looks like there's, you know . . .

BS: Lots and lots of land. Yeah.

SL: . . . hundreds of yards that there's not—and there's already bridges over it, and it seems . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . like it'd be kind of a natural . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . path . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and one that would—I know grades and all that stuff is a little more difficult on a train, but I don't know. I just see it comin' back somehow.

BS: Yeah. Well, they're gonna have to do a lot more studying on it, and you know, the country's still so new, it's hard to imagine that Eisenhower, after World War I, was commissioned to see how long it would take to drive from coast to coast [*SL laughs*] if you had a convoy of people to help out over the rough places and all. And even then, it took several weeks [*laughs*] to drive from coast to coast. Well, the—you—we're still gonna have to

make that much improvement over what we have now . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . 'cause it—what you have just won't do sometimes.

[04:12:27] SL: Well, I think that's really a significant litigation, I  
guess . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . as far as . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . this state is concerned and probably the country. I mean, I  
would . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . guess that—were those requirements—personnel  
requirements to run a train—was that [*dog pants*] a federal law  
or was that—is it broken down by state or . . .

BS: It was a state law in our case. You know, the—we were so  
ridiculous that we—the railroads would take a station wagon to  
the state line and stop that train and put on the extra men out of  
that station wagon as they went across Arkansas. [*Laughs*]

SL: That is not good.

BS: And that was terrible.

[04:13:21] SL: That's not good. Well, is there anything else you  
wanna say about the firm? I mean, it's been your home for so

long.

BS: Well, it has been, and it was just a—for me, a grand opportunity. So many people that mean so much to me in it. And you know, like most things, look back to the old people and have gratitude for them, first of all. When it was built right from the beginnin', that makes it a lot easier to survive and run right in the future. But the old leaders—Judge Mehaffy, Smith, Williams, Herschel Friday—people—Bill Bowen was one of our leaders at one time before he got out of the law practice and went into banking. But people—just extraordinary leaders happened to gather there in one place at one time in history and made a great difference as far as building a wonderful law firm.

SL: So when you signed on, there were eight, ten of you? Is . . .

BS: They—I joined ten others. Uh-huh.

SL: Ten others. And how big is the firm now?

BS: It's about a hundred. [*Laughter*] Yeah.

SL: And you guys are busy.

BS: Yeah. Yeah, they're busy. Yeah.

SL: Well, that's—that says a lot right there.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

BS: It does.

SL: Well, okay.

KK: Hey, Scott, are there, you know, other notable Arkansans he may have worked with? 'Cause all I remember he mentioned Fay Jones. [*Unclear words*].

BS: [*Unclear words*].

[04:15:00] SL: Oh, okay. Are there any—Kris is asking about—you know, during lunch you mentioned goin' to bat for Fay Jones on—in a case, and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that worked out for Fay.

BS: Yeah.

SL: Are there any—I mean, we can talk about that a little bit if you want to. You know, Fay Jones is certainly an icon in the architecture world and architecture history.

BS: Yeah.

SL: I guess for the benefit—now we've brought it up—for the benefit . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . of people lookin' at the tape.

BS: I had the privilege of representing Fay Jones in a case that never shoulda been brought against him but did. And he won his case—I would hope easily enough, but it was a great privilege.

I've never seen a jury gasp at somebody's work before, and when we showed them pictures of Fay Jones's work in other instances, I very well remember a distinct gasp from the jury as if to say, "How beautiful that is. How gorgeous that work is." And it was, and he was that kind of person.

SL: You know, he drew all that stuff by hand.

BS: Yeah, does . . .

SL: It wasn't computer generated.

BS: [*Laughs*] No, no, and he was a—an artist and great design mind.

[04:16:41] SL: Any other notable Arkansans that you've helped out?



BS: Well, you know, I tried my best to help Jim Guy Tucker. I was part of his defense team and feel really bad about that situation because I did not ever feel that he shoulda been tried under the independent counsel law and felt like the timing was just absolutely unfortunate for him. If he'd been tried at a different time, I think it woulda been perhaps a different result. But I don't know about that. To me, he was a—just a fine public servant, and of course, he wasn't tried for that; he was tried for things that happened in a bank and things like that ten years before. And I thought the case was very weak, but the jury at that time felt otherwise, and I always regretted that.

[04:17:58] SL: Well, you know, I guess that's part of goin' to bat.

BS: Yeah, it's part of goin' to bat. And I always felt good about the fact that Judge Howard did not feel that he should serve time for his conviction and came to his aid, I thought, in a very compassionate way, since he was having a liver transplant and it was pretty clear, I think—I don't think anybody argued much that had they treated it differently he might not have physically survived it. And so that was one good thing that happened out of that.

SL: Well, and that's—I'm glad you said something about that.

BS: And I think another good thing is that I think people have accorded him due respect. Since that time he's made a good recovery and is very, I think, honored and respected person, which I'm glad to see.

[04:19:29] SL: Any other folks that you can even mention or talk about?

BS: Well, one that everybody knows is John Paul Hammerschmidt. I was privileged to serve on the Dillard's board with John Paul Hammerschmidt for fourteen years and became a great admirer of his. He's such a—to me, a walking encyclopedia. Such a smart man and such a good, do-right person. I've always felt with great confidence that he was a fine citizen and

congressman who really did believe in doin' the right thing.

SL: Don't you think that even today that his tenure there and the staff that he put together and the service he provided his constituency is still the standard . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . by which congressional staffs are judged?

BS: Yeah.

SL: I mean . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's just . . .

BS: I think he . . .

SL: It was . . .

BS: . . . taught a lot of people good lessons about how to run that office. And I hope that's spilled over to later years.

[04:20:47] SL: He's also a great example of, you know, being on the opposite side of the aisle, but still welcomed, well liked, respected . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . gentleman. I mean, and he . . .

BS: That's right.

SL: . . . it was just a reciprocal thing . . .

BS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . between the—because, you know, he—for a long time, he was the only Republican congressman . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that we'd ever had. He came in kind of on the coattails of Rockefeller.

BS: Right.

SL: But he became his own guy.

[04:21:23] BS: His own guy. And I've felt good all these years and, lookin' back on it, still feel good about the Arkansas delegations in general. Most of the time I think we've done pretty good job over the years of sending reasonable people to represent us. I look at some of the others and say, "I don't believe he coulda gotten [*laughter*] elected in Arkansas."

SL: Well, yeah. I mean, we don't have to mention the ones that maybe were [*laughter*] not . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . what we would call stellar, but . . .

BS: Yeah, right.

SL: . . . there—we have been blessed . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . with good representation, for the most part.

BS: Right.

SL: It has been remarkable.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And for a while Arkansas was a very powerful delegation on the Hill.

BS: That's right.

SL: Quite remarkable.

BS: That's right, with good people that didn't abuse and just—we've been lucky.

SL: Went there for the right reasons.

BS: Yeah, right. Right.

SL: Believed in the system and . . .

BS: Right.

SL: . . . believed in doin' right.

BS: Right.

[04:22:32] SL: Okay. Well now, if there's not anything else you wanna say about the firm—and if there is, we can always go back to it—but I think we oughta talk a little bit more about your family.

BS: Okay.

SL: And your wife. And you had a third child. Is that right?

BS: Yeah, that's right.

SL: And . . .

BS: Our son, Wes, was born in 1962.

SL: Okay.

BS: And he was six years younger than my second child, so the other two kind of felt like they were raisin' him, I guess. But he was a lot of fun to us, and he's still a real good partner. We talk nearly every day and are interested in the same things, and that means a lot.

SL: Well now—so what now—what does he do now for . . .

BS: He is a medical—I call him a headhunter. But he tries to get out and find doctors to work for clinics and hospitals and people that hire him to do that.

SL: Good, good.

BS: So he does that.

[04:23:47] SL: And your other children?

BS: My daughter, who is the oldest of the three, lives right behind me. You can see her house . . .

SL: That . . .

BS: . . . from here. She's married to Dan Kirkpatrick, and Dan is—has an advertising agency. And they have one son that's Michael, who is in that agency with his father. And then their oldest child, Katie Kirkpatrick, is a lawyer in the law firm that I was with all these years—the Friday law firm. She does medical

malpractice from . . .

SL: So this is your granddaughter?

BS: My granddaughter, yeah.

SL: How 'bout that?

[04:24:37] BS: Yeah, yeah. And she's a lawyer. And then I have Mary, another granddaughter, who's married to a fine young man that works for Murphy at El Dorado. And I have one last granddaughter, who's in school at the University of Missouri at Kansas City to get a master's in music. So she's—she'll be through, I hope, soon. [*Laughs*] And that makes up that family. And then I have two great-grandchildren. My daughter in—granddaughter in El Dorado has two children, and so they keep us happy and busy with that.

SL: Well now, was there another daughter or . . .

BS: No, I'm sorry. There's another son . . .

SL: Another son, okay.

BS: Yes, Richard.

SL: Right.

BS: And he lives in North Little Rock but works a lot in Texarkana and Hope, where he manages property down there—owns and manages property. And then he's a—but his main call is an artist. He does artwork and . . .

SL: Painter?

BS: Yeah, he's a painter. Mh-hmm. And pen and ink person.

SL: Whoa, that's . . .

BS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . good.

BS: Yeah, he's very good.

[04:26:13] SL: Well, you've got—you are very blessed.

BS: I am.

SL: Yeah, you've got a great—a big family.

BS: Yeah.

SL: And I can't believe that you have a daughter that lives right . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . behind you here.

BS: Yeah.

SL: How neat is that? The grandkids come over. I guess your main job these days is to spoil your grandchildren . . .

BS: That's it.

SL: . . . and your great-grandchildren.

BS: That's it. It . . .

SL: And . . .

BS: . . . doesn't seem like that that's spoilin' anymore. It did when they were my children, but [*SL laughs*—and my grandparents—

my parents were spoilin' 'em, but I do. I admit it. I do and enjoy it.

[04:26:49] SL: Now your first wife . . .

BS: Yes.

SL: . . . passed away in . . .

BS: [Two thousand] four—[20]04.

SL: [Two thousand] oh four.

BS: Two thousand four. We'd been married fifty-two years, and she had cancer in 2004 and passed away. And you know, we—I had known Susan, my present wife, for a long time. Knew her husband, Judge Overton, very well. We were good friends. We traveled together some on business and Bar activities and things like that. The—and Susan was a good friend to Peggy. And so after we'd—been about seven years for me alone, well, we married. And she's been a joy in my life.

SL: She's a great gal.

BS: Yes, she is. Mh-hmm.

SL: Known her for a while.

BS: Yes.

SL: And as near as I can tell, you guys seem to be very, very happy and very . . .

BS: Well . . .

SL: . . . very blessed to be together.

BS: . . . I am, and I hope she is. [*Laughs*]

SL: I think she is. I can see the sparkle . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in her eye.

BS: Yeah, well . . .

SL: She seems to be very . . .

BS: She's a wonderful person. Very, very kind and generous person.

[04:28:17] SL: Well, so you're still—you still go in to work.

BS: I don't work much. I've got an office with the firm. They're kind enough to furnish me with an office and a secretary, but I can read that look that says "Stay out of my way" [*laughter*] when I go down there. And I pretty well abide . . .

SL: Yeah.

BS: . . . by that.

SL: Yeah, I get that look sometimes, too. [*Laughter*] Well, so—gosh, what do you see happening for you here in the next few years? Are you—do y'all travel any, or you just gonna stick close to home?

BS: We're talkin' about traveling more than we're doing now. I've always had an interest in my church, and I do try to serve the church. I still teach a Sunday school class, and I still try to

serve of counsel to the Baptist Health System and to the board of the Baptist Health System. And I get a lot of enrichment from that. And then I serve on the board of Ouachita Baptist University, and I have a strong feeling about that and would like to be helpful to them. I serve on the Sheriffs' Ranches board and feel like they do a good job with the kids and the Pulaski Tech Foundation Board and feel like they're a good mission. And then the University of Arkansas advisory board, which they don't need my advice much, but I like to go and listen to what they're doin' and hear what they're doin'.

[04:30:21] SL: You know, I—Buddy, I—you went off this list of stuff that you're still doing and wanting to do, and I swear I hear your mother and I hear your father in your activities. That allegiance to your church and your faith—the Sheriffs' stuff and doin' the right things. I—it seems like all that stuff that you told me about your parents and growin' up, it's still with you. It stuck with you.

[04:30:57] BS: Well, I think it has. I hope it has. You know, it—to me, later life is just carrying out what you planned to do and what you made up your mind to do. And if you're lucky, you still hear people talkin' to you that have gone on before. I still hear my parents talkin' to me, and I still have a hope and desire that

I would be pleasing to them—that I'd be somebody that they say, "Well, that wasn't too bad a mistake." So I do hear them speak to me and would like to fulfill the hopes that they had for me.

SL: I think you've done a [*laughs*] pretty fine job with that. I . . .

BS: Well, thank you.

SL: . . . I can't thank you enough again for all this time you've given us today—especially in this time in your life. You just lost your sister a few days ago and . . .

BS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and it's really wonderful of you to do this at this time. And I hope that the next few days are good ones for you and there's some kind of celebration with life and that the family is strong and comes together. I hope it all is good.

BS: Well, thank you.

SL: And I . . .

BS: That's very kind, and I appreciated your courtesy and have thoroughly enjoyed doin' this. I hope somebody else will get enjoyment from it, too, 'cause I sure have enjoyed it.

SL: Well, thank you.

BS: Okay.

SL: Okay.

BS: All right. You betcha.

SL: Okay, Buddy.

[04:32:44 End of interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]