

University of Illinois Student Life 1928-1938
Oral History Project
Franklin Allen – Class of '37
Delavan, Illinois
June 18, 2001

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Ellen Swain: This is an oral history interview for the University of Illinois Archives. The interviewer is Ellen Swain, the narrator is Franklin Allen, an alumnus from the class of 1937. We are at Mr. Allen's home in Delavan, Illinois and the date is June 18th, 2001.

Can could I ask you your full name and birth date?

Franklin Allen: My full name is Franklin Hatch Allen. I was born July 8, 1914.

ES: Where did you grow up?

FA: I grew up in the vicinity of Delavan; Green Valley, Illinois; Tazwell County, Mason County, Logan County. We were in the corner of them. I was a farm boy. My father went to U of I, and graduated in 1905. My mother in 1911. I don't think they were in the University at the same time, but my grandfathers and grandmothers all went to the University of Illinois and they were the original ones. They started back in 1878, along in there, 1878 and that vicinity. And my mother was Edith Hatch and some of the Hatch's went to University of Illinois at that time, and my Grandfather Hatch and my Grandfather Allen went at the same time and they knew one another and the families knew one another, and that's kind of how I think my father and mother got acquainted and finally got married. He settled out southwest of Green Valley on a sand farm after he had lived there several years as a bachelor—

ES: What was his name, your father?

FA: Paschal, Paschal, P-A-S-C-H-A-L. (Wendell Paschal Ram). And he had the same name, and he spelt his name P-A-S-C-H-A-L, and then he had a son that he called Pascal Allen, but he never put the "H" in it, his name. But he was his son anyway.

ES: So did you hear stories about the U of I growing up?

FA: Oh not special. We were acquainted with the U of I. And of course the family was interested in it. Went to college about the time. It was long before they started football and those kind of things. Then when they built the stadium, he was interested in that. And I remember that's when I first came in to being, that was about 1920 you know. I heard about the great game they went to. [The game U of I dedicated the memorial stadium and Red Grange was there and made four touchdowns the first quarter against Michigan.]

ES: Red Grange, right.

FA: Right, and they went to the games at that time of year. They tried to get over once or twice a year and they were football fans. He was great lover of the University of Illinois. He went there and he liked the professors and so on, and that was a part of his life.

ES: Your father?

FA: My father. And I listened to him.

ES: Did you have brothers and sisters?

FA: Yes I had. I was the oldest of 6. I have two sisters and three brothers. One brother is gone and one sister is gone now. And they both went to U of I. And they were my youngest so I am the oldest and the rest of us down the stair steps is right behind me and they are all alive.

ES: So three of the six went U of I?

FA: We all went to U of I.

ES: You all went! I see. So education must have been important to your parents?

FA: Well it was important to my parents, and I'm sure it may have had a big influence on their life when I think, it was just part of it really.

ES: Why did you choose to go to the University of Illinois?

FA: Naturally I had a lot of influence to go, and that's why I went. Now we changed that to some extent. Things are a lot different now, than they used to be. A lot of the little colleges and the way that education has come around since the early Illinois days. We've seen more in my hundred years than all the rest of what we know about the history of the United States, and at least half of it seems like it's been in my lifetime. I've probably known half the presidents or heard about them. We're back to Wilson, and there's been a lot of presidents and sorts since Wilson. And U of I has of course been part of it, in that it's been a real interesting part you know this last 100 years. We just got over the 100 years part. But I'm not saying U of I is the only college, no there's other colleges.

ES: But your parents were geared towards U of I?

FA: They started out with the original ones and U of I, they did real well, and they always liked it, and my Grandfather Allen, there was ten in that family and they all went to U of I, starting back with my, well my Aunt Edith was the oldest and she never was married, but she went to Washington DC and worked in the Agriculture Department to some extent, in that kind of thing. And then rest of them, it was settled little country when they came around in 1905, along in there. Montana out west in there, one of my uncles, a rancher. You know, it was hard time, all the time then [*laughter*]. And there just wasn't room enough for everybody, and this particular little eighty acres that they started out on. Now of course we have a much bigger bunch of ground out there. And it includes a lot of people, but there's a lot of other things beside

agriculture, and they all went into different things. I don't know suppose the University of Illinois plays the part that it did originally to all the people that went first. But it was important to them.

ES: When did your family start to feel the Depression, or did your family feel the Depression?

FA: Well the Depression [*laughter*] started way long before Abraham Lincoln you know. And you know Abraham Lincoln lived around here too. He went through here and down Springfield and so on. But, it was the westward movement, and it was an agricultural movement. More people keep coming and coming and they kept expanding, expanding, and they were all poor, all poor to begin with. And agriculture has always been poor, but they're still going, and they'll keep going, and they're part of the country. They're part of this country and they started long before the U of I, the Depression, that's always been with us. But there's been better times than others, it's up and down, up and down. But people's poor in Abraham Lincoln's day, they were poor when my father was here. And they were really poor when I started here and went to college, so that was back in 1931; that was one of the depths of, when this country just changed at that time. But we got re-organized and the life of the people kept improving all the time, and still is. We live a very much better life now than we did. We're not going back to the old days, because it was hard days and harder for some than for others. But the ones that went on the poor times, profited from their experiences of the poor times, and did better I always thought, than the people that had had it easy, and that's 1931, that's when I graduated from high school, or '32, and we were at what you would call the depth of the Depression, that I give Hoover credit for, but I don't think he had anything to do with it. He was a good man and he tried to live through as best he could, and he did a lot of good too. I would have rather lived in Hoover's days than I would have back in Abraham Lincoln's day. There you go. Although it was kind of depressing years when I went to college.

ES: How was your family able to send you to college?

FA: Well you had to have a lot initiative yourself, and they always drilled you in that. That's the first thing they taught you, that you had to be self-supporting. And General Grant - that's what he said, when he talked about Civil War days, he said, "The Army has to be self-supporting," and he got to be kind of famous for that. And that was true, you have to do it yourself and every generation that comes along has a different situation that he lives in, and he has to fit himself in to it, and do what he can. And that's the way it was in that the Depression was kind of outstanding, because everybody remembers that. There's the Depression years right there.

ES: Did you have to send yourself to school then?

FA: Well we didn't send ourselves to school then, the folks helped us. The family helped us. We were all poor. Everybody was poor. There was no question about it. And some were where they had folks that went to college, and they liked the thought that it was thing to do, and we were going to go to college, and we worked on it, and that was our life. When my time came I had six, five brothers and sisters that were in high school on down and my father wasn't very

well either. But the farm kind of pulled us through. We kind of stuck with it and the first year that I was supposed to go to college, I couldn't go because they didn't think I was ready [laughter]. So I kind of stayed out and worked that year and that's how I really found out that I learned that year that I didn't go off to college. I think it was a big help to me but I didn't know that then.

ES: So what year did you start in college?

FA: I started college in '34 I think it was. It was the fall of 1934. I stayed out one year, graduated in '32, and I stayed out one year. And I remember that was when Roosevelt and Hoover ran for President, that they had the Depression coming up and Roosevelt got in by a landslide and I remember that very much because that was just as I finished high school some and that year that I worked on the farm, you didn't get much for that but they paid me back, that helped me get started in college. I remember I got a prize for making the best forecast of who was going to win the county tournament for this area here in basketball. I was a basketball interest at that time. I wasn't in school, but I wrote it in and I won and they gave me a little prize of \$5 [laughter]. But that was a little high to me. And on the \$5 that little boy went with it, I went to Washington DC on a trip with my uncle who went out there to see my aunt who was out there in the Commissary Department, but she was also from U of I and they later got married. But I went along, I remember that, and for \$5 that was quite a trip. I thought quite a bit of that education.

ES: Tell me what your first impressions of school were?

FA: My—

ES: When you moved to Champaign, where did you live, where did you—?

FA: Okay, I started out, it was that time, they had what they called freshman camp for prospective people, and I thought a lot of that. The YMCA sponsored it. I don't think you have that today. They took us out to camp a week or two before the University began, and they had some of the students and professor and so on come out and talked to us about getting along in college and getting started and all that. And I thought that was a big help, because I was kind of backward, maybe I still am, but that camp helped a lot. Their counselors and leaders took over the education of the campers. Mic Coldwell and Henry Wilson were the head of the YMCA in those years. My father said, "That's a good thing to go to." And he put me out for that. And that helped me to get started and I kind of fell in and everybody was interested in getting a job or someway to get some support to everyone. Everybody had to have a job but you couldn't get much, but if you could get a job just waiting tables like that, then they tried to get those jobs, so it was just pretty hard for freshman to get started on but—

ES: Did you have a job when you were a freshman?

FA: Well not to begin with, but I worked on odd jobs and things like that. They'd start you out on that, and they tried to help the students all they could on those kind of things.

ES: You're talking about the YMCA?

FA: Well, no that's the University in general.

ES: Just the University in general.

FA: If you get a job waiting tables, why that, I didn't know how to wait tables too well, but it wasn't long until I learned how to do it, and when they had big parties and things, why they'd call me and you'd get a good fee that day. You learned, it wasn't long to you learned how to do it. You could carry five plates at one time, and they shut out and all those things.

ES: Were these at fraternities, or where did you wait tables?

FA: Yeah sometimes, and then they'd have regular, of course the upper classman got those jobs, because they had to live too. But we freshman would fill in sometimes because they would get tired or they would leave the town for sometime and they would have a big party and need some workers. Dean Bracken [Dwight Funk Bracken, Assistant Dean of Men, in charge of student employment] was in charge of labor. They had a Labor Dean then, and he worked to get all the students working that they could. And finally when Roosevelt came in with these programs on getting the economy going, they needed someone, he wasn't a great match, but they go a long way. And they had what they called, I forget what they called them, but jobs and they would clean yards, those kind of jobs and then there was other jobs. After the first year I got a job on working out at the horse barns, and they paid the big sum of 35 cents and hour; that was real clover there, 35 cents and hour. And then they had some, you'd run the elevators up in the new Ag, well it's the old Ag now. And they'd run that elevator up and down for everybody and those kind of things.

ES: Were these FDR's programs?

FA: They weren't FDR's. He didn't have anything to do with, that was part of the program of the University.

ES: I see.

FA: That was part of the University, but FDR was trying to promote students dues, same as our president today. And that's what made it help, and it wasn't long before that did help, but of course the War came along. The time I left, the war was just beginning. They were all shook up again.

ES: Tell me again where you lived when you were in school.

FA: When I was in school, well I first pledged Farmhouse. I'm a Farmhouse man. But that's an agricultural school. . .fraternity. You know, if you're familiar with fraternities. [The house then was at 105 West Daniel Street, Champaign.]

ES: Uh-huh.

FA: Well when I got in that, they helped me. They were pretty good. They were agricultural you know, and I could talk agriculture with them. And they taught me a lot of tricks, good and bad, some of them were bad. But There was pretty good in general. They were a good bunch of boys.

ES: What kinds of things did you do together?

FA: What?

ES: What was it like to live in Farmhouse, what kinds of things did you do?

FA: Well it was just like the fraternities of the day, but they were different than they were today, well just things were just different then, and they were different. I've been over there a number times since and there's a lot of difference in them, but the general things are still there, and they were all hard times for people. They tried to get little jobs as they could, and they got through. Some of them would drop out and work a year and come back and those things. And they learned that when they dropped out and worked that was a good education in itself. Guess I had to do it, I could see that was the thing to do today. Well we did that. We lived cheap. There was \$35 a month, and that's what we lived on at that time, and we thought it was terrible to pay that much, but that's all you could make it go on. But we did it, we did it. We had good social activities in those days. There was not too much time, very little. You were safe to walk the streets everywhere, and we had good times. And the churches all had good social activities.

ES: Was that important? Were students involved in the foundations in town?

FA: The students were wild then. They put on plays and things like I assume they do today. Maybe they improved on it, but in hard times you appreciated it more. You didn't have to spend much money for a lot of things. You needed to have a good time without spending much. I remember the theatres were rolling pretty good then. Those days, we just didn't have any money to go, but they would only charge you 50 cents. We had the Virginia down there. Maybe you remember the Virginia, that's long back.

ES: Uh-huh.

FA: I don't know how many years it's been gone. But you could go to the Virginia for probably 75 cents. So we could go once a week and they had good movies then. They had good ones and that was an education in itself, and then they had vaudeville and things like that. And then they had little theatres, wasn't as big as the Virginia, couple of them in Champaign and one in Urbana I think, and on a Sunday afternoon you could probably get into them for a dime and so on. They were packed of course for a dime, but there wasn't too many people who had an extra dime too sometimes. But they had enough dimes to fill, and that was part of their life. And the Ag students had their little international that I assume they still do today, or things similar to that, where they had yearly events and showed livestock and things like that and that was part of the college life. And the professors and they all had their Ag clubs and things and that was all good.

ES: Did you know them outside of the classroom?

FA: What's that?

ES: Did you know them outside the classroom? Did you socialize?

FA: Yes I did. And that was another thing, not my first year, but my second and third and fourth years, they didn't want to high show or anything, they were interested in debates and things like that. And they had intramural debates, which I enjoyed very much, and well Hank Hannah was one of our members of Farmhouse and he was there. And he was in law, I don't know whether you know Hank Hannah or not?

ES: Uh-huh.

FA: But he's in law, Dean or at that time he was just in the Law department, and he was interested in those debates and he'd help us some you see. He liked that. I liked that. There's a lot of interest in those debates. They'd come around and you come and listen. Good subjects and they'd debate and have winners, just like tournaments.

ES: This is in the Ag Department?

FA: That was in the whole University. The Ag students took special interest in that.

ES: I see.

FA: The ones that were then were kind of popular of course. I never got up to be a good winner but I enjoyed being one of the crowd. Those kind of activities is what makes your college. Your college is worth just as much what you learn out of the classroom as you learn in, I find if you actually participate and you should participate. Those days, you could always get participation, it's the thing to do. Well that's how it was and we got acquainted with everyone.

ES: Did you talk to other students about the Depression, or whether they were having hard times staying in school?

FA: Well we all worked at it. A lot of us, after I had been in the fraternity a couple years, I moved over to a private home on Chalmers Street there, and I learned there, because I bachelored. We did our own housework and things like that.

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FA: I bachelored, and I had some good roommates that weren't Ag students, were just two in that house at that time, and we had a room upstairs where we slept and studied up there. But we had the basement, and we cooked washed down in the basement.

ES: You were still a member of Farmhouse you just didn't live there?

FA: I stayed a member of the Farmhouse even though I was in a private house. I was a member of Farmhouse at that time. I finally got smart enough to get initiated, [and once a fraternity member you are always one].

ES: You just wanted to move out into your own—?

FA: Well exactly. I thought it would be a good thing and I had several of the Farmhouse lived with me, see to start with. I sort of got started on that and I liked that. I learned about cooking and I learned about, we'd go down every Saturday night to Robeson's. I don't know, you know Robeson's, but they were down in Champaign, and they had a department store, and they had a lot of groceries. And we learned about buying the groceries, and we could buy those groceries and weigh it for half of what you could and we really did. We got more to eat that way. And we cooked them ourselves, of course we had to spend a little time, but you got some time when you were going to college. It's good for you to get into other things, and we learned a lot doing just that.

ES: Were your siblings in college when you were? Were you down there at the same time?

FA: Well I had one sister there at that time.

ES: The same time that you were?

FA: Yep, but she was in the 4-H house.

ES: Oh okay.

FA: You know the 4-H, is it still going? I guess it is.

ES: Uh-huh.

FA: Okay.

ES: Was that a financial drain on your parents to have two children there?

FA: Well we figured out that, that's why I didn't go to start with, they kind of waited to build up a little steam [*laughter*].

ES: Sure.

FA: But they always insisted. General Grant again, the Army has to pay it's way, and that's one of the greatest lessons of life. If it weren't that, you'd have to understand economics. And that's that way it is with college. College has got to pay its way, or you've got to pay your way. You may get some help, and you get your scholarships, but you have to be the biggest part of that help, or you aren't going to make it finish, but then so you have to earn it yourself. But not 100%, maybe 75, and that 25's a big help. And the parents, of course, they pay the biggest part of the 25%. By that, I still think that the people that go to college to me don't need to expect to have a big win for all the pushing through. They got their work too, and they have to do at least

50% of it, or they can't do it in four years or three years or whatever it takes, take seven year. You're being educated all your life. And college years, you're not only going to college, but you're being educated at home and everywhere else at the same time and it's all through life, from the time you're born to the to the time you die, you're still learning. And it goes on, and that college is just part of it.

College helps you to learn better after you've been there, and it gives you the tools to improve in whatever your field is. But it's your job after that to what you do with it, and that's what you learn. The Depression years were especially so. All the people in my generation, whenever they get up to talk to anybody about it is. The first thing he does. He starts talking about the Great Depression. Well he's of my age, that's what he does. But that's the thing, and we're all the same way, and when we go around to these Agriculture meetings and so on, they know we're all white heads and we're just not much, different. And on that trip to Washington I will say that's when we first heard of Alky gas, and () you've got the big plant in Pekin, Illinois, making this gas today what they're talking about on this tax thing, and when my uncle and I went, they gave us five gallons of gas to take to Washington D.C. to give to the senators and so on. And when we were there, I didn't go to that, but my uncle did, and he gave them the gas and he said, Henry Wallace was there and he poured the gas into his car. I didn't get in on that but he did. I just mentioned that trip to Washington, that's how times were then. The times made my life special, because it was hard times [*laughter*].

ES: How did you get back and forth? Did you have a car when you were in school?

FA: No, well I'll tell you everybody had a car when they went to high school, in those days, and they all drove them, even if they were fourteen years old. I started when I was ten. They all had the old Model-T, that is if they could afford a Model-T, why they had one and they could drive. Everybody drove to high school. We didn't have buses, and I lived ten miles out. I didn't walk that far. Most people, they drove home, and they had stalls down at their high school. They have since done away with all of that, but they have the bus, which is all right; it's probably better the way they do it today, it's probably cheaper too. That's the way we had to do it. The roads were accordingly, the younger people for the last fifty years don't realize that the roads have been the biggest thing probably of our lifetime [*laughter*]. They just didn't have roads in Lincoln's day, they went horseback, down the rivers. That's why Pekin and the river towns, they're all your old towns, the biggest and the best towns, but they lived on the rivers. This was just a cow path country out in here you see. And in my days it was better and just ready to take off, really at that time. When we came out of the Depression, which was probably 1950, we really took off then. Then we got to go to the moon of course, and we never had such things as this as radios. I can remember TV came along and I asked, that was after I came out of college, I asked Farmer Bill, he was the announcer over here on the radio, "You mean to tell you me you are going to show a program and show the pictures up in Chicago and I can see you?" He says, "We sure are!"

ES: Quite an invention huh?

FA: But that's education, and that's the time we lived. I don't think TV started until after I was out of college.

ES: Right. Did you have a radio that you listened to?

FA: Yeah. When I started high school, three years of just coming in. That was the rage, I got WHO in Pittsburgh, and Jack Demsey, Gene Tunny were the prize fighters, and they'd have the radio there to broadcast the fights and things like that. Amos and Andy and all that, and that was the shows that we watched when we went to Champaign to the movies. See they'd have vaudeville and they'd have specialties like Amos and Andy and those kind of guys and they had individuals and they had good ones too.

ES: Did you have a radio?

FA: Oh we all had radios. We had little radios.

ES: Did you know what was going on outside of campus, out in the world? Did you keep in touch with national—?

FA: For pretty much, as people were those days, but you'd be surprised because we were interested in it, I don't know why, but then we were part of the world. When we started out in the world we were just beginning to realize how complex it was getting to be.

ES: Were students interested in politics do you think?

FA: Oh very much so, that's where your debates and things come in. We're not too far behind Lincoln, he was a great orator and so on, but he was a man of the time, and his orations and stuff stuck because he was so good at it. You see it all over. Well he had to be the leader of the Civil War to say that, but he did. He was very simple. He said it, and a few words and nobody paid any attention, but it began to soak in after that. That's debate, and he was good at that too, and that's how he got to be President. He was kind of awkward. He was a farmer and we farmers followed him too because we were one of him. But Lincoln went in the Law of course and that helped him and then he had good people who were advising him and straightening him out and got him one good.

Well that's the way with the U of I. They had some good people, and I remember them. I remember C. L. Stewart [Charles L.]. I went to some of his classes and he was in Economics land things and I hadn't thought about it, but he gave me some good ideas, and I used a very good amount of that when I got out, when it was the right time to do it too. There was a lot of those things, like land, the time to buy is when it's not worth much. Well it wasn't worth much then. Of course back in Thomas Jefferson's days and the West was developed, you could buy a whole county for \$100 see, but that's why we could get so much economy. Today it is growth of the country, that's what makes it. And that's all the Depression most worked then. We lived in it, and the Depression was part of it, and we were part of the Depression too.

ES: Do you think the Ag students were hit harder than other families?

FA: Not necessarily so. The Ag students were more self-sufficient. They could live out of the grocery store, I believe, better than anybody else. That's part of why agriculture; they were used to it. They used to work at hogs, and they knew about a lot of things without going to town and

college, and they worked together. And Abraham Lincoln was the same way. I was comparing us to Abraham Lincoln. He was a farmer too but he actually got into being a lawyer after he got going, but a lot of the farmers do the same thing, and that's part of the law then. Hank Hannah was one. He was a farmer. My nephew Timothy Allen lives on the same farm. He was a fraternity brother of mine, and he doesn't know me I don't think anymore, but he would if you told him who I was, but I don't see him very much. He was a lawyer but he was originally a farmer. He's got a big story too. He's wrote a book or two.

ES: I got another set of questions I wanted to ask you about rules on campus.

FA: About what?

ES: Rules for students on campus, do you remember any?

FA: Oh sure they had rules then, and it was important, you had to follow the rules. I always thought that the President's house then was kind off limits to students, especially as a freshman you see. I don't know well the one [President] back several years, I told him, I says, "Well it was off limits when I was a freshman here." And he kind of laughed about that. Yeah you made the rules, you know what they were and you learned them. Sometimes you had to learn them the hard way. You didn't know all of them and there were some of them that. . .there's a lot of campus history that. . .they had the boneyard then, and before my day they had a tug-of-war across that thing and pulled one another through and all that. But they did away with that, before I got there.

ES: Do you remember the Dean of Men? Did you have any contact with him, his name was Fred Turner I think?

FA: Fred Turner was the Dean of Men. Yes, he was at the YMCA camp for us freshman.

ES: He was?

FA: He was a gentlemen of course and he wanted to get away from the idea that we were. . .well they called Lincoln a baboon, and we were cow college and he wanted to dress appropriately and speak right and so on and so forth, so he believed in social graces and so on. Those days it was hard times. They said if you bought you a pair of pants for the Engineering school or any student did, they could go the four years with the same pair of corduroy pants but they got kind of wore out. Fred Turner, he said you should be able to dress up once and a while, and I think he was right. He was a good dean, but he fit in the times too. He had to or he wouldn't have been there very long. He was a good dean, but they were all good deans. There were some good men in those days. They didn't pay them much, but they were good for the students and I suppose the students were good for them too. But you had to obey the rules. I was in the hospital ten days with the chicken pox or something, I forget what it was, and they wheeled in fellow that came from San Jose, Illinois, which is right here, I never knew him, but I knew he was. Dwight Zimmerman and we had a big time, but we were quarantined and we had to stay there four or five days. Mumps I believe it was, we had the mumps. While we were in there we had to obey the rules.

ES: Do you remember what some of them were?

FA: Rules?

ES: Uh-huh.

FA: Oh no, nothing except, from front of it, they put a lot of reasons and when you knew the reasons, why you obeyed them. And—

ES: You didn't question them at all?

FA: Well you shouldn't. A lot of them did, but you paid for it usually. Then they had the campus cop. I remember him. I suppose you have him today. I don't know whether you do.

ES: What do you remember about him?

FA: Well he was the campus cop. He was really a pretty good guy but some of them didn't like him see. They'd get roughed up, of course that was a bad misdemeanor to strike a cop you know. I remember that cop, and before me, I'm sure they had cops all the way. In my father's and grandfather's day, I think they had because that was the way they did business in those days. You probably don't have cops now. I don't know what they do.

ES: They have a University police force.

FA: The University police. They've got a whole bunch of them?

ES: Yeah, they've got more than one [laughter].

FA: Well that's right. Well he was our main cop but he'd be around in the dark and so on and so forth. Of course, the kids that didn't like him. They'd have him spotted. They had an altercation or two once in a while, but they'd always disappear, if they didn't, they were asked to do so. I know some of them, my fraternity knew better than anyone else's probably, they did things that they shouldn't have done, and some of them got sent home. That was the proper way, if they did that, they did a whole lot better, I'm sure. They had the discipline.

ES: Was drinking a problem?

FA: When I first went it wasn't too big of a problem, it was beginning to get so, and my fraternity didn't allow drinking, but they got around to it later. Maybe they don't allow, but they were, they do some. Some fraternities had liquor all the time, why that was part of the sociability, and that wasn't too good. And I think liquor has caused the fraternities bad, but they shouldn't have. They were into wine too. I think they upheld, our fraternity did pretty well, I'm kind of proud of them. They had some bad ones too. Same way with the sororities. They were all kinds, but there were lots of good ones, don't get me wrong. There were bad ones and they were good ones. They were people. That's what they were.

ES: Do you think being a fraternity gave you a higher social status or—?

FA: I do, but my son thinks I'm a snob and I don't. . .but he's got reasons to. He didn't go to U of I, he went to Illinois State, but I never said anything, because my daughter, all of my kids went to Illinois State, but Illinois State is handy. They could drive, be home at night you know and all that kind of thing, but they were teachers too. They went before he did, and the other one, he went down to Lincoln for a while. Well, we had trouble. It was his life and he was going to do as he pleased, and nothing I could do. It's not right, but you're going to have to pay the piper and that's what he did. He went to Vietnam and he came back and he was in trucks for a while, but he died of excessive tobacco and so on. He died of a heart attack of course. You can't tell them the student learns, nobody else. The teacher helps. The parents can advise the. You can do what you want to, but it's your life, and you can do what you want, but you have got to pay the piper. And he did what he wanted to and he paid the piper, and that's the way with all students. It's the same with the ones that go to the U of I. They're no different than anybody else when it comes to drinking and so on. They're stupid to drink when they go to college. I still think the guys that don't, do a lot better.

ES: Tell me what organizations you were in.

FA: At the U of I?

ES: You were in Farmhouse, were you in—?

FA: I belonged to the Presbyterian in the those days. My wife was a Methodist and that's why I changed over to that.

ES: Did you have social activities at the Presbyterian, McKinley Foundation, is that it?

FA: Yeah we put on the passion play two or three times and I was part in that. I did some drama down at the Lincoln Hall, college plays and things like that, but I was just a minor thing. I liked that, but I never got to be a good one. I mean I never got to be a top.

ES: Were you in the YMCA?

FA: I was in the YMCA and that helped me in my freshman year. I went out to camp you know. They kind of steered me and got me.

ES: Were you in a YMCA Council too?

FA: Oh, I worked on it some.

ES: What kinds of things did you do?

FA: I worked as an editor. I worked on the Illinois Agriculturist, as Senior Editor.

ES: You did?

FA: Agriculture, I was editor of the Agriculturist for my senior year, but the War came along, and my father wanted me to come home again. He had a boy try to get him in college, started. He needed help at home, and I could see he did. I don't know whether that was a mistake to come back home or not. I graduated and came home, but I was the editor of the Agriculturist. I always regretted that, because I never finished that year out, but I did at least part of it. They had some good people in that department, that worked in publication. They put out the Agriculturalist stuff, couple editions after I left, without my help, which I think was better, but I never was very good at punctuation and all that stuff, but I was good on thought. They had the saddle and sirloin club, you've probably never heard of that. They had an essay contest, international essay contest. All agricultural college, and I won that when I was a senior. They went to the banquet, and they had their international amphitheater in Chicago, and I think it's still there, but they don't use it anymore, where the old Stockyard used to be. They had the Sirloin club and they had me up there in the winner's seat, but they also had Dean Mumford, and they honored him that night. [Laughter] That surprised me, but my grandfathers knew Dean Mumford, but he was just a boy then. But of course Dean Mumford knew who I was and I remember that. That was a good highlight of my college career. I wrote about the international expositions, that was the subject that I wrote about. I was Arty Fischer's roommate too for a while. He was a Big Ten champion tumbler for years, two or three years while he was there.

ES: How did you meet him?

FA: Well he was Farmhouse.

ES: He was in Farmhouse?

FA: Yeah. He lived right down here at Cantrel too, that's by Springfield, but I didn't know him until we got to college.

ES: Were sports well attended? Did people go to the sporting events?

FA: No, not like they are today, because they didn't have the money, but they let them in cheap of course. Students, they let you in half price or I don't know maybe they let them in free now. It was then too, they helped you as much as they could, but they didn't go either, because that was another buck they could save. You had to choose what you did, and that I think it improved your education.

START OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

FA: It was hard, and I tried to instill in them, that you've got to pay your way, and sometimes a guy doesn't like too work to well, that doesn't set too well. They were easy going, my wife was a good woman and she always did the right thing, but she would say, "Now you straighten the kid out." Well then she would begin to get after me because I was too tough on him. Well, you get into that.

ES: Explain to me again why you graduated in 1937, but you had to leave early, is that what you said?

FA: I left in the Spring of 1937, I had enough—

ES: To graduate, I see.

FA: I graduated and I was taking the last semester. I didn't need that to graduate. I never went back to get my diploma, but that was part of the hard times. When I graduated from high school I didn't get any presents or any of that stuff, and we never had hardly had any sociability, parties and things like that. The teachers did the best they could with what they could do. We would have maybe one or two, now they've got to go to four different breaks for spring vacation and all that, it's all right, but I really think it's over done. If a kid doesn't learn that he has to pay his way. Too many parents give it to them. You've got to impress upon a kid that he has got to go part of it too, or you doing him disfavor, to just shovel it out and not pay anymore attention to it. But that gets you into difficulties.

ES: So you didn't come back for commencement, your parents didn't want to—?

FA: Well my parents were—

ES: They still had kids in school...

FA: Yeah they had kids in school, that was hard times. The War was, Hitler was going through Russia, at that time, he was just starting good you know. He was working on the Jews and all that stuff.

ES: Do you remember students protesting on campus about peace protests or anything?

FA: Well I remember, what was it, it wasn't the hillbillies...where they broke the windows and so one. They lived, what do you call them guys, that was while the War was going on I think. Well I've forgotten about them now, but they were, that cult, what do you call them, they'd have all night parties all over the United States, what you call them, they were kind of smelly. They would wear the same clothes and so on for years, there was a bunch of them. People were busy then, they were in the War. But these were guys that lived in the parks and so on.

ES: This is while you were in college?

FA: No that was after I got out of college, five or six years.

ES: I was wondering if while you were in school whether you remembered any kind of radical student activities on U of I campus?

FA: No you were so glad to be there that you didn't have any of that. It was in that period that you had, I can't think of what that is, what we called them then. They were kind of loafers, they

were college loafers too. They would wear their old dirty clothes. You don't know, you've forgotten the, you were after them?

ES: No.

FA: Yep, but they were there, they were really getting tough then. They were figuring out whether they could keep the college then, if they were going to have those kinds of guys.

ES: Are you talking about the 60s and the 70s, the hippies and the—

FA: The hippies, there you go, the hippies, you hit the word!

ES: Okay.

FA: You remember the hippies. They were characters. You're a what, what year are you?

ES: Oh I'm after that.

FA: You're 90s?

ES: I graduated in the 90s yeah.

FA: See you forgotten all about them. The hippies was another era.

ES: Yeah right.

FA: I was farming good then, I was going big then. Well I was in politics a little bit then.

ES: Tell me what you did right after you got back from school. You came home early because your family needed you.

FA: I came home and I went to work. I went off on the farm.

ES: Is that what you wanted to do? Is that why you went to school?

FA: Not exactly, but there you are again, when I was there you got the romance end of it. At that time there was three boys to every girl; it was good for the boys, not so good for the girls. It ruined some of the girls. Then that's the way it was. Farm boys were at the end of the totem pole, down at the bottom, when it come to romance, because the girls that were there, that were agriculture girls, they were going there, no question about it, they were going there to get off the farm. And they weren't coming back to the farm. I had to come back to get started, and then I got started, and I began to like it and I kept right on going and that was the right time to start. I was born at the right time, but I didn't know it then, I thought it was tough. Nothing else, they didn't care too much about us Ag boys, but we had to be pretty good guys or we didn't get around too good. But when I got started farming the world began to turn a little bit. We had a Farm Bureau organization called Rural Youth that I joined when I was in college and when I

graduated why they were still by age, and I went real good in that. The girls were better too, my wife, that's where I got her.

ES: That's where you met her, I see.

FA: But that was lucky for me. The college, you did all right. You went to the college dances, and I knew the local girls and I got to go the college dances and things like that.

ES: Did you have much contact with the townspeople?

FA: With the townspeople?

ES: With the Champaign-Urbana townspeople? You said you knew the local girls.

FA: Well that's the local girls here. When I got to Champaign, yes, Champaign was more of city then. Agriculture, they were more out raising chickens and things like that, but this farm group, they did, and it worked out real well for me. You find out that in agriculture districts and so on, why farmers were more popular then. Then was a time to buy land, that's what I did. I got Mr. Stort I remembered him, and I bought land, and it starts going up. Now I don't own that land, but I got a good bank now. I worked for it, but I don't tell people that I didn't go to the Army. No I didn't go to the Army. I was in the state militia, but my brother went in my place. Well anyway the girls, of course that's changed now. They're all two women to every man now my age. We laugh about it when we go travelling. They do the waiting at the restrooms and so on and we walk on in.

ES: Well thank you do you have anything, any other memories you'd like to talk about?

FA: No those are just some of the memories, there's a lot of memories, but those memories after you get out of college, your experiences go right on, you're just starting there now. Your age is, when did you go to college?

ES: I graduated in '90.

FA: '90? Well you're at a good age too. You've got a lot before you, I'd be glad to trade you places.

ES: Well thanks for talking to me.

FA: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW.