

**University of Illinois Student Life, 1928-38:
Oral History Project
Clyde Helm '37
Champaign, Illinois
October x9th, 2007**

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

Maynard Brichford: Rerecording of an interview with Clyde Helm on October x9th, 2007 by Maynard Brichford.

Before you mentioned you were in Lake Villa, your hometown. You were born and raised there, were you?

Clyde Helms: Well, no. I was born in Lake Geneva. But I lived in Lake Villa all my life. Until I came down here.

MB: And you mentioned you went to school with Bill Stratton.

CH: Oh. Yeah. His folks lived west of Lake Villa. Little town they call Ingleside and it's now a part of Fox Lake. Fox Lake was a little village and it's expanded but we had a bus line and well it ran twenty seven miles and it started where Strattons lived and went all the way to Gurnee which was a consolidated high school that people came to from all over. That was the only high school around and they had a bus and if you played basketball or football, of course, then you had to have a car. But we had buses that ran on all the main roads to haul the kids to school. If you want to go to high school, that's the way it was.

MB: Did you say something about consolidated high school and the lady from Sears Roebuck was there...

CH: She was the benefactor. She finally coughed up enough taxes that, they built a very deluxe school. She was like, you know Martha Stewart is a good example. The richer people are, the greedier they are. That old girl didn't pay taxes anywhere for a long time and then somebody in this little town of Gurnee got digging around and they discovered she hadn't been paying taxes in Chicago like she claimed she was. So they sued her and got a big chunk of money and build a deluxe high school in Gurnee, Illinois. And you hear about Gurnee now.

MB: Yes.

CH: But that's how it come about. Old lady Sears built, she paid for, the high school.

MB: That was Warren Township, wasn't it?

CH: Yeah.

MB: Your father was a contractor...

CH: Yeah.

MB: And in a partnership, he did a lot of work.

CH: He built anything from a barn to an outhouse. They built lots of wood in those days and they built barns and then we had Samuel Insull who had a place in Libertyville and they put up miles of wood fences. And then he went broke. He paid, I can remember, I was just about starting high school. I remember my dad came home one day and in those days we had a big cook stove that my mother cooked on. A big iron cook stove like they had years ago and my dad came home and went in the bedroom and come back out with a big wad of paper. He walked over and opened up the stove and put the papers in there and I can remember as if it was yesterday my mother asking what he was doing, and he said, "Well those are the stocks that Insull paid me for all that time I worked for him" and Insull went broke you know. He was a crook.

MB: Yeah.

CH: And my dad just took all the stocks and stuff. Insull was pretty smart in some ways. He paid everybody with stock. He'd say, "I'm going to give you a little bit extra. I'm going to give you a lot of stock instead of cash" and he was very successful for a while.

MB: Yeah.

CH: And then it blew up. And my dad had worked, done a lot of work. Put up a lot of fences. Around Libertyville they have a lot of big wood fences.

MB: Oh Yeah. High income area.

CH: Yeah ...

MB: I think we've all had some what similar experiences in 1930,'32.

CH: Yeah.

MB: Terrible.

CH: Yeah 1930 was probably the worst of everything. I graduated from high school...

MB: 1933?

CH: No 1930.

MB: In '30 you graduated from high school. When did you graduate from the University? '37?

CH: '36.

MB: '36.

CH: Well, actually...

MB: That was a degree was it?

CH: I got so many hours but technically it's '36.

MB: Ok.

CH: I didn't have a diploma for a long time. Now I don't know where it is. But I, I have a one hundred and sixty hours here. In fact one hundred and sixty one.

MB: You'll be glad to know that the Board of Trustees says you graduated in '37.

CH: Yeah. Well, I took landscaping and architecture. I took a lot of courses. I took a couple of Home EC courses that the girls would sit there and look "What is that man doing in class with us? We're Home EC people." Well, I liked to cook and I had a scholarship so my tuition was free.

MB: You had a county scholarship did you...

CH: State.

MB: State legislative?

CH: Yeah. And I was working, making money. And, I worked at night. See I was a janitor. I mean, I have a lot of respect for working people because I was a janitor for a long time and that meant I could work at night and then I would go school all day and do whatever I want.

MB: Were you the only one that came from Warren Township to the University of Illinois?

CH: Oh yeah. Yeah. A few went to Lake Forest Academy. I was the first one to come down here. Yeah. In those days' people, Lake Forest had an Academy and then two or three went up to Marquette. And well, two of them went up there because they were given athletic scholarships. Both of them broke their legs playing football and as soon as they couldn't play football, they cancelled their scholarships. Things were tough in those days.

MB: Yep.

CH: And Marquette tried their best to recruit me, but I fooled around and I got a scholarship to come down here and when I once got down here I figured out how to make money so I lived quite well.

MB: You'd come earlier with Strattons who took you to a football game?

CH: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I met Zuppke. I shook hands with Zuppke.

MB: At that game?

CH: Well not with Stratton. I came down with a coach, a fellow who was a coach at Warren high school and my folks used to have him come to dinner a lot on Sunday and we took a liking to him before he married. And he brought a couple of us down here and but, then the Stratton's, of course. We went to school together all through high school and Mrs. Stratton was very frail and after Bill got through high school she was so frail they, they called it consumptive consumption years ago we had chest so they went to, one winter in Texas and one winter in Arizona. And Bill Stratton went to school out there and then I came down here and...

MB: There were a number of rooming houses, South First street, East Healy...

CH: Oh yeah.

MB: You went independent, that is you were...

CH: Oh yeah. No. Yeah. They, the house I had was on Green and Fourth. There was a filling station there and he was a retired railroader and she had four boys, three and me. We slept in the attic and we had a living room. We had desks in there. He was retired and in those days they had nothing in the way of pensions to speak of and it was very welcome for her. We'd do our laundry in the basement and hang the clothes around the big furnace they had down there. And we, of course were kind of the outsiders. You had the people that lived in organized houses, the fraternities and the sororities. Then the independents. The fraternity guys all sat together. They and the sorority girls were like a union. If you weren't a sorority girl you just practically weren't there. We had one girl that was in home economics and the University had a house and they had eighteen girls that lived in it that were not in any sororities and it was the only place they had to live. And the University sponsored and set this house up and there almost all the girls as I remember were all the home economics. Two of them, although one of them had a brother and I. When she graduated from University she went to a little town in Illinois as a Home EC teacher. But in those days it was pretty much fraternity and sorority and then a few rooming houses. But socially, it was all fraternity and sorority. And of course I waited tables. If you belonged to a fraternity and you were having trouble making ends meet you'd get a job at another fraternity washing dishes. Not in your own. You didn't want them to know about it. But you'd go over to another fraternity and wash dishes.

You'd never wait tables. You'd never go out where anybody saw you, but you'd go over and get your meals at another fraternity. They traded back and forth and all the waiters were all independent like me.

MB: I think some football players were doing that too.

CH: And, but in those days at...

MB: Where could you eat? Go to restaurants or...

CH: No, most of the time I've got jobs. I had a job, well, I could cook so I didn't have any problems getting a job. I could work in kitchens, and I, the DU house had a lot of money. Doctor Ford who was ear, eye, and nose man was a sponsor for them. Well the DU house had a cook, Opal Hunt. And she took a likening to me and I would do all the serving and she would get all the food cooked and then she take off and go home and I lived there. I mean I stayed there. I'd go over and cook myself some bacon and eggs for breakfast. And we, the fraternity kids, they had a tough time for breakfast. They mostly had cereal. But Opal Hunt was one of the best cooks on the campus and the DU house, Doctor Ford was their sponsor, they were a well-to-do fraternity. They ate very well. We had steak and most of the fraternities seldom had steak, but we had steak quite regular.

MB: A lot of fraternities went out of business...

CH: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah there were a lot of empty houses there. And people, some friends that I knew, came down here and they saw an empty fraternity and he talked his dad into, his dad had to get a loan from a bank to get some money, and he opened up a rooming house. He and his wife, they were married young, and he was just starting as a freshman and he opened up a rooming house in a fraternity house that went broke. And made a business out of it. He went to school and had a couple of kids and ran this big rooming house. You know a big fraternity had a lot of rooms and we had little restaurants over on the campus and we had two or three pretty poor restaurants. But one Greek restaurant. That was probably the biggest problem is having some place to eat because we just didn't have restaurants around the campus.

MB: Remember the names of them. There was one in the east side, near where Krannert is... I can't remember the name of it...

CH: Well, we had...

MB: The Green Lantern was down there. That was a faculty place. The course you took, commerce and accounting, and you took a lot of electives I believe.

CH: Oh yeah. I got into everything. Landscape architecture. I had an awful time with that. Agriculture School had a prerequisite. I didn't have any thing there, so I had to do a lot of fast talking before they let me in. Landscape architecture had a couple of

prerequisites. Well, I didn't have any so when I finally talked them into letting me take it. I worked in the library so I kind of black mailed them in a way because I reminded them that occasionally they needed help at the library with one of the problems in the library. The faculty were great people to go into the stacks, get a book go to their cubicle and use the book and then leave it. Well, that meant that, in fact, my job was to go around and find all the books that were missing. Well, after a little while I got to know who's in each field, whatever the book was I'd know just where to go and get it. I'd go and take it out of the cubicle and they'd come in and say "Oh I had a book" and I'd say, "Where did you have the book?" and he would say, "Well I forgot to put it back." They always forgot to put it back, that was their story. They forgot to put the book back. They left it in their cubicle and they come back and the book was gone. Then we'd say, "We don't know much about it." Well, they'd go back, go back in the library and low and behold there was the book on the shelf. Emma Jutton was the librarian in those days. Big German women and all God! She'd sweat in the summer time. She'd have a dish towel and she'd, she just perspired and she was quite overweight and she was a tough cookie to work for. She kept things...

MB: She worked on the book loaning now...

CH: She was in charge, yeah.

MB: First was Mary Lois Bull, I guess.

CH: Well she was Professor Windsor's secretary. Yeah Lois Bull, took a liking to me and we had a lot of students and normally they had grad students. We, at one time, we had fifty students working in the library. In those days the government had programs where students could only work three hours a week and spread it out so a lot of students had a little money.

MB: Didn't allow you any money.

CH: And Lois Bull was Professor Windsor's secretary and well she did everything. He, he pretty much was in his own world, and he didn't know too much of what was going on in the real world. He was doing his own thing. She was a wonderful person. She really was one of the kindest persons I've ever met. And we had Emma Jutton, she was boss of the library. And they employed alot students. The government had a program that they tried to spread the work out among a lot of kids. That nobody made very much money, but they made a little money.

MB: Everybody made enough to get along.

CH: Yeah.

MB: You said something about police work and other student jobs. Did you work for the Dean of Students at all? Were you having any dealings with Fred Turner or?

CH: Well no. I worked, I worked at a lot of, well, at football games the last couple of years. See I was a little older than most students and then, for a couple of years, whenever President Willard was making a speech, I guess, I probably have told you that I'd have to take his wife home. She was a little old lady and she'd get tired and he wouldn't even get through the meal and she'd be ready to go home. I would get their chauffeur and get her home. And they had two colored maids and as soon as we drove up, the maids were at the door to help her. We'd get her up to the door. He was, he was not exactly the most popular president we had, but people that got to know him really, really liked him. He was an awful nice person. But he was very strong minded. And of course the academic people had a problem accepting an engineer as being president. That was a bitter pill for them to swallow, that to have an engineering, an engineer from the north campus become president. But he knew what he was doing. Willard did a lot things for that University.

MB: Anthony Granata was a great helper to, I think, he had a small staff, but good.

CH: Yeah.

MB: Well you graduated in general business and then sold insurance after you were ...

CH: Oh yeah. Well I sold. When I was in school I decided that I tried to figure out what I wanted to do and I sold insurance for oh, more than a year when I was in school. Did real well. I had State Farm, I sold automobile insurance. And State Farm really, really made me a couple of offers, but by that time I found out money makes money. When you sell automobile insurance you can only sell them once a year, or with State Farm you sold policies renewed every six months. But with life insurance you could sell that to anybody. So I, I quit State Farm. They even offered me a salary to come to work in their home office but I went into the life insurance business. Then I liked the idea, I didn't have sit around and wait for people to come to my store to do business with me. I could go out and I'm a great believer that money makes money. A lot of people looked down their nose at insurance salesmen. Most of them have no idea how much money we make. We had men in Ohio, Ben Fellman that back in the Thirties was making a million dollars a year selling life insurance. He went around the country selling insurance to prominent people that had a lot of money. I followed his path in a way. I only went to people that were financially in good shape. There was no use for me trying to sell insurance to some ditch digger that hardly had enough money to feed his family. That don't make any sense.

MB: After the stock market crashed probably insurance seemed like a good investment too, rather...

CH: Yeah and people if viewed life insurance. People were beginning to understand that you had taxes to pay. I sold a couple of Greeks in Champaign one of the Katsinas. Everybody tried to sell him insurance because he was making a lot of money. They never got to first base. Well then I come along and I'd heard that he just wouldn't buy any insurance, but my wife and I used to eat a lot in his restaurant and he married a

school teacher so one evening he came and sat down with us. In fact my wife was so pregnant she was sitting sideways in the booth and I said, "Pete, you and I are going to have to sit down some morning and talk about insurance," "No, no," he'd say. So eventually he sat down and I sold him a lot of insurance. He realized that when he was dead and gone he had family left and it was a good investment. And you know, a lot of people don't understand the reason for some of this insurance. Like, I have insurance now that I get dividends that are twice as much as the premiums that I ever paid. They're tax free. And dividends from insurance you don't pay any taxes on it. And the only people in Champaign that are wealthy that I didn't sell insurance to was Lewis and Kaufman. Kaufman's did business in Chicago. They were Chicago Jews. Lewis had a friend in the insurance business. But most everybody else that made money in Champaign bought insurance from me. Yeah. I, I didn't fool around. That's a bad attitude it's not a very sociable attitude. I didn't fool around with people buying new insurance policies. There's, it's just as easy to write a big policy and make a lot of money as it was to write a little policy. You know? And I'm a great believer in money makes money. I, you, if you want to make money you ought to watch where the money is. I...

MB: You mentioned also duck hunting too...

CH: Oh yeah.

MB: One of your favorite...

CH: This time of year. Oh, I really miss it. This time of year. My wife was very kind. She went once with me and had to leave the river and go back on dry land and build a fire for her and it was a daylight distance. She was damn near freezing to death. She never went with me again. But oh yeah I, she never complained. We had a daughter and I would take off Friday afternoon and go to Havana and got acquainted with river rats over there and we hit it off pretty good. And I got to be a pretty good duck caller. And I had some good decoys. I made some decoys myself and I liked to duck hunt. I grew up of course as...

MB: Lake country up there in Lake County.

CH: Yeah. And the duck hunting up there is entirely different from what it is was over at Havana but I got very well acquainted in that Havana River with the people over there. And we got to be real good friends. And I would go over there and once and a while, I would take a person along but most of the time I went by myself.

START OF TAPE 2, SIDE A

MB: We may have missed some things about computer science. They said what? If you could handle the office and he would handle the faculty ...

CH: The money end of it.

MB: That was with regard to what?

CH: Yep.

MB: Yeah. Then...

CH: You see we had, we did have, the Navy gave us some money and the Air Force. We had some grants that came in and they weren't large sums of money, but still they had to be accounted for. And unfortunately, a lot of the faculty are very careless about the money. And I could name two or three that I had to watch like a hawk because they would do things, for an example, you can't buy anything at the University that costs over five thousand dollars without going out on a bid. There are certain things that you, that's the way it is. It's written in stone, that's what we used to say. And we...

MB: Had some people that didn't...

CH: Well, they Japanese name for Budweiser is hot fudge Sunday. I used to get these bills for expenses, expenditures, and we had a Japanese faculty man and every so often he entertained when any Japanese come to town.

MB: Is that Muroga?

CH: Yeah. Muroga. And I would get the bill and I would have every bill would have, there'd be four of them, three guests and Muroga. And they would all have two hot fudge Sundays. Well the first time I saw that I thought, "Jesus, those Japanese like sweet stuff." Well then a few weeks later he entertained some more visitors and same damn thing. Everybody had two hot fudge Sundays. Well that didn't sit very well with me so I called Urbana Lincoln and I said, "look up" all these tabs got numbers and I said, "Look up that meal tab and tell me what was on there" and before long he's back on the phone, he says, "What do you want to know?" I said, "Well I'm sitting here looking at a four expenditures of two hot fudge Sundays for each of the four people" he says, "Clyde, that's the Japanese name for Budweiser." Muroga would turn those damn bills in hot fudge Sundays and they'd all have two Budweiser's for lunch. So I never caused him any trouble I thought, "If that's the way he wants to do it why should I get least bit annoyed?" Muroga was a real nice person.

MB: It facilitated communication.

CH: He, Muroga couldn't be nicer and I didn't think that was peanuts compared to what the politicians do. So I did let little things slide.

MB: I imagine that George Friedman was a problem.

CH: Well he was a real pain in the ass. He, his attitude was that he knew all about everything and he was the father of computer science and all that. He's finally calmed down the last few years. He's on that trolley binge. And he well...

MB: I guess you also mentioned Slotnick was in the act...

CH: Yeah Slotnick was a problem, but then he left you know. And he went out to California and they weren't too happy with him out there. And then he ended up out there in New York and then he dropped dead jogging. And, but in his field, in what he did, I guess he was very brilliant in some of his thinking. But then we had a lot brilliant people. For example in engineering, there was Nick Holonyak who has invented all kinds of stuff. And we got other faculty people who are brilliant but...

MB: They had theoretical people and then applied people...

CH: Yeah.

MB: Bardeen was great in the physics theory. He wasn't all so much willing...

CH: Well he was before my time. I've read about him and heard about him but-

MB: Well Holonyak as long as...

CH: But no, Slotnick, well he, well...

MB: You didn't have any dealings with Plato people?

CH: Well they, there was times we wondered if... What used to bother me, he would come up with some kind of scheme and he'd want a cup of tea and he'd have to call up his secretary to find out if he put sugar in his tea or not.

MB: Was this...

CH: Slotnick.

MB: Oh yeah?

CH: Yeah. He'd call up his secretary and say, "Do I have sugar in my tea or I don't have?" Because he hardly ever drank coffee but we always had to get hot water for him so he could have a cup of tea, but he didn't know if he put sugar in it or not. That used to bother me, that, it would seem to me that was kind of fundamental.

MB: Yes. There's a fellow I can't remember he's now in Southern Illinois but I ran into him just a year ago. He started Plato or much involved in it and went to North Carolina, I think. But I can't remember the name. Well, it was interesting I presume. You mentioned what Pogue had, the adopted daughter of trustee and...

CH: Pogue.

MB: Yeah, they were handling business before you came in 1968, 1969...

CH: You know we had, we had about a half of a floor in one of the engineering buildings. We had trunks of light bulbs. At one time when computer science was first starting it was all light bulbs. And we had just everyday, light bulbs like this, trunks full of just plain light bulbs. And the only problem was they only worked for a short duration, real bright and then burn out. And so some of the help, you know you're not supposed to take anything. University, if they change a toilet they take it out to the dump and then take a sledge hammer and knock a hole in it. That's the way the University does things. Well, guys would steal these light bulbs and take them home and there'd be a big burst of light and then that'd be the end of it. But, oh I don't know how many trunks full of light bulbs we had to dispose of. And the truck people that had to haul them out there and get rid of them, they would bitch and complain. And then we weren't supposed to throw computer paper down in the big dumpster because some guys came by and they would climb down in there and get the computer paper back out and haul it over to Danville and sell it. Well, it didn't make any difference to me. We were throwing it away and it was going to go to the dump so I just minded my own business. Boy, some of the faculty got very upset. They were wondering what these guys were doing and they started complaining and they came to me and I said, "Well I never seen anybody in the dumpsters." You know it was a big dumpster...

MB: Yeah.

CH: I said, "I never seen anybody down there." But the all the people at work, we all knew they were taking that paper over to Danville someplace and selling it. And some outfit in Danville would buy it and...

MB: So they weren't selling it to Berkeley or MIT or somebody else?

CH: They were, some company in Danville would buy all that old computer paper. But we had to finally put a stop to it because two or three of the faculty people complained about it and it-

MB: Well the Synder, Preparasa, Kubitz, Belford, lot of people in the...

CH: Yeah Kubitz is still around as far as I know. Bill's a real nice guy. He really is, and Belford I think she retired. But Kubitz he lives over, he lives about half a block from my house and he's a real nice person. And, so is Belford but she, she, I don't know, I don't know enough about what was going on. Apparently she was pretty good at whatever she was doing. I had no contact with her whatsoever.

MB: Did you have contact with Gillies, he's...

CH: Oh yeah. Of course he died you know and his wife is still around. But he died in his sleep.

MB: Well, you mentioned you went to the football game back in '30 to see Illinois played down here...

CH: Oh yeah.

MB: Your first trip to campus. You saw Zuppke...

CH: Yeah.

MB: And then you saw later on, did you see some of the games or?

CH: Oh yea I went...

MB: An opponent said he once walked off the field?

CH: Well, I only saw Zuppke once because we were still in high school and then by the time I got down here he...

MB: He was gone after '41...

CH: Yeah he had an apartment over there, downtown, in Champaign on University Avenue. He lived in those brick apartments. But he was, Eliot was here and so on. No, only saw him once and I think I remember he had a cap on and a cigar in the corner of his mouth. And he's a short, stocky guy. But that was before, I was much younger. Yeah and then I come down, by the time I got down here then that was back in the days of Eliot. And we had quite a succession. And I wasn't very interested in the sports because when I started working I got into a lot more problems than I anticipated. And...

MB: Working in the computer science?

CH: Yeah and I even worked Saturdays and Sundays. My wife, she almost divorced me. She said that, "I don't care how bad that situation is" she says, "you've got to stop this going over there on Sunday." But the only problem was I could go over on Sunday and work a couple of hours and I could get a whole days work in because no body bothered me. See, and I'd go over there about eight o'clock in the morning on Sunday and hole up in my office and then I could go over all the paper and look at all the figures and see where we were getting into problems. And then on Monday I would call a meeting and unload on, "You're stop this and you stop that, we're not going to buy any more of that." And they'd have a long face, "Jeesh how did he know about that?" Well I spent probably half a Sunday going over the records, that's how. But after a while we got things evened out and I'm not a church goer so it didn't bother me working on Sunday but it did my wife. She thought I was working too hard and then we wanted to do things of our own. But then, of course, I had a lot of freedom. If I decided to go home at two o'clock in the

afternoon, I just went home. And if had to go to the dentist at ten o'clock in the morning I just went to the dentist. I didn't report to anybody. And people left me alone because...

MB: Snyder was...

CH: Oh he's just, all he was concerned with was being head of the department. That's, he could have cared less about anything else. He had his heart set at being head of the department.

MB: Did you have any dealings with the financial people in the University here? Business office or did they monitor much what was going on in the Computer Science?

CH: No, no. Two or three of them were good friends of mine and we would have coffee together and we would match up stories. And a lot of things were ignored, left alone. I'm a great believer in don't kick a sleeping dog. If things are, maybe not quite kosher but they're not causing any great problem, leave it alone and normally it will work itself out. And nobody was stealing anything. It wasn't that they were wasting time or wasting money or buying things. Our biggest problem was convincing these people that there were certain procedures. You have to have a purchase order. The University just can't let you just buy anything you want. And if you call up, like, I wanted some air conditioners and the University couldn't supply them, I called Fetters up in Peoria and the first thing the man said to me was, "Do you have a purchase order?" He knew how it's done. But you have some organization. You know you just can't let people fly around and do whatever they want. No...

MB: I think we got the section on there where you were talking about the hot fudge Sundays being, can't remember when they, but they ended up being Japanese for Budweiser.

CH: No let's see now maybe I was a little bit remiss but see I just left Muroga alone. He's a good man and the University... You know I went to a retirement party a year ago and I couldn't believe it. They had stacks of wine and beer unheard of. And they, we had a retirement party and they in fact they embarrassed the hell out of me because we walk in, my wife and I, and we no more than got in the place and all of a sudden the girl that was running it taps on a glass and gets everybody quiet and she says, "Now the man of the hour is here." And I kind of look around. She says, "There he is, the one that started all this." And everybody hooped and hollered and clapped and I just didn't realize how many friends I had. It was quite a party and this was in the University building. We had wine, some of those, there was a lot of them, mostly immigrants, they drank with both hands. Oh you turned some of the faculty loose where you had wine. God they just soak it up like a sponge. Well in my day, you know, you didn't have liquor in the building. It was frowned on. One or two faculty friends of mine used to have a bottle hidden down in the bottom drawer of his desk. And he would sneak a drink out of there but you just didn't...

MB: Yes.

CH: And now they, when they go to a party they have one. And, so we'll disrupt the day. But it was a shock to me because I hadn't been around a long time, you know, I go in there...I couldn't believe it. Yeah when I left I never went back until they were having this retirement. And I did want to go to the party. But it really, really was a revelation I'll tell you. Because times have changed. Why, I go back to the days that you couldn't smoke on the campus except in your office. Tommy Arkle Clark was Dean of Men for years and boy he ran a tight operation. I liked Willard. I got to know President Willard quite well. And I've taken his wife home many times from meetings when I was a student. I was the University Police and undercover. I didn't have a uniform or anything on but I was the police force and they would have a banquet and Mrs. Willard was a frail little lady and President Willard would kind of nod at me like that and I would go get the chauffeur to bring the car around and then I'd get Mrs. Willard and we'd take her home. They had two black girls as maids and me and the chauffeur come and get the car and I'd help her out to the car and we'd take her over to the house and then the two maids would come and take care of her. And she was always worried that I wouldn't get my dinner. Then I would. She was the nicest person.

MB: The nicest.

CH: And she was always worried she was messing up our dinners. She said she's "just awful sorry," she said, "I just got so tired" but she says "Now, I want you to go back and you go in the kitchen and you tell them that I said they should fix you a nice meal." She, she was so nice. Well, I liked Willard. He treated us like anybody. Now we, some-

MB: The University here was in difficult years too in the thirties...

CH: Yeah.

MB: Betsy Ross was his...

CH: Yeah.

MB: equivalent to Mrs. Willard. You mentioned your fellows being bartenders in Champaign. That was after 1933 when the...

CH: Well the...

MB: Prohibition went out...

CH: Yeah, well, most of those were up in the greater '36, '37. In through there quite a few students could work part time see. That fit in with the places that were selling beer and so on. They really hadn't got set up like they are now. It was so new that everybody was kind of waiting to see what was going to happen. There was one of the married boys, that he was a bartender at the Urbana Lincoln and he was redheaded, had two kids, and

freckles. Two little boys, they were all, they had red hair just like he had and big freckles. And he was a bartender at Urbana Lincoln and they kept going to school until he got his degree. And he was in accounting and went up to Chicago and eventually got to be a CPA. And...

MB: A very good accounting, the Accounting department here was quite...

CH: Well we had Karen Brock. I always liked him. And he went to California. He went out to California as head of their accounting department. But I had a course under him and the, we had Alta Gwynn Saunders who was killed in an airplane accident. She was the business letter writing. That was her field. And I, because I remember the name Alta, A L T A, and you don't see that very often. And she, you know she was a nationally known authority on business letter writing. And Karen Brock of course was a very well regarded accounting professor and he went out to California to head up the department. And we had two or three more that I don't recall. I can think...

MB: The head of the department was in business was accounting. He did local audits and stuff around here. Can't remember the name again. Andrew Barr, who was a friend of ours graduated from accounting in '23. He was one of the career accountants. He had his photograph of the faculty here.

CH: Yeah.

MB: Well, I think we've covered things pretty good here and what about the library, I remember that and Computer Science? All these other years you were right here in town selling insurance.

CH: Oh yeah.

MB: So you had business contacts with the University.

CH: Yeah, yeah. Well...

MB: The University has always been the biggest industry in this town-

CH: Well they don't buy life insurance.

MB: They don't buy life insurance?

CH: No. No I'd have starved to death. I went all over. I'd go to Mattoon, Springfield. Who ever had money. You see the kind of policies I sold they were not nickel dime they were big policies and I would only go to Chicago if I was real sure there was a good prospect. But no I went to Indianapolis, Springfield, St. Louis, I wrote big policies took big premiums. Money makes money. No use fooling around selling somebody that maybe is going to pay a five hundred dollar premium when you can sell a five thousand dollar premium. Doesn't make sense. So you, you learn real fast. And I learned two

things, money makes money and don't ever kick a sleeping dog because there's a lot of things that you should leave alone. And as the old saying is, if it ain't broke don't fix it. I've been guilty of thinking that I could improve something and I screwed it up worse than it was before I started. And I learned real young to be careful. And the other thing is sometimes you, you need to sit back and take a good look at what's going on before you get carried away.

MB: I remember you mentioned Bill Stratton?

CH: Oh yeah we went to school together, grade school, high school. Yeah. His dad was Secretary of the State and his dad had. Stratton and I came down a couple of times and we went duck hunting over on the Illinois River when his dad was Secretary of the State. He had a hunting place over on Illinois River. And state police would pick us up Friday after school and drive us down to Springfield and then Saturday morning we'd go over to the Illinois River and duck hunt.

MB: Taxpayers are paying for you fellows to go duck hunting!

CH: That's what it amounted to.

MB: Yeah.

CH: That's the way it works.