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## UA68/8/2 Sybil Stonecipher Oral History

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Produced by Oral History Committee  
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Dr. James Bennett: Miss Stonecipher, you were just telling me that you are a native of Indiana. . .

Sybil Stonecipher: Yes.

JB: . . . and where was the area where you were born?

SS: In Posey County, Hoophole Township, down close to Mt. Vernon. Hoophole, of course, isn't the real name of the township. It's really Black. There's a legend attached to it.

JB: And your father was a school teacher, you say.

SS: Yes, he was a school teacher, and, consequently, we moved a few times. I was in the third grade when we left Mt. Vernon; my brother had just finished first grade. But my father's mother's people had come to Indiana in 1811; so, you see, we are pioneer stock. And that makes it possible for me to be a member of the Pioneer Society of Indiana, a society of Indiana pioneers that have really come.

JB: You went to school, then, in the various schools where your father was teaching or superintending.

SS: Yes, just - actually, it was only Mt. Vernon, Kirkton, and Zionsville, three schools.

JB: Fairly close to Indianapolis?

SS: Yes, reasonably close. And, of course, Zionsville - My father went into the army in 1918; my mother died in 1917 of the flu. So, my father wanted to get into the service. He went into the educational corp, somehow combined with the International YMCA, and went to Europe. And, of course, my brother and I went to I. U., but we rented rooms at Zionsville and stayed there until we were through at Indiana.

JB: What was your major at Indiana?

SS: Latin. I had gone down intending to major in Latin and minor in German, because I'd had four years of Latin and three years of German in high school. But that was the first year of the war - First World War and consequently, there was no German.

JB: Mm-hmm. That's right.

SS: I got one year only.

JB: They just stopped teaching it altogether, I guess.

SS: Absolutely, and for years and years and years, because I tried to get some correspondence courses, but they didn't exist. And, of course, we had much more sense about it in the next world war.

JB: Did you go straight through and get your A.B. degree?

SS: Yes. Well, actually, the year my mother died I stayed out one semester with my father, but went back in the summer and made up the work. Aside from that, it was straight through.

JB: Now did you start teaching after that or did you . . .

SS: One year I taught. My brother, in the meantime, had taken extra work and stayed in two summers, and he finished, therefore, just one year behind me. And in July of that year, he and I went to Asia Minor to join my father. They had insisted that he stay on, and he'd already been over there a year and a half. And he said, "If you will send my children I will stay." And so, they found my brother a job with the YMCA way up in the interior of Asia Minor near the ancient city of Philadelphia; and I was with my father in Smyrna - Izmir. So that was quite an experience, in as much as neither one of us had ever been anywhere. In those days, you know, we weren't - we didn't have a chance.

JB: Yes, people didn't travel much.

SS: But it was really quite great. The civilian wife took over the Greek army work which my father was heading, and we started back home. Got as far as Paris and they wanted my father to go to Italy to close out a Y for the naval personnel of the Adriatic fleet. And, so, he and I went back to Venice and stayed - that was in February - and we stayed until October of that year. And my brother, in the meantime, had - of course, he had been an SATC at Indiana, student army, and he had the regular papers. So, in Paris he had no reason for going to Italy; so, he saw in the papers an ad for soldiers who wanted to work in the army in the graves registration. And that's what he did while we were in Italy. That closed up just a little before we left. Then we started back home, and of course, in the journeying back and forth, we saw all the things that people are supposed to see while traveling. But that was the beginning of our craze for travel. It's definitely habit-forming.

JB: Yes, I know it is.

SS: And both brother and I love to go places and have traveled quite a lot. But then after I came home - my brother had always said he would never teach school, period. And, of course, I knew that was the only thing females did, really, if they didn't get married. So, I taught that next year - year and a half - down in Southern Illinois, and then I went to the University of Illinois for my Masters. After that, some more teaching. Mishawaka in northern Indiana was the last teaching before Bowling Green. Although, for three summers before I went to Western I had substituted over at Ball State at Muncie. One of the Latin teachers was getting a masters, and so I filled in for the summer. And, as a matter of fact, the first summer I was at Bowling Green, I spent at Ball State. But it took quite a lot of time to get used to regular college teaching.

JB: When did you arrive in Bowling Green?

SS: In 1929. You were probably born then.

JB: Yes, I'm afraid so.

SS: Probably weren't born then would be a better construction, I should say.

JB: 1929. I believe that that is the same year that Kelly Thompson enrolled at Western.

SS: I have the history. You've seen that.

JB: Yes, uh-huh. James Cornett's.

SS: Last night I dug it out and started reading part of it, because I have forgotten not only names but a great many other things. And I was surprised to learn that the college had been actually founded in 1884. Because, of course, I think it was about two years after I got there we celebrated the 25th anniversary. But that was for the state recognition.

JB: I guess so. The state began its operations in 1911 - 10, or 11, somewhere along in there.

SS: Nineteen hundred six they were given the title of a state college.

JB: 1906. That's right. (machine stopped)

Now, you had arrived in Bowling Green in 1929. Mr. Cherry was president, wasn't he?

SS: What's that?

JB: Mr. Cherry was president of Western?

SS: Yes. He was president of Western.

JB: How did you go about getting a job there?

SS: I didn't go about getting a job. I was teaching at Mishawaka, and I expected they had written to I. U. because the Mishawaka superintendent told me about an inquiry. And it just happened that that was the first semester - or the second semester, rather - of the year which

gave me my life license in Indiana. And I was not going to give up that, because I didn't know whether I might want to come back to Indiana or not. So, I told them that and asked that I would like to be considered later, perhaps. But they had a young woman from Chicago, I think, who came in for that semester and taught just the one semester, I think.

JB: So, in all the arrangements for the position you worked directly with President Cherry, I guess, didn't you?

SS: I suppose so, but you know I really don't remember. I really don't remember a thing.

JB: I'm basing that on things that some of the other people have said, that generally everything went through him.

SS: I know that there was nobody else who seemed to have any particular authority. I know that. And I know, as far as salary was concerned, it always seemed that if Mr. Cherry said she gets this, well, that's what she got, and there didn't seem to be any special standard for it. Not that it bothered me, because I didn't know any better. We weren't trained in this business of negotiation. Honestly, as I read the papers, the KEA newspaper, I am so disgusted.

JB: It's amazing, isn't it?

SS: It's unbelievable. I just can't think of teachers doing what they do.

JB: No, it's become just a - well, it's not quite the profession that it



used to be. It's more of a job.

SS: No, it isn't at all. Not at all.

JB: It's displeasing to see that happen, but . . .

SS: The year after I came, the Depression began.

JB: Good timing there.

SS: And our salaries were cut. They weren't too much to start with and they were cut. I don't remember how long it took for them to get back. If you just have enough to live on for the month, that was alright. That's the way it struck me anyhow.

JB: Made it from month to month. Who were some of the people in foreign languages or some of the people just generally on the faculty when you first came?

SS: Well, of course, Miss Claggett was there, and she and I were the closest, certainly. Our offices, when we finally got to having offices, ours were right side by side with Mrs. Moore - I mean Mrs. Perkins. And of course, Miss Wood was there, a beautiful protrait of a lady if ever I saw one. You didn't know her; she had died before you came. What year did you come?

JB: 1960.

SS: That Miss Wood was - she looked the part; she played the part. She

was a gentle woman, and one of the very first that I had known, actually. And then of course, Miss Egbert and Miss Robertson, because Miss Robertson was from I. U., and the Moores - Earl Moore and his wife - and, let's see, who else? We used to have I. U. group and have occasional social events, just a small group on the faculty. Mr. - Dr. Mutzler was a very close friend of my father's. They had known each other in, I think, probably at I. U. But at any rate, my father went with me to Bowling Green and we stayed at the Mutzlers until I was safely settled. Daddy could go home then.

JB: Did the Mutzlers live on Nashville Road?

SS: Yes.

JB: In the house - Dr. Berry lives there now and our house is just the next street behind that house. I pass it every day and I remember someone saying that they thought that was the Mutzler Home.

SS: And, of course, Miss Richards, she was I. U.; and Emma Stith, who was Peabody. She and I became very good friends. Well, in fact, I was thinking, every time Christmas comes and every time I go to the dentist - you know I still go to Dr. Grimm down in Bowling Green - I think about the the people whom I have known down there, and it's surprising, really, how many of them are still active, comparatively so; although, not all of them. Of course, Miss Egbert's dead and Mrs. Robertson were the two that I knew best who died. And, of course, Etta Runner who wasn't a teacher, but she was just as important. The last - well, from 1950 until '64 when I left I lived, you know, in the duplex that she had built. So I knew Miss Runner very, very well.

JB: Yes, I remember her - tiny little old lady.

SS: I think, actually, some of the people like Etta and Florence Schneider were just as important to me as some of the faculty people. If you wanted to know something they could tell you.

JB: Yes. I understand that Miss Schneider just had a tremendous amount of information and knowledge at her fingertips. You could ask her just about anything; she didn't have to look at her books at all.

SS: One of her nephews was one of my Latin students, John O'Conner, John Joseph O'Conner, and I hear from him regularly at Christmas. Once Marjorie Clagett and I were in Florida, and we visited the O'Connors. That was while he was still connected with the Cape. Now, it's the people and such a lot of them. And then, as the newer ones came on - well, of course the Grise's too - they took me into the family, actually. That was another thing which I think was rather unusual, because the Grise's made me feel as if I was a part of them. And the Skinners. You didn't know them, the Taylor Skinners.

JB: Didn't know them. No.

SS: But they had two daughters and they adopted a third baby girl. And they have been my dear friends all these many years, and the girls are almost the first people from whom I get cards at Christmas, and long letters always. So the way they accepted people and were concerned about them - and then of course Mrs. Leiper. You didn't know her either.

JB: No, I didn't.

SS: Well, I lived at her house for several years. And the Home Ec teacher, Mary Lee Taylor, who died fairly recently - she had married and was living in Oklahoma; that was just last year or year before last she died. And Suzy Page, who's still circulating.

JB: Yes, she is in a rest home now in Warrensboro.

SS: Oh, is she?

JB: Yes.

SS: She is. Well, she had so much trouble getting around; I was worried about her.

JB: Yes. She's bent almost double. She just never got in a hurry anyway. Lunch might be at 6 in the evening, you know. And I think maybe she just didn't get enough to eat and she just didn't get around to it, and just got in pretty bad shape.

SS: I imagine so. Suzy used to tickle me. We'd meet on the corner just in passing and I'd ask her how she was and she'd tell me in detail. She was a great gal, though. Oh, and Marie Adams.

JB: Yes. She was always . . .

SS: And, of course, one of the special friends is my cousin, Helen Griffin, who has - during the time that I was in the hospital, I think she must have mobilized all the people in Bowling Green who knew me to write me cards, because I had a tremendous number of cards from people I barely

remember. And I know when I write to her that I'm coming, she always circulates the news with about 10 of the women whom I still see frequently if the dentist gives me time.

JB: Yes. My wife is in Altrusa, and she told me Tuesday night that she had talked to Miss Griffin.

SS: Yes, she's quite a girl, Helen.

Well, on those first days, those first years, actually, in Western, our students were so mature and so serious and they worked so hard that you really just had to dig it in order to be able to keep ahead of them. But that was one of the good things that happened to me there, because although I had had all these courses, I really had had an adequate preparation and I loved it. As far as the German was concerned - well, of course, the first year I think I had one class in French. That was my minor at I. U. when I couldn't get German. One year, Mr. McChesney's six children all got scarlet fever, and he was quarantined and there wasn't anybody to teach German. Well, I had had three years in high school and one year at I. U., you see; so that was better than anybody else had and I drew the prize. Well, I loved it really, and that was before the days of the laboratories and all that stuff, and reading I could teach them to read. And that's what I really always loved to do. I really don't care too much for speaking German. I would never starve; I'd never get lost or anything like that, but as far as just conversing in German, no. I read it all the time. So, from that time on, I was a permanent emergency, in a case of permanent emergency. Because I think I had at least one German class every semester 'til the day I left, which was good for me, because it made me do it. And the same thing was true with Dr. Grise's classes. He used to

teach, you know; he was the head of the department.

JB: I was just going to ask you about that.

SS: And he taught. He said when I came that I could take any of his classes except Horace; he would not give up Horace. Well, it so happened that occasionally he would be caught in a bind with his duties as dean and I would, without warning, be called upon to teach a review lesson in Latin literature or something else which was also good for me. At the time I couldn't quite see its virtue, but I survived. And, of course, after awhile it was no problem. But I think it - Do you remember Lee - no, you weren't there when Lee Giles was there.

JB: Lee Giles?

SS: He was in personnel or public relations or something like that, only two years. Well, he's at channel 8; he's the top man at channel 8. I've forgotten the exact title he has. And he had just married that year and his wife was coming to classes at Western. I didn't know - I knew her, because they went to our church, but I didn't have her in any class. But she and I were talking one day, and she said that one of the things she always loved about Western was the way in which the teachers were always interested in their students. And it isn't always that way. And that was what made the place - one of the things - that made it different. I don't see how you can help being interested in them, because they are an exciting bunch.

JB: They are. They still are.

SS: They still are. I had a note from Mrs. Claggett in the mail today and she asked if I had had a rather melancholy card from Jim Coke. Jim was a French major and a Latin minor, and he has been teaching Italian at William and Mary for years; and he always writes at least at Christmas. So, he did have a very unhappy card; he just was feeling down and out. So, I had to take considerable time trying to think of something to say to Jim, and I really didn't say it very well, so I don't know. But he has apparently done a very good job down there, because he was - one year at least - the favorite professor, the students chose him for the best professor and so forth. And then I have -

END OF TAPE ONE 344

JB: We're back on our second cassette tape now, and you were talking about the article in the last issue of the Western Alumnus.

SS: Yes. No, I guess it's the next to the last. It's the one about Mrs. Hardwick anyhow. She taught Latin, of course. I have, also, two Latin students who are now teachers who always keep in touch at Christmas time. One of them is a girl who was graduated the year I left and another one had been out a few years before, and they are both proud of their classes. Both of them take part in Junior Classical League and win prizes and things like that. So, that makes me feel good.

JB: Surely it does.

SS: It makes me feel very good that they are still interested. I also have another family that I'm interested in - the Hearndons. Bill came back from the war and took German with me. Martha was the girl

he married; they were high school sweethearts. She was one of my Latin majors. So I always hear from them. And their daughter, Diane, is teaching now at Plainfield; so, I met her last year. She's coming over one of these days again. But the relationships that grew out of other relationships, you know, are always interesting, I think.

Well, I kept on travelling all the years I taught, because it was a good excuse. Now, if I'm teaching about Rome, I should have proof that I know something about it, actually having been there, and so I had to go to Italy. And, then of course, Greece. I was teaching mythology and I just had to go to Greece. Of course, I had been in Greece, because when we were in Asia Minor we had to land in Athens to get the ship to Smyrna. Then we traveled there several times. And then Yugoslavia; that was territories that belonged to the area of my interests. And, of course, Austria and Germany after I got to be an expert in German. I think the greatest pleasure I had - one of the greatest - was in, I think it was 1950. It was the first year the Passion Play was resumed after the war, and I went. Well, I also went to Salsburg and to Vienna. And, of course, Vienna was still occupied by the four different nations. And one of the greatest pleasures I enjoyed was going up to the limits of the Russian border and reading the signs in German all along there. They weren't exactly lies; I mean they didn't come out and tell plain lies. But they were definitely false statements the way they were phrased in German. So, that's why I think reading and understanding is really just as important as anything else and probably more so.

But, you know, the last - Greece is my favorite place, I think, but I can't go back because of the walking. You need to walk in Greece; you have to walk in Greece, and I just can't do it as much as I would want to do - as much as I've always done. But my last three trips have been to Scotland.



JB: That's a beautiful country.

SS: And I am a complete fanatic on Scotland. I have the latest bulletin of the Scotia Tours which I took. Do you know that?

JB: Well, yes. I think I've seen their brochures. We went pretty much on our own; we had AAA to make our arrangements.

SS: Well, the Scotia Tours - I have taken six of them, two of them each year, and I could still go back and take all of them over again, but it'd be a little foolish. But, you don't remember Gwenda. Gwenda was the Welsh girl who came as an exchange teacher in the training school. Gwenda Davies. And she was there for a whole semester, and she's one of those people whom everybody liked and she just loved everybody. So we have kept in touch all these many years, must be more than 25 years. And I have visited her several times in Wales when her parents were still living, and then she married a Scot and they live in Glasgow. And she teaches in the teacher's college in Glasgow. So, she's one of my favorite people.

JB: When were you last in Scotland?

SS: What's that?

JB: When were you last in Scotland?

SS: '75. My brother and his wife were taking some tours in England, and I just turned up my nose at them and went to Scotland. Now, I love those tours from London, and those day tours from London, I've taken quite a lot of them. They are marvelous. But I was in Scotland in '72 and

'73 and '75. And I had been there before. I was there one summer for the festival.

JB: Oh, that would be nice.

SS: And I have been to Salzburg for the festival. And a festival that isn't well-known but to me is just as delightful - the one at Brighams. It's on Lake Constans, and it's lighter music perhaps - operettas rather than operas. Although, I remember the last time I was there it was a rainstorm - thunder and lightening and noise - and there was a great choir from Amsterdam singing "The Damnation of Faust."

JB: How appropriate.

SS: Which was so appropriate.

Oh, there's another former student of Western with whom I keep in touch. She's a German girl, Orsella Lawson, and she had married a G. I. and they had two children. And he didn't turn out very well; he was not the kind who supported his family. So, Orsella was left - well, had to earn the bread if there was any bread. So, she came to Western, and one summer - she had taken some correspondence courses, I think; I'm not positive about that - she came to Western one summer. Her mother had come over from Germany to stay with the children. The children went to training school. Lavinia Hunter had the little boy, who is now a graduate of Harvard. The girl was a couple of years older. So, Orsella - I didn't have her in class, but I had met her and she came around and wanted help - or rather I wanted to give her help, because she was that kind of a person. She definitely deserved it. So, we became very good friends. And the children, the children were most delightful

youngsters. So, Orsella went over to the University of Kentucky. She got her degree at Western in elementary education, and she went over there and taught in the county school, but decided that she wanted to teach German. So, then she went to the University and got her degree in German, and then she got a scholarship to Vanderbilt and got her Ph.D. And she is now professor in the German department at Athens, Ohio, and every spring she takes a class of young people to Salzburg for the spring semester. So, she's another one who owes a great deal to Western and who appreciates it. She really does.

JB: Now, what was her name again?

SS: Orsella Lawson.

JB: I was trying to think. Have we missed any of the - Now we've covered all of the faculty in languages and we've talked about some of the people, Miss Stith, for example, in English and you mentioned Miss Egbert and Miss Robertson, Dean Grise and of course Mr. . . .

SS: 'Course Dr. Hatcher - Dr. Hatcher came, you know, as the head of our department, and that was sort of a change, to say the least. But I always liked him very, very much; he was most considerate and helpful and pleasant. Do they even have any Latin now?

JB: You know, I think they don't have. I'm not sure of that. I just -

SS: Well, the last report I had was unofficial, but I didn't think there was any prospect.

JB: I think that's right. The language department a few years ago suddenly found itself in great difficulty. There were just no students electing foreign languages of any kind, and they had real problems. and I think now, they are coming back.

SS: Picked up a little.

JB: They've picked up some.

Well, Paul Hatcher, then was only the second head of the foreign language department, wasn't he? Dean Grise had been the first one and he'd been there all that time.

SS: Well, no. Dr. Grise - Before I got there, I think, wasn't Dr. Wilson head - no, he wasn't the head, because they're more or less contemporaries. Mr. Leiper - Dr. Leiper.

JB: Was he?

SS: I think -Yes, I'm sure he was. Because - I hope they still have it, but - Dr. Leiper had brought back from the east when he was in school there a model of Rome. And I've chased around. I've tried to get that thing put out some place where we could see it, you know, and use it. Then they switched around when I left and I really don't know. But if anything has happened to it, it really would be a very great shame, because it's an - I mean, those things aren't common and they would be valuable, you see.

JB: I'll look around when I get back.

SS: You ask about it. Tell them I want to know where Rome is.

JB: Alright. It was a model - a plaster model or something of Rome.

SS: Yes. It was on - well, let's see. How big was it? It was bigger than the top of this, I should say, but maybe a little broader and not much longer. And then the walled city was set within the framework. It wasn't - the buildings were, I should say, rather small, but still there was enough variation in size so that you got the feeling of the place quite well, I thought.

JB: That sort of intrigues me. I'll have to see if I can find that. I'll let you know if I do.

Well, now, Dr. Leiper then switched from foreign languages to English.

SS: Yes: Now, I say he was the head, but I assume by reason of the fact that he was earlier than - well, I believe that Dr. Wilson and Dr. Grise were both his students. It seems to me that's in the back of my head. I don't know for sure, but I believe that's right. 'Course Dr. Leiper was a very learned man, indeed. I didn't get to know him, because that year I - or rather - I was at Mrs. Leipers' more than a year. I was there after he died. I guess just about a year before he died, and then after that I was there for several years. And he was a complete invalid then, so I didn't really get to know him. But Mrs. Leiper was always so good to me. And she gave me some of the books that he had. He had too many. I left most of the books that couldn't be of any conceivable value in Bowling Green at the College, because I am a squirrel and I simply cannot get rid of books. I don't

want to get rid of them; but, eventually one has to. So, all I have left now are the few which I have acquired more recently and the reference books: dictionaries, and things like that. Have you read The Loom of History by Mueller, from I. U. ?

JB: No, I haven't. (machine stopped)

SS: That is definitely a problem.

JB: The Loom of History, Herbert Mueller. I'm sure we'll have it in the library. When I get back I'll find time to read that.

SS: I expect they do have. Of course, it's a little restricted. I mean, it's not a general history.

JB: To change the subject a little bit, where was the department located? Was it always - well, I know it wasn't always in Cherry Hall, because you were there before Cherry Hall. In what building did they have foreign languages when you began teaching?

SS: Oh, that was one of the adventures. I had the upstairs on the - well, if you're looking at it from the front - on the left in the Administration Building. And the French had the upstairs on the right in the same building. And I remember one day in the summer - you remember we taught- you don't remember, but we did teach, 'course you still do teach in the summer. It was 114 degrees up there next to that room. It was beastly!

JB: I can imagine it would be.

SS: It really was, very, very, - 'Cause there was no cross-ventilation, you see. You could open your windows, but nothing but blank wall over here.

JB: Of course, I remember how hot it was in Cherry Hall for years. I was there a long while before they did anything. Then, finally, we got a window air conditioner for our offices; and then later it was entirely air conditioned.

SS: Well, of course, I was on the top floor of Cherry Hall, too. And the big fan that I bought to use in our classroom I brought with me. I still use it; it's a good fan. No, that classroom business, and of course, it wasn't very big - oh, I suppose, I really don't know how many it held; I used to have really good-sized classes up there, probably thirty - but we struggled through.

JB: Was your office in that building, too?

SS: Office? We didn't have an office.

JB: Oh, your classroom was your office.

SS: The classroom was it. Now, Dr. Grise's office was at the front end of the building, and, of course, the classroom was in use all the time, somebody or other. So, Dr. Grise let me sit in his office and study or work out what was coming next you see, which wasn't exactly satisfactory, but it was the best we could do. So, when we had offices of our own that really was progress with a big 'P'.

JB: Now, did that not come until they built Cherry Hall?

SS: Not until we had Cherry Hall. Well, now in the interim, when they were building Cherry Hall, we had classrooms down in the Kentucky Building with partitions, not walls. And that wasn't very satisfactory. Fortunately, that didn't last long enough to scar my memory.

JB: Well, now that -The Kentucky Building wasn't completed at that time, was it or not? As I recall, they got so far on the building and then for a period of time they did nothing.

SS: Well, let's see. When was Cherry Hall built?

JB: Well, I believe that it was begun in 1937.

SS: Well, I don't know. I think we were in a basement room. Probably the -

JB: That was finished I'm sure.

SS: That's probably -

JB: And I think the -

SS: upper part, uh-huh.

JB: - some of the interior. They just ran out of funds, I think.

SS: Uh-huh. Fortunately, as I said, it really wasn't too long a period



that we had to teach there, but - well, let's see. But the move - I call that place, that round place down there on the campus -

JB: I was just going to ask you were you still in the department when-

SS: -The Roman Circus.

JB: -they moved down there to the Roman Circus.

SS: That was really the ultimate.

JB: I never understood the reason for that.

SS: I don't either. Now, that's one thing that I remember very distinctly. The rumor got about that some of us were going to have to move down there. Well, of course none of us wanted to go. I mean the department was by departments. And I remember who was head of math, the Math Department, had simply put his foot down and said they were not going, period. Well, Dr. Hatcher was our head, and I don't know whether he just was sweet and kind or what, but at any rate, we got elected. But that constant noise not only was in the building but the trains. And then the problem of getting them out just on the dot so that they could get up to the campus, and then always trailing in late and things like that. And the thing I think that bothered me most was that our office didn't have any windows. I hate places without windows. You just feel stifled.

JB: While they were remodeling Cherry Hall - 'course, we all moved out - and the history department moved to the new fine arts building. And I had an office on the top floor; I guess it was the fourth floor. It was

a huge, oh, it was very large - it was really, I think, built for a laboratory, or something, an art laboratory. It had a sink, and the office was very large, but not a window in it. You closed that door and it could not have been darker. So, I finally took advantage of that, since I had these little cabinets and this sink. I started processing my own film. I thought, "Well, I've got the dark and I've got the water", so I did that. But it's miserable to be in a place without windows.

SS: Oh, I just can't - oh, I can stand it; I did stand it for several years, but I really was glad to leave it. So, I guess I have taken part in all of the moves from 1929 on, from here to there. Except back to the - the new campus is so big; I have never even been in some of the buildings.

JB: The foreign languages now is in the Fine Arts Building, which is the banana shaped building on the old football field. The last time I checked they were.

Do you recall the ceremonies that they had when they dedicated President Cherry's statue? The one in front of Cherry Hall.

SS: I do not, I'm sorry to say. I remember being very proud that we had a Taft statue, but I really don't remember. It's like me to forget important things but remember the unimportant ones. I wonder - almost every day I say, 'Why, on earth did I remember that?' There's just no reason.

JB: Well, all of us see different things and those just stick with us.

SS: That's right. I remember Dr. Cherry's funeral.

JB: Now, where did they have that funeral?

SS: On - well, I say it was his funeral; I guess it was rather a memorial service in the administration building. Now, that I think I recall, was in the administration building. Well, I'm sure it was, 'cause when did he - now, he died in - This doesn't take you any later than '37, I believe.

JB: Well, that was about the date, wasn't it?

SS: I think it was. Must be about on page 205. That's the end of it. President Cherry's last meeting with the Board of Regents occurred on May 17, 1937.

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JB: Now, then. We're on tape number three; I better mark these.

SS: I love this picture of the faculty members back in the beginning. You've seen that.

JB: Yes. That's in Dr. Cornett's book.

SS: I have a hard time recognizing - well, some of them, of course, many of them, I did not know, but some of them I did.

JB: Do you recall the situation immediately after Dr. Cherry's death? Was there much speculation on the part of the faculty as to who would become president?

SS: Well, I really don't know, because I never was able to keep up with what was going on. Some people do. I do recall - and I wasn't with groups of people so much, you see; I always lived alone. Well, that was 1937. Where was I then? I guess I was over - I may have been at Mrs. Leiper's still. She wouldn't have gossiped about it, I'm sure. But, at any rate, I get undercurrents, but nothing really specific. I know some of us had very definite ideas that we didn't think would be wise, but that didn't really make much difference.

JB: I have heard that there was a Mr. Ford -

SS: Oh, yes, Mr. Ford.

JB: - in agriculture, maybe, that many people thought President Cherry was grooming to succeed him, but he was killed in an automobile accident.

SS: He was a very popular person and very well-known throughout the state. And, furthermore, he was a great big man rather - I thought he always seemed a bit dictatorial. 'Course, Dr. Cherry - you know, I had never seen a dictator before, but he was one. There just wasn't any question about it. But as I said, that didn't bother me. But Dr. Ford talked a little bit that way so that you get the feeling - I was very fond of his wife. I still am, and she was as gentle and nice and sweet as could be. And the girls, I really didn't know him well, but I remember now, his name was frequently mentioned. And, then of course, I think several names were brought up and their qualifications assessed. I know I made a very bad mistake in expressing myself to somebody who went and told this person about whom I had expressed what I had thought. That was not wise.

JB: Well, the faculty didn't have much voice in the selection.

SS: No, no, no. I don't think they were consulted at all, as a matter of fact. 'Course there probably was some undercurrent, but not as much as their seems to be frequently nowadays. I don't know about Western, but I mean most places.

JB: Well, on most campuses now the faculty has a pretty strong voice. At least they have an opportunity to present their views. Much stronger than the situation was even when I went to Western. It's changed a great deal.

SS: Well, now they're looking for a new president out at Butler. Dr. Jones was retired unexpectedly this year. I didn't know him, but apparantly he was a very good president. But I haven't heard any great comment one way or the other. A few newspaper articles, but nothing startling. You wouldn't expect anything startling.

JB: What do you recall about President Garrett?

SS: Well, as a person, I liked him, but I really never thought he was qualified. I think he was sincere in what he was trying to do; I think he wanted to do. But I never could really feel that he grasped the ideal or the ideals or something that should make the college what it ought to be.

JB: That wasn't a period of growth, much, was it, during his administration?

SS: No, I don't think. No, it wasn't until after that - of course sometimes I think these periods of growth can be over production of buildings without much of anything else.

JB: Right. And then you have the problem of filling the building which leads to all kinds of things.

SS: Yes. It definitely does.

JB: Well, I had heard - I think what you have said sort of expresses the consensus view that I have heard. I understand that President Garrett, was, however, a great reader.

SS: She was a very intelligent woman, really, and a very fine person. I liked Mrs. Garrett and I liked the boys. I had one of them in class; I've forgotten which one, but they were nice kids.

JB: Now, it was Mrs. Garrett who really did a lot of the landscaping, wasn't it?

SS: Yes. She was good at that, excellent.

JB: And was it Mrs. Elizabeth Wood that also . . .

SS: Oh, yes.

JB: I've heard Dr. Poteet mention her.

SS: She wore half socks, you know, even till her last days. You'd see her - I lived at Mrs. Ashby's. That's where I was for quite a long while. I was at Mrs. Ashby's. Miss Robertson lived there also. That beautiful big house down on State Street with some - what's the number? Was it 1250? No. It was just before the one way - in the block of the one way street.

JB: Yes, I think I know it.

SS: And it's on the left side as you go down, a great big old house pillars, red brick, balcony. And it was - Miss Woods lived just about a half a block - I don't remember directions, but it's that direction from there - and on that street that cuts off the one way traffic. And she'd go up to her sister's - oh, I've forgotten her name - but her sister lived up the street about the second house from the corner just below the campus. And Miss Wood would go trotting up the hill over there in little white socks. She was, oh, she was so sweet a person.

A faculty family whom I always liked very much - I think they had left before you came, too - was the Gundersons.

JB: Yes, he was in the music department.

SS: Music, yes.

JB: I never knew him.

SS: And I still hear from them at Christmas time. He's going to retire this year, so they said.

JB: Where is he now?

SS: Toledo. He went up there from Western.

JB: Did you know Professor Strahm?

SS: Oh, yes! I played in the orchestra!

JB: Oh.

SS: Yes, I had played in the orchestra at I. U., my brother and I both. I played the violin and Brother played cello. And the orchestra at I. U. in those days would not compare with the music at I.U. nowadays which really is marvelous.

JB: They have a fine program.

SS: We go down to the operas at least once every season, usually twice. And it always makes me feel a little bit leery of saying, 'I played in the orchestra when I was at Indiana.' But when I first went to Bowling Green, of course, Mr. Strahm was leading the orchestra, and, oh, I thought he was terrific! He was sort of mean - I mean scary and hard on you - but he was funny. And of course, I think he rather played on that German dialect of his when he didn't really need to. Yes I played in the orchestra. But we had to practice - I've forgotten - at least one afternoon a week and one evening. And my schedule kept getting bigger and bigger and bigger, and I just couldn't practice. I didn't have time. So, I quit. I haven't done any playing since. It was fun; I loved it. I really did. I like an orchestra better than anything else. I have a season



ticket for the Indianapolis Symphony and that is really my chief pleasure, as far as entertainment is concerned. It's really marvelous.

JB: Yes, I've heard that it was.

SS: But as a performer, I am strictly a has-been.

JB: Well, it's so nice that you've tried and have had that experience.

SS: It is, and I appreciate what an orchestra means. And that's why I think it's so unusual how a soloist has - well, of course, nowadays a soloist has the backing of an orchestra and so forth, and he has to be concerned with what they're doing. But he could still stand up and play for himself, whereas they have to be absolutely tuned to each other. That, I think, is most important.

JB: I know Mr. Strahm had quite a reputation. My dad remembers him when he was a student there.

SS: Was he a student there?

JB: Uh-huh. He did part of his work at Bethel College in Russellville and then went to Western. But I've heard him talk about Professor Strahm, and just the way had mentioned the name, you know, you got the idea he was quite a personage.

SS: I think we went to his funeral, Mr. Strahm's funeral. And I've been to lots of Catholic churches traveling, but I have - this priest was apparently out to proselyte. At least that's the way the eulogy sounded to me.

I just couldn't get it through my head; I loved Professor Strahm and I admired him, but I just can't think it was in harmony with the situation. Funny. It had to be funny; it couldn't be anything else.

JB: Something that you might know about and I've been trying to find out - I've not had any luck. But I understand that, I don't know even when it was, but at one time, the theatre down on the square -

SS: The what?

JB: The theatre - the motion picture theatre down on the square had a pipe organ and had short organ performances between the films. Do you recall anything about this?

SS: No. I had heard that, but I have never - I'm sure I never heard one of them.

JB: I'm interested in theatre pipe organs -

SS: Oh, you are.

JB: Uh -huh, and so they told me that the one there on the square -

SS: Well, now is - I've heard about some organ that somebody bought and put in his house, but I don't think - surely that isn't the one.

JB: Well, the story I've heard is that when they decided to take it out of the theatre that they gave it to Western. It was to be put in Van Meter, but it never got put in, and no-

I just couldn't get it through my head; I loved Professor Strahm and I admired him, but I just can't think it was in harmony with the situation. Funny. It had to be funny; it couldn't be anything else.

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SS: Nobody knows what happened to the organ. Well, that's -

JB: I've tried to locate it.

SS: It's a little bit late to start hunting for it.

JB: Yeah. It's gone, but I've always been a little curious about it.

SS: Uh-huh. Yes, I would say so. But I have no memory of that at all. We used - I remember when they used to have good movies; we went to the movies occasionally, and I'd always get provoked because nobody could ever decide whether we'd go upstairs or downstairs, you know. There must have been some difference in price, but certainly not enough to make any real answers to the question.

JB: Something else that I wanted to ask you - I don't know how they did it - but you were there when Mr. Garrett became president, also were there when Kelly Thompson became president. Did they have some kind of innaugural ceremony? I notice so many of the schools nowadays do. Did they install him in some kind of a public ceremony?

SS: As far as I - I don't remember. I seem to be a little bit short on ceremonies. I don't recall anything at all. Let's see, Kelly became president when? Was it -

JB: I should know because I just did some interviews with Georgia Bates and we talked about that. Was it '56? No.

SS: I expect it was somewhere along there.

JB: I'm not at all sure.

SS: How's Kelly's health?

JB: Well, he's had a good deal of problems these past few months, I think. I've not seen him for awhile, but he was in the hospital not too long ago for a while. I suppose he's in Florida now. He spends most of the winter down there.

SS: Well, I - Kelly was always a likeable person, but -

JB: Well, he had not had much academic background -

SS: He didn't have any, period.

JB: - his whole work had been with athletics.

SS: I think that was - it just struck me as very bad public relations to put somebody who was just in the one field which was not academic. And, of course, I like athletics. I'm very fond of watching games if Indiana's playing - and if they're winning. I don't care so much if they're not.

JB: It's hard to watch them lose, isn't it?

SS: And I used to go to the Western games back in the days when we - when I first went to Western, and not very many people did.

JB: Now, that was in what they call the Red Barn.

SS: Yes. . . .

JB: Where was that building?

SS: Well, as I recall, it was right there near where the faculty house was, or maybe a little bit farther up the hill. I can see the building, but I can't see it in relation to anything.

JB: Well, everything has changed since then. It would be hard to locate it. It's surprising how that affects you. I asked someone the other day if they remembered what building used to be on that curve on Normal Drive where that new library tower is. Well, they couldn't for the life of them think what it was. Well, that was a little building that at one time was the music department and the home economics department -

SS: Oh, yes.

JB: - and it sort of almost jutted out into the street. But you forget where these things were when they're gone and something else is there.

SS: It doesn't take much landscaping to change the whole picture.

JB: I know. I've been there long enough now former students come back and I'm taking them around and they're amazed, you know. Well, I've been here 17 years and that's not a short period of time.

SS: Well, they still haven't built anything yet on top of the fort.

JB: Not yet.

SS: I hope they never do. Surely they won't.

JB: President Thompson got terribly interested in that a few years ago, you know. He was going to put up a thirty story building or something right on the summit, right behind the old library, but that didn't come through.

SS: That would almost be desecration.

JB: Yeah. I think very few people were really in favor that. Dr. Stickles was fairly outspoken about the selection of Kelly Thompson, wasn't he?

SS: Dr. Stickles and my father were also very good friends, I. U. friends, and, of course, I think Dr. Stickles also taught in some school down in Indiana, southern Indiana. And my father, of course, was a school man, and daddy always loved conventions. He always went to conventions, and he always came home with a book for us. And my first introduction to mythology was in a book my father brought home, The Gods and Heroes of Ancient Greece or something like that. Very simple. But Dr. Stickles was - he really was an unusual person. Really. He was marvelous and mentally alert up until practically the very last. How's Jim? Is he still off in the somewhere?

JB: Uh, I don't see him as often, but when he sees you - I remember one time I was in the library and he was on the far side of the library and saw me and hollered and started a conversation all the way across the -

SS: Well, one day I was in the drugstore out - well, it's the one - I've forgotten the names of the street; - that shopping center near the Nashville Road.

JB: Yes, the mall.

SS: Uh-huh, the mall. And I was in there and Jim came in at the other door and he saw me and he yelled across and started talking. It's a very embarrassing thing.

JB: It is. And there the library was full of people; I just wanted to -

SS: Even worse in the library, of course.

JB: I just wanted to hide and you just couldn't hide from him. But he's still living there on -

SS: With his cat?

JB: I guess, on Chestnut. I see him out walking and sometimes riding a bicycle. So he's - I don't know how he's managing, but -

SS: I don't either. That's a waste, really, 'cause he was a bright boy.

JB: That's what I've heard, that he was a very, very good student.

SS: A good student and so forth.

JB: Did you have Dero Downing in any of your classes?

SS: No, but I had Harriet.

JB: Oh, did you?



SS: That was when they were courting, and Harriet was in a Latin class. I've forgotten which - let's see, she came from Arkansas, I think, wasn't it?

JB: I'm not sure.

SS: I think. I've met her mother; she used to visit up there. She's a lovely person. But I had Harriet in a class for a year; she was a nice student. She wasn't especially interested in what we were teaching, but she was doing okay.

JB: I didn't know. Now, Dero, of course, I know he played basketball and was involved in athletics, but I just suppose that he majored in math. I don't know whether that's true or not.

SS: I don't know. Is he good in math?

JB: I had the feeling that he taught math in the training school, but I'm not absolutely sure.

SS: I don't really know anything much about him except he was one of the basketball fans - team. Wasn't he on the team?

JB: Yes, I think he was.

SS: Well, let's see. I'm sure I've forgotten somebody who belongs to the ancient days.

JB: I know one thing that I wanted to ask you, and I don't know that we've

covered everything. If you think of anything else, why, I'd be glad for you to tell me. But I did want to find out about your knitting.

SS: About my knitting?

JB: Uh-huh, I understand -

SS: Oh, I'll show you something I found. Just a while ago I was looking for something else; that's the way that I find things, looking for something else. Maybe this was what you - Oh, yes I was . . . Well, do you see when I went to the ball games I took my knitting. I can knit when I walk up the street, and then, of course, I was a nurse's aid - for - and Helen was, too, and I have a picture of both of us standing holding bed pans. But, yes, I have a national honor roll man. I don't know how many bushels of knitted articles I have. In fact, I've knitted so much in those things I really don't care for them.

JB: You can sort of get worn out on that.

SS: Here's something that has nothing to do with Western. We have a Round Robin that started in 1920, classes and friends from 1920 and '21.

JB: My heavens.

SS: And there I am.

JB: I picked you out.

SS: All out of this group except one, this one; all are still - no, my error - this one died last year; she was adopted. But that leaves six out of eight and we're all eighty or over and have had reunions. Not everybody could be there at the time, but here's when we, I've forgotten - if it was 1950.

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SS: I think they gave me the summer free which was something. I stayed there, but I had already decided that I was coming to Indianapolis because my one and only brother lives here, and he has no family. His first wife was a semi-invalid, and so I thought that's where I wanted to be. So, I took my - in August, I guess, I took a trip that lasted four months and didn't get back to Indianapolis until about Christmas time. And, oh, I went everywhere. I even went back to Turkey; it's the first time I had been back to Turkey. Izmir and Ephesus didn't get anything beyond Ephesus.

Oh, there's another thing which makes me think of something that I'm still turning over as a possible travel. Our Indiana Methodists this last year had a special tour to Greece and Turkey following Paul's footsteps, you know. And so, two of my good friends were on that trip and I asked them about crippled old ladies, and they said, 'Well, there's a lot of walking, no question about that. But on the other hand there were three people there who had had ball and socket joint.' And, of course, if you didn't want to walk you didn't have to, because you could sit on the beautiful big bus, and they had thought it was a wonderful trip except that at the time they were supposed to go to Turkey there was a storm. And the sea was so dangerous they couldn't sail or steam or whatever method of transportation was use. So, they didn't get to go to Turkey, but they're planning now to go. But I would enjoy that. I like -

of course, I always fooled myself by saying that my trips were part of my teaching, even Scandinavia, you know. Because all of those, - if you go in some of those museums in Sweden or Norway or Denmark, just full of classical statues you'd think you were in Rome. And it really is amazing the number of things that you can try out.

Well, let's see, I said I went back to Turkey. I flew over, and we had lived in Turkey on a street called the Street of the Roses, French - they used French names for all their streets. But I didn't get out in to the city very much except where the bus went through. But I did walk around our hotel which was on the shore of the bay, and my father's head-quarter's was a great big building on the bay. The Bay of Smyrna is one of the most beautiful in the world, deepest and most, I mean, that way. And then we went down to Ephesus on a motor trip from Smyrna the next day. But all those statues of . . . He was just - see, we were there in 1920 our first round, 1920 from July to the first of January in '21. And it was quite - I think it was more like the Holy Land used to be than any place that you really can compare it to. And, of course, I haven't been to the Holy Land. But Ephesus - the excavations at Ephesus are simply remarkable. They're exciting, and they're still excavating over there. And there are some magnificent things done, of course, just great piles of stone. You don't know what it was or see much use for it. And the thing that tickled me, really amused me, was the way in which the Catholics and the Turkish government have cooperated with the Virgin Mary. You see her home there at Ephesus, you know, where Jesus commended her to John. John lived at Ephesus; so that's where she was. And it's a nice little house. And you have all the paraphernalia, the souvenirs, the type of thing that you would expect. So, really, it's almost funny, except it isn't meant to be.

JB: Sometimes they really - particularly the way they just almost crowd out what you go to see with the souvenir shops. Well, that was quite a tour, and it was a nice way to cap your teaching.

SS: Yes, it was really. Because another thing that was sort of cap to an unfinished plan that my father and I had always agreed on - see, while we were living in Venice, the YMCA was supposed to be especially for the navy of the Adriatic Fleet, the ships of the Adriatic Fleet, which was over there primarily to establish the boundaries of all these little states that were being formed. And we always had a stationed ship or so in the harbor. And of course, at the Y center we had dances and entertainment and a place to eat and things like that, but that just suited me fine. In those days I was younger. We had dances and - well, really a lot of things went on. So, in that period there's one thing - this is historical. Now, it doesn't sound historical, but it's true. The fascists were just coming to power and somebody killed somebody else at the railway station - one faction. One faction was the fascists; the others I don't know. I don't remember who, but at any rate, they were rival factions. Burial in Venice is on a special island, you know. So, the faction that was not the loudest went over to the island ahead of time and hid behind a tombstone, and the other faction that brought the corpse and so forth, came along. And just as the ceremonies were about to start, the first group blared forth with band music and drowned them out. It's just ridiculous, things like that. Well, then there was one night I never will forget. In Venice we had concerts in the square - in St. Mark's square - and you could sit at the tables around and eat or you could - Brother and I went down frequently, 'cause Dad had to stay - well, I say brother went down frequently. It wasn't frequently, because brother wasn't there except just a little bit at the very end. But once when we were going to the concert, some choir,

some great choir was singing - what was it? - it was a Berlioz, there. A beautiful piece of music. And all of a sudden there was a sound like a shot, and just out of nowhere soldiers materialized and cordoned off the center from the rest of the crowd. Brother and I were in the front row and I had a library book I had borrowed and was carrying, and it startled me so I dropped my book. But I got it before we left. But things like that were just everyday occurrences, you know. But that was when they were just coming in; so, I've always been interested in that history, too. I remember Miss Berry told me about a book by somebody named O'Neill. I think I have the book about the -- where's fascism? No, this is somebody else. This is Herbert Matthews. This is Herbert Matthews The First of Fascism. What was the other one about? I guess it must have been about Greece. This also is very interesting. I don't remember when it was published - '43. That would be close enough to the period to be - Do you know that?

JB: No. My field is United States history so I'm not -

SS: Now, this kind of book is a kind of reference book that you can find things that you don't need to know every day, but sometimes.

JB: Yeah. We have to have those around, for sure.

SS: Now, I can't remember . . . Mostly classical things and all these beautiful pictures of Athens and Corinth and Rhodes. I mean those books of pictures.

JB: Mm-hmm. I've seen some of those. They are magnificent.

SS: . . .until I can't handle it any longer.

JB: Well, I believe we've about covered - I can't think of anything else. As you say, later I will, but right now I can't think of anything else that I wanted to bring up. And I've taken up quite a bit of your time: so, -

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