1968

UA37/5/4 E.A. Diddle Interview

Robert Cochran

E. A. Diddle

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Biographical/Historical Note: Edgar Allen Diddle was born near Gradyville in Adair County, Kentucky on March 12, 1895 to John Haskins and Mary Elizabeth (Hughes) Diddle. He attended Centre College in Danville from 1915 to 1917, entered the U.S. Army, then returned to Centre for a time. After coaching briefly at the high school level, Diddle arrived at Western Kentucky in 1922. He was initially athletic director and coach of all sports. As the Hilltoppers' men's basketball coach from 1922 to 1964, he compiled a career record of 759 victories and 302 defeats and took his teams to ten OVC championships, eight National Invitational Tournaments and three National Collegiate Athletic Association tournaments. WKU's Diddle arena was dedicated November 7, 1963 in his honor. E.A. Diddle married his former women's basketball player Margaret Louise Monin in 1923. He died January 2, 1970. He was inducted into Western's newly created Athletic Hall of Fame in 1991, and into the Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 1992. [excerpts from Encyclopedia of Kentucky]

Description: Bob Cochran interview of E.A. Diddle. Digitized as m334.wav, m335.wav and m336.wav

Dates: nd

Allied Materials:
UA1B3/3 University Athletic Committee
UA1C11/16 E.A. Diddle Photo Collection
UA19 Athletics Director’s Records
UA37/21 William Jenkins Personal Papers

Subject Analytics:
Athletics
Athletics (WKU)
Basketball
Centre College (Danville, KY)
Cherry, Henry Hardin, 1864-1937
Diddle, Edgar Allen, 1895-1970
Football
Garrett, Paul Loos, 1894-1955
Interviews
Thompson, E. Kelly, 1909-1993
Western Kentucky University

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| 000-076  | 1-1  |            | Childhood & Family  
Gradyville Flood 1907  
Early education  
Brothers Jim, Charles, Bill, E.A. and George  
Uncle Jimmy Walker  
Uncle Edward Hughes  
Cousin Paul Hughes  
Grandmother Hughes  
Parents John Haskins Diddle & Molly Hughes |
| 077-106  | 1-1  |            | First basketball game at Monticello, ca. 1913  
Transportation  
First car Diddle saw - driven by the Lt. Governor |
| 107-183  | 1-1  |            | Family farm & rural life  
Flour mill  
Mail delivery  
Baseball  
Presbyterian church, monthly circuit rider  
Reaper |
| 185-195  | 1-1  |            | Education  
Lindsey Wilson Training School in Scottsville, KY  
M & F High School (?)  
University |
| 196-204  | 1-1  |            | Living in Adairville, 1914 |
| 205      | 1-1  |            | Vanderbilt University |
| 206-267  | 1-1  |            | Centre College in Darville, KY  
William Ganfield  
Basketball player  
Football player  
Alvin Nugent "Bo" McMillin  
Thad McDonald  
Bob Mathias  
Charley Moran |
| 268-271  | 1-1  |            | WKU undefeated against UK 1917-1924 |
| 272-303  | 1-1  |            | Centre College football team  
No rules  
Enlisted in Army 1917  
Returned to Centre College 1919  
Basketball team  
Alvin Nugent "Bo" McMillin  
William Madison "Matty" Bell  
Allen Davis  
John Cooper |
| 304-316  | 1-1  |            | Coaching basketball at Columbia, KY |
| 317-389  | 1-1  |            | Hired at Greenview High School  
Wilson Smart  
Marguerite Fox  
Bob Myers |
| 390-400  | 1-1  |            | Coaching at Monticello, KY |
| 401-424  | 1-1  |            | History of Kentucky high school basketball tournament  
Centre College hosts in 1916  
University of Kentucky hosts  
Somerset High School wins  
Henderson High School wins  
University of Louisville hosts |
<p>| 425-430  | 1-1  |            | Centre College football team |</p>
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<td>Coach at Monticello, 1920</td>
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<td>First visit to Bowling Green when the Centre College football players worked with a chautauqua company from Colorado, 1920-1923</td>
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| 440-559 | 1-1  |            | Centre College athletics  
Dr. Gromer (?) coach  
"Uncle" Charley Moran  
Alvin Nugent "Bo" McMillin  
William Madison "Matty" Bell  
James "Red" Roberts  
Bill James  
Gus King  
Robert "Chief" Myers  
Centre College vs West Virginia  
Centre College vs Harvard  
Centre College vs Yale  
Centre College vs Princeton  
Howard Reynolds  
Ralph Horween of Harvard  
C6H0  
James "Red" Weaver |
| 560-624 | 1-1  |            | Growing up  
Farming  
Logging  
Cumberland County, KY |
| 625-692 | 1-1  |            | Centre College  
Expenses  
John Y. Brown  
William Madison "Matty" Bell  
Jimmy Coleman  
Athletics  
Kentucky College for Women merged with Centre College |
| 693-744 | 1-1  |            | Military service during World War I, 1917-1919 |
| 745-750 | 1-1  |            | Return to Centre College |
| 000-039 | 1-2  |            | Coach at Greenview  
High School tournament in Bowling Green, 1922 |
| 040-105 | 1-2  |            | Henry Hardin Cherry  
Diddle comes to WKU  
Campus attitude towards athletics  
Construction of old football stadium  
Construction of gymnasium  
Big Barn aka Red Barn |
| 106-135 | 1-2  |            | E.A. Diddle bringing Kelly Thompson to campus |
| 136-161 | 1-2  |            | First football game in stadium  
Soup Oliver |
| 162-182 | 1-2  |            | Rivalry with Ogden College |
| 185-202 | 1-2  |            | Fred Reardon  
W.R. McCormack |
| 203-245 | 1-2  |            | Kelly Thompson  
Broadcasting games  
Thompson moves to Indianapolis  
Paul Garrett  
M.C. Ford  
Kelly Thompson's return as director of public relations |
| 246-253 | 1-2  |            | 3 most important supporters of WKU basketball  
Fred Reardon  
W.R. McCormack  
Kelly Thompson |
<p>| 254-263 | 1-2  |            | E.A. Diddle coaching all sports |</p>
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| 264-271  | 1-2  | 264-271    | Athletic buildings  
Football stadium  
Training School gym  
Physical Education Building aka Helm Library |
| 272-292  | 1-2  | 272-292    | First basketball game against Georgetown  
First football team, 1922  
W.D. Croft  
Bob Price  
Maynard Botto  
Big Babe Hart  
Tony Horn  
Carmen Cartwright  
Eddie Ward  
Eligah Frazier  
Leonard Pitchford |
| 293-341  | 1-2  | 293-341    | WKU in 1922  
600 students  
Faculty members  
Dean A.J. Kinnaman  
Macon Leiper  
George Page  
Ela Jeffries  
Miss Wood  
Fred Mutchler  
Marion Ford  
L.T. Smith  
E.A. Diddle's history of WKU  
Henry Hardin Cherry  
Paul Garrett  
Kelly Thompson |
| 342-325  | 1-2  | 342-325    | Growth of WKU athletics  
W.B. Owen  
Willie White  
Eddie Ward  
Maynard Botto  
George Smith  
Leonard Pitchford  
WKU firsts  
WKU vs University of Mississippi  
Hugh Poland |
| 386-414  | 1-2  | 386-414    | Kelly Thompson arranging conference games  
Buffalo  
Oklahoma City  
Wichita  
Washington  
Ithaca  
Philadelphia  
Radio broadcasts of games |
| 415-454  | 1-2  | 415-454    | WKU Athletic Department history  
E.A. Diddle gives up coaching football and baseball  
Ted Hornback head of Physical Education |
| 455-500  | 1-2  | 455-500    | Stories about Seebree, KY  
Jimmy Smith  
Kelly Thompson  
Harry Potter |
| 501-547  | 1-2  | 501-547    | Basketball teams and players 1930's  
Bernard Hickman  
Harry Hardin  
Jack Farmer  
Tom Hobbs  
Paul Walker  
Brad Mutchler  
William McCrocklin  
Max Reed  
SIAA Championship  
WKU vs University of Louisville |
| 548-562  | 1-2  | 548-562    | WKU vs University of Dayton, 1950's  
Tom Marshall  
Dan King |
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<td>WKU basketball 1940's&lt;br&gt;Charlie Labhart&lt;br&gt;John Oldham&lt;br&gt;Chalmers Embry&lt;br&gt;Oran McKinney&lt;br&gt;NIT in New York&lt;br&gt;Dero Downing&lt;br&gt;Wallace &quot;Buck&quot; Sydnor&lt;br&gt;Howard &quot;Tip&quot; Downing&lt;br&gt;Billy Day&lt;br&gt;Jim Callis&lt;br&gt;Ray Blevins&lt;br&gt;Carlisle Towery&lt;br&gt;NCAA playoff against Duquesne University&lt;br&gt;Ollie Olofson</td>
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<td>E.A. Diddle on changes in the game of basketball</td>
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<td>657-761</td>
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<td>657-761</td>
<td>Basketball players and styles&lt;br&gt;Ted Hornback&lt;br&gt;Otis Denning&lt;br&gt;4 on 5 offense in 1920s&lt;br&gt;Fast break plays&lt;br&gt;Bernard Hickman&lt;br&gt;Harry Hardin</td>
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<td>Paul Garrett becomes WKU president&lt;br&gt;Marion Ford candidate&lt;br&gt;Governor Happy Chandler&lt;br&gt;Paul Garrett candidate&lt;br&gt;Tom Rhea political faction&lt;br&gt;Ballot stuffing&lt;br&gt;University status issue</td>
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<td>Paul Garrett's presidency&lt;br&gt;Kelly Thompson comes to WKU&lt;br&gt;Garrett's illness and death of son&lt;br&gt;Florence Schneider and embezzlement</td>
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<td>Henry Hardin Cherry&lt;br&gt;Arrest in Louisville</td>
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<td>Arndt Stickles&lt;br&gt;Kelly Thompson</td>
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<td>E.A. Diddle's health&lt;br&gt;Harlan Hodges, Murray State University basketball coach</td>
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<td>138-157</td>
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<td>Wife Margaret Monin&lt;br&gt;Phi Kappa Tau dance&lt;br&gt;Ward-Belmont College&lt;br&gt;Basketball player for E.A. Diddle&lt;br&gt;Married Dec. 27, 1923</td>
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<td>Diddle's family:&lt;br&gt;Ed Diddle Jr.&lt;br&gt;Mary Jo married Jim Philips&lt;br&gt;Granddaughters Margaret and Maisie Lynn</td>
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<td>Changes on campus&lt;br&gt;Administration Building&lt;br&gt;Potter College&lt;br&gt;Cabell Hall&lt;br&gt;Cedar House&lt;br&gt;Heating Plant</td>
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<td>Army barracks used as athletic locker room&lt;br&gt;Rex, Irish setter, mascot&lt;br&gt;Practicing in quarry&lt;br&gt;Old football stadium&lt;br&gt;Early baseball diamonds&lt;br&gt;Old fairgrounds</td>
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<td>Faculty and staff&lt;br&gt;Ted Hornback</td>
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| 268-289 | 2:1        | Moved into house in October 1944  
          |            | Used to house basketball players - Diddle Dorm  
          |            | Transportation to games  
          |            | Trains  
          |            | Leaking Lena bus  
          |            | Interview ended abruptly by telephone call |
|         |            | L.T. Smith  
          |            | Walter Nalbach  
          |            | Dr. ? Stevens  
          |            | Carl McNally  
          |            | Lois Dickey  
          |            | Roberta Moody  
          |            | Hubert Hardaway |