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COBB COUNTY ORAL HISTORY SERIES

NO. 5

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT T. GARRISON

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Interviewee: Robert T. Garrison

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Interview conducted by Thomas Allan Scott

Interviewee: Robert T. Garrison

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Well, I will tell you a little bit about your background. I will write before you leave who your mother and father were, and when you were born.

Well, I was born on December 26, 1888, in Alpharetta, which at that time was the town of Newnan, Georgia, and is still there now. My father was born and died at Sandy Plains, between Sandy Plains and Newnan Chapel. At that time that was the only town there.

Well, let me tell you what I can give you. This is all I have, however it's worth, for your meeting. You hardly probably have the most complete record of a family history anybody in Cobb County. We have been trying to get a bound book, I

but could not be successful.

Well, this gives a history of what we call the Garrison families which are the descendants of Thomas Garrison, Sr. They are all printed here with a few notes. Then, after the war, one of Daddy's sisters, George's sister, Fannie Hagedorn Garrison, got real interested in it. She did a lot of research and went into North Carolina and wrote me for me Newnan, Georgia. We brought it up to date and corrected it in September of '82, so its pretty well up to date. At any rate, how the Garrison got their name I can start that first.

Well, I will start.

It will give you the story in the book, but in 1861, the same year the war started, my great grandfather Thomas Wesley Garrison, Sr., his four children and his wife Belinda Forsyth who was from around Alpharetta, moved down here from Roswell,

Robert Thomas Garrison, a Cobb County native, was born on Sessions Street in Marietta in 1911. He is the son of Margaret Giles and Eli Wesley Garrison. Mr. Garrison was one of the members of Marietta High School's 1928 graduating class, the first group of graduates to attend for four full years the newly built school on Polk Street. Shortly after graduating, he joined Cluett Peabody at their Arrow Shirt plant in Atlanta. By 1949, he had become president of the Arrow division.

Garrison, Dr. [unclear] the one that moved down

[unclear] and bought a large parcel of land and set up

[unclear] there right at Wesley Chapel, or below Wesley

G = Robert T. Garrison presently the Garrison Mill School

C = Mary B. Cawley school, Garrison Hill, is right at the

S = Thomas A. Scott of the Willow Creek. That is where my

other built his house and set up a mill

[unclear] he built a dam and a mill run and his wife

C Just tell us a little bit about your background in Marietta before you left--who your mother and father were, [and] when you were born. There was a

G All right. Well, I was born on Sessions Street in Marietta, which is--at that time was--the heart of Marietta, and in 1911. My father was born and raised at Sandy Plains, between Sandy Plains and Wesley Chapel. At that time that was the main road.

G [unclear] That was an average distance from Sandy Plains to my father's family, so

First, let me tell you what I can give you, for whatever it's worth, for your keeping. Our family probably has the most complete record of a family

of anybody in Cobb County. [Mr. Garrison indicates a bound book.]

S That would be fantastic. [unclear] all of them in this

G [unclear] even goes way back further than that--

S So, this gives a history of what we call the families which are the descendants of Thomas Wesley Garrison, Sr. They are all printed here with a tree. Then, after the war, one of Daddy's and Dr.

G George's nieces, Mabel Hagood Crankshaw, got real interested in it. She did a lot of research and went into North Carolina and even as far as New York. We brought it up to date and corrected it in September of '82, so its pretty well up-to-date. At any rate, how the Garrisons got here. Maybe I can start that first.

G [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

S All right. [unclear] dedication of the schools

G It will give you the story in the book, but in 1860, the same year the war started, my great-grandfather Thomas Wesley Garrison, Sr., his four children and his wife Melinda Forsyth who was from around Alpharetta, moved down here from Homer,

Georgia, which now is Banks County. It was formerly Franklin County.

They moved here with their four children. The three oldest were girls and the youngest, my grandfather, was a boy. His name was Thomas Wesley Garrison, Sr. My grandfather was Thomas Wesley Garrison, Jr. My great-grandfather was Thomas Wesley Garrison, Sr. He's the one that moved down here and bought a large parcel of land and set up shop there right at Wesley Chapel, or below Wesley Chapel, where presently the Garrison Mill School is. The school, Garrison Mill, is right at the headwaters of the Willeo Creek. That is where my grandfather built his house and set up a mill. First he built a dam and a mill run and his water wheel, and he set up a two-way mill. He could only run one mill at a time and pull the belt from one to the other. One was a gin and the other was a grist mill--a flour or meal mill--and the third was a saw mill.

The reason this book is so big and we have so many relatives is that, while they only had four children, those four children gave him 40 grandchildren. That's an average of ten each. There were 17 in my father's family. Of course, there were two wives involved in that particular family. At the time they moved down here, my grandfather was six years old. He was the youngest of the four children, the other three being girls. The eldest married a Burtz. The next two married brothers, the Hagoods. That's how the Hagoods got into the act. And as I say, all of this is in this book. It even goes way back further than that--where they went back and found some records at Garrison, New York on the Hudson River and all that kind of stuff.

- S Could we borrow the book?
- G I'll give you the book. I've got an extra copy.
- C That would be wonderful.
- G One of these books is in the Garrison Mill School library. I gave one to them when I went up to speak at the dedication of the school.

C This is the kind of thing that we should really put with the interview. Then--the only answer was to call him "Grandpa" or "Go Grandpa" by that time.

S Yes, we'll make an appendix.

G My father, out of 17 children, was the only one that graduated from high school. He and a fellow who later became the treasurer of Cobb County, Horace Groover, graduated from Marietta High School in 1903. That's a genuine sheepskin diploma. [Mr. Garrison shows a diploma and a picture]

G That was my father, Eli Wesley Garrison, and [unclear] Horace Groover. There the graduation class of 1903.

S And that's the old Waterman Street School.

G You may have that picture. I have another one. It's from the Cobb County Times, a reprint. Let me point them out to you.

S All right.

G [That is] John Tucker, that's "Bose" Groover, [and] that's Allgood. So they came by horse and buggy every morning. They left their horse over there across the street on Waterman in a barn. They came home that night. At that time, that was the only high school in the county.

And that's the write up on Thomas Wesley. Just a little write up on him they wrote. Anyway, my father was the eldest son of those 17 children. He did have some older sisters.

Around 1905, Grandpa sold his farm. He'd already [taken] part of Great-Grandpa's farm, or bought it or whatever he did, and started raising him a family. He moved to Marietta and opened a business called Garrison and Dobbs, and rented a building across the street from where DuPre's is now.

S Where Fletchers is now?

G The name is Fletchers now. They had a general store and sold farm equipment, shoes, farm clothes and mostly work clothes. Later, he bought out Mr. Dick Dobbs and called it "Garrison and Son." My father came with him and was a partner in the business. He also had younger sons who worked.

At that time, they lived somewhere else in Marietta and just where, I do not know because I was not

born then. In 1914, my father developed tuberculosis. The cure then--the only cure--was to get out in the fresh air. So Grandpa by that time had bought 240 acres of the old original Glover farm--the Glover plantation.

C I'm going to ask if you did if operate off South Cobb?

G Off South Cobb, off what's now South Cobb?

Off Atlanta Road. That's Atlanta Road, really. It runs into South Cobb right there at the railroad.

He already had bought that because he had a big family and they needed a lot of room. They tended it and had a large farm. My father bought 40 acres over on the Powder Springs Street side and we started farming. That was about 40 yards out of the city limits of Marietta. The city limits of Marietta at that time were exactly one mile from the center of the square, the center of the park. One mile around.

S I wouldn't have even guessed it was a mile.

G Well, that's what it was. It was a mile, so that put me and my family in the Fair Oaks district of school. I have two sisters and one brother. There was four in our family.

C Your father married in what year?

G He married in 1907.

C [He] married a Marietta girl?

G No, he married Margaret Giles from right where the school is now, almost on Mars Hill. The scholarship that my sister and I gave to the college, the name of it is the Margaret Giles Garrison scholarship fund. That was in honor of my mother who lived [near Mars Hill] and couldn't go any further than the eighth grade. That's as far as they went back then.

C She went where, in Acworth?

G In Mars Hill. I've been down there recently, but I don't know where it is.

S Is that that school out on Mars Hill Church Road?

G It's close--somewhere close--to where North Cobb [High School] is. I don't know where North Cobb is, but it's up in that direction. One of the conditions of the scholarship in honor of her [was

for] them to give preference to North Cobb graduates for need.

- S Let me ask you a question about the Garrison and Dobbs store. Did it front onto the square like Fletchers does now, or did it operate off of a door on Whitlock Avenue? [They] cut right down and all of a sudden it died.
- G No, it fronted on Whitlock Avenue. [They] also sold coal besides farming tools, equipment, feed and grains and all that kind of thing. They also got in carloads of coal. [It] came in on the side track, just like DuPre's now. So you had a back platform where the freight trains would ride up.
- C Would it be behind where Fletchers is now--where that Seafood restaurant is now?
- G It would be like building a big platform on the back of Fletchers. In fact, DuPre's, I think, has one now or did have one.
- S Yes. [It] was where the old Post Office and library was.
- G Oh, they got a road going through there now. But used to, right up to the railroad, they had these side tracks where they empty the cars.
- S But I'm a little confused. Is it on the same side of the tracks that Fletchers is, or is it on the other side that would be over more toward the Methodist Church?
- G No, same side of the tracks as where Fletchers is. In fact later that building became, after Grandpa and Daddy dissolved their business, the Brumby Press. Otis Brumby, Sr. set up a press there where he did regular press and started the second paper in Cobb County.
- S This was the Cobb County Times?
- G He called it the Cobb County Times, which was a weekly paper.
- S You may not have been down there, or were there You may not have been down there recently, but I think there's a Captain Billy's...
walking about a mile and a half to Fair Oaks school that didn't go beyond the eighth grade.
So, if you wanted to finish, you had to go to Marietta!

C Seafood Restaurant. It's behind Fletchers. The
G place we have so many people up and down
C It's where the young kids had the place. Denny
G was the head of the Rockefeller Foundation.
C That's right. who's a dentist--is all these boys
G I thought it was working out real good from all I
could hear. All of a sudden it died.
C What a what you did?
C I know.
G So that's where the building was. After that, Otis
Brumby was in partnership with his brothers in the
chair business, and then he pulled out of that. He
didn't pull out, but he pulled out of the working
part of it. I guess he kept his stock. But he
opened up a printing press, a job press they called
it, where they had stationery and all kind of
things. Then he also put out a weekly paper. Then
it got to be a daily paper too, to compete with
Harris who was printing the Marietta Daily Journal.
[The Marietta Daily Journal was] over on the other
side of where the old Post Office and Library is
now.
We moved out on the farm, as I said, in 1914. Then
I got ready to go to school. I was the youngest
son. My brother was four years older than I am.
We all went to Marietta High School. All four of
us graduated from Marietta High School, and we paid
tuition from the first grade in grammar school
through high school.
Paid tuition?
G Had to if you lived outside the city.
S How much did you have to pay?
G Well, it was about two dollars a month in grammar
school. In high school, freshman and sophomore
were about four dollars a month, and juniors and
seniors were five dollars a month, I believe.
C What would have been your option, or were there
any options.
G Walking about a mile and a half to Fair Oaks
[School] that didn't go beyond the eighth grade.
C So, if you wanted to finish, you had to go to
Marietta?

G Oh yeah, if you wanted to go to high school. The reason we have so many famous people up and down the car line--like Jimmy Carmichael, and Danny Creel who's the head of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Louis Ray who's a dentist--is all these boys could ride the street car and go to Marietta High School. ~~fastest~~ because he could run down the street.

C And that's what you did?

G No, I walked. He worked for Tom Sanders, who was a police officer. That was Tom's daddy. I don't know if he was a constable or a deputy. He (Tom Sanders) Yes.

C But it saved you a half mile walk. But Tom was a constable and Cecil was a deputy. I believe he's the only reason he hired Cecil was because he was a fast runner. I believe he's the fastest runner. I believe he's the

C And allowed you to finish high school.

S And you went to better schools.

G Oh, much better, much better. Now, Smyrna at the time I went to high school, had a high school--but it wasn't accredited. ~~on a long way out of town~~ ~~you were living~~

G By that time, they started having a few high schools pop up. Now, seventh district had a school which is now McEachern. They called that the Seventh District A&M.

C It was an agricultural school. Who was it that went to A&M?

G My wife went there. Before the high school was built there was a school house there first.

C It was a boarding school, I understand.

G Well, they had both. They had day students and boarding school. You could work your way through, or you could pay your way through.

S Maybe it was Cecil Bullard? Marietta High School

C It was Cecil Bullard. He was a boarder.

G I saw Cecil the other day.

C Did you? It was on the corner of Weddin and Main and it was called the Hayes Street School.

G Yeah (Laughter). Cecil was known as the fastest deputy sheriff in Cobb County. (Laughter) How do you know Cecil Bullard?

S Mary interviewed him the other day.

C Yes, I would like to go back and talk to him again and get some more specific information about the sheriff's office and what it was like.

S He was the fastest because he could run down the moonshiners?

G He could outrun anyone who broke the law and they were after him. He worked for Tom Sanders, who was the Sheriff. That was Kermit's daddy. I don't know whether you know Kermit or not. But Tom was Sheriff and Cecil was a deputy. He [Tom Sanders] said, the only reason he hired Cecil was because he could run so fast (laughter). I believe he's the uncle of Bill--or the cousin.

C He's Bill Bullard's uncle.

G Uncle, that's what I thought.

S Did you feel like it was a long way out of town where you were living?

G Oh, I thought that was the furtherest! It's so short now, even though the traffic is bad like it is. I think the biggest change in world to me--and probably to everybody else--is that what we used to think were long distances have now become short distances. See, it wasn't far to walk from home to Waterman Street School. You could go there first through the seventh [grades]. Then, the high school, before they built where they are now, was over on Waddell Street where the city police station is now. That's where the high school was when my brother went to high school. My sister went to high school [there], also. When I went to the new school in 1925--and our class of '28 was the first class that graduated where it is now--1925 was the first year that Marietta High School operated where it is now.

S I know of a Haynes Street School.

G Haynes Street was a two way school. Haynes Street--I said Waddell. It was on the corner of Waddell and Haynes and it was called the Haynes Street School. Later, they called it the Keith School after Professor Keith, who was principal. It took the northside elementary school and high school and it took all the high school for the southside. Waterman took southside elementary. First through seventh is what we called elementary back in those

days... I used to go down to grandfather's house. You know the old song - "over the river and through the woods to grandfather's house." By the way, you didn't notice who signed that diploma? Dr. S.V. Sanford signed it.

S Is that right? I noticed that he was in the picture.

G That's correct, went and a little bit earlier. Yeah, he signed it. Here it is [showing picture].

S Yes, that's it right there, Steadman V. Sanford. Superintendent. At that time, it looks like he's got an AB degree (laughter). But he went on to be President at the University of Georgia and then Chancellor. was the first class at the present

G That's right. We had a very famous educator.

S He must have been quite young at that time, I guess. say through [unclear] correct. At that time, he was Mr. Planter's superintendent of schools.

G Yes, he looked young in this picture. In fact, he was a handsome man.

C What did you do after you graduated?

C You were talking about your farm. Can you sort of fix geographically where the farm was?

G Well, the farm now is an apartment complex. Well, part of it is. Our house was on top of the hill on Garrison Road as you go up the hill towards Grandpa's big house where Planter's is--which I bought in 1955. thing to do.

C When you came back? was helping Daddy on the farm
at that (laughter). After a year or

G I didn't come back till '58, but I bought it in '55. My wife's mother and father--he retired, moved in and house-watched the house--kept the job house until we moved back in '58. We moved back in '58, and my job was in New York. I commuted for nine years weekly from New York to Atlanta until I retired in '67. I had the choice, and the president and board allowed me to do that. I commuted for nine years, and it didn't cost me but a hundred dollars a week for round trip.

C It's hard to realize now that such times existed.

G I think the kind of house I started there in I couldn't afford it now.

S From what you're saying, you were not living in the big house when you were growing up.

G I went by streetcar for about two or three months, but our working hours were awfully long then. It

- G No, no. I used to go down to grandfather's house. You know the old song--"over the river and through the woods to grandfather's house we go. The horse knows the way and carries the sleigh."
- C You were to the west of his house, behind it?
- G That's correct, west and a little bit south. His farm joined Grandpa's farm. Part of the farm was where all those Garrison Apartments are off South Cobb Drive. at least, I think, at least, or maybe
- C And then you graduated from High School in 1928?
- G '28. That was the first class at the present location.
- S That had gone all the way through?
- G All the way through, that's correct. At that time, I believe Mr. Keith was Superintendent of Schools. C. A. Keith. He used to go to Atlanta every so often to Atlanta. They kept the office there.
- C What did you do once you graduated?
- G Well, the year before I finished high school, they put in a commercial department, and I decided that I would go an additional year after I graduated in '28. I went an additional year and took typing, shorthand, business arithmetic, and bookkeeping. [The commercial courses were] to give me a profession, something to do.
- In the meantime, I was helping Daddy on the farm too--but not much (laughter). After a year of that, I had an offer--by my Sunday School teacher at the First Baptist Church--to take a job with Arrow Shirt Company in East Point. So I took a job with Arrow. I used my bookkeeping [but] I didn't use my shorthand [or] my typing.
- I kept the cloth records. You had to be quite flexible back in those days to hold a job down. When the boxcar load of cloth would come in, I unloaded 'em, emptied 'em, put 'em on the tables, got 'em ready to cut into shirts, kept up with the yardage, made weekly reports on how much we used and all that kind of thing. I started there in 1930.
- C Did you, at that point, move away from Marietta?
- G I went by streetcar for about two or three months, but our working hours were awfully long then. It

was from seven to five. That was nine and a half hours a day, 30 minutes for lunch and five hours on Saturday.

C About the time principal wasn't there
And the streetcar started running that early?

G Oh yes, it started earlier than that. former principal
wouldn't let you have go. I was a senior that

C Did it run all night? Arch, who was Professor
Mather at that was our howecon teacher.

G No, the first cars left, I think, at five, or maybe four-thirty. They ran expresses and double-headers--in other words, two cars together kind of like a double header truck you've seen. They would run from around the square, and we had a car barn which was over behind Schillings. Where the lawyers... were in your graduating class, do you

S Smith, Eubanks, and Smith?

G That was the car barn, and they kept the cars that were going to leave here to go to Atlanta early in the morning. In Atlanta, they kept the cars that were going to leave Atlanta and come to Marietta. See, they run both ways.

S Did you have to transfer in Atlanta and then go on to East Point?

G Yes, it stopped at the Georgia Power Company on Walton Street. Then you had to walk three blocks over to Rich's at the corner of Broad and Alabama. They gave you a transfer. You bought a--no you didn't. That was a separate line and you had to buy a book of tickets to Atlanta and then you had to buy a regular ticket. But you could get a transfer and go on several rides. I caught the street car at Rich's and rode right to the plant, which was half-way between West End and East Point.

S I see. By the time you got through at Marietta High, Shuler Antley should have been there about that time. See that was Bob Taylor and Claude

G Shuler was there. Shuler had just come there.

S I understand that there was a little controversy when he first came--that not all the students were happy about him that first year.

G Yeah, there was some kind of little trouble. I don't know what it was, but there was a kind of strike or something. They changed--I don't know

what happened about that. That was my senior year,
I guess.

S Something about the former principal wasn't it,
that they didn't want to see him go.

G Yeah, that was Professor Cone, the former principal
they didn't want to see go. I was a senior that
year and Miss Faith Porch, who was Professor
Keith's sister-in-law, was our homeroom teacher.
She'd been with us all the way through. She was a
Latin teacher. She came out and said, "Everybody
in the senior class that's not in this line in five
minutes will not graduate!" Well, needless to say,
we had a full graduation class (laughter).

C How many were in your graduating class, do you
remember?

G I can count 'em. I could go get my annual. It's
beat up pretty bad, but I think it was 58.

C That's a good-sized class.

G We've had our class reunion every five years since
our twenty-fifth.

S Oh, that's good.

G And I'll just give this for you to keep. That's
the list of the graduates. It will give you the

S Well, that's wonderful.

G You can have that too. Since I was in charge of
affairs, I've got all the records. That lists the
graduates.

S Well, now let's see. Was it Mrs. Northcutt who
this year had her sixtieth?

C Yes. Class of '22. Keep. I guess you--I'm sure
you don't.

G Class of '22, that was Bob Fowler and Maude
Vaughan.

S Maybe it's sixty-fifth. It's trying to fit it in

C I can't remember, maybe it is the sixty-fifth.
It's Mrs. Jolley, principal of the Marietta High
School, for a good number of years.

G Mrs. Jolley, [Mrs.] Lex Jolley?

C And Mrs. Northcutt. And his father was a
G writer. And Wesley Nathan was the husband of Linnie
C That's the class of '22. shop--I'm sure you've
S seen some clothes on the square there. And Dick
G I thought it was '22. honest Colonel of the Army
S Okay, that would be 65 years. Raymond Reed's older
G brother that died recently. H.G. Smith is an older
That's class of '22. They missed their sixtieth.
S Polly Johnson is still living, and in
There's our Miss Faith Porch. She never did
marry.

C She was a pretty girl.

G I still have a photo in the same house on
We always honored her. She always attended every
one of our reunions until she died. She was from
where the military school, independent military
school, down around Barnesville.

S Next door to her was a brother Andy taught
It's not Gordon?

G Gordon. Gordon is now part of the University
System.

S Right, a junior college. Her brother, W.S. "Ricky"
lives on Church Street.

G That's right. That was her home town, that's where
she was from. I believe that will give you the
class.

S Well, you've got quite a distinguished group of
people in that class. Now, which Tom Brumby is
this? I counted Faith porch, too.

G All right. [Pointing out figures in photo] That's
the mayor's son. Tom's still living. Donald Cone,
that was his father that was the superintendent
that they let go. That's the one they had the
strike about. Henry Kemp. I guess you--I'm sure
you know Henry. Maybe you don't.

S I know him. He and I ran down the
I've heard of him. back in those days, a football

C The name is familiar and I'm trying to fix it in
my mind.

G Well, Henry was principal of the Marietta High
School [for] a good number of years.

C Yes, except it wasn't way out that far. It was
back more where the parking lot is now. But we had
a fence around the woods, what we called Brown's.

C Was he from Marietta? ~~and~~ knee pants--knicker
G He was from Marietta [and] his father was a boy
doctor. And Wesley McRae was the husband of Linnie
Lou Landers--McRae Style Shop--I'm sure you've
bought some clothes on the square there. And Dick
Mims is a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the Army
and lives in College Park now. Still does live
there. And B.F. Reed, that's Raymond Reed's older
brother that died recently. H.G. Smith is an older
brother of Don Smith that is a lawyer here in
Marietta. Polly Wellons is still living, and in
the same house she's always lived in.
S Is she still in town here?
G She still lives right there in the same house on
Reynolds and Powder Springs.
S She'd be a good one for us to interview.
G And that's Ricky Anderson--his brother Andy taught
History at Marietta High School and was the
basketball coach.
C W.S. Anderson?
G No, his brother, his younger brother. W.S. "Ricky"
Anderson lives on Church Street.
S This Ruby McDaniel--I know exactly where those
apartments are in Knoxville.
G Yessir, she still comes to our reunions. (Counts
from one to sixty three). I counted 63 counting
the deceased ones. I counted Faith Porch, too.
S That's Jimmy Carmichael. Look at them.
G Jimmy didn't graduate with us, you know. this whole
S That's when he got injured?
G Yes, he was in our class. He and I "ran down the
line" together. Back in those days, a football
[field] didn't have a stadium. We just had a fence
around the football field.
C The same place it is now though, behind the
school?
G Yes, except it wasn't way out that far. It was
back more where the parking lot is now. But we had
a fence around the woods, what we called Brown's

woods. And when you went from knee pants--knicker pants with black stockings--to long pants, why, it was customary for you to "run the line." The boys all took their belts, the boys who was wearing long pants, and lined up along the fence and you had to run down the line. Of course, misery loved company, so Jimmy Carmichael and I decided we were gonna wear long pants tomorrow. Jimmy said, "You gonna wear long pants tomorrow?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Okay, I will too." So we could run down together. (Laughter) If we get enough of 'em, you could bunch up (laughter) and they couldn't hit you, you see. They couldn't hit but the last one. (Laughter) Couldn't get to your behind.

C Was there a traditional age where you went from the short pants into the long pants?

G No, it depended on your size. Some boys was little. Tom Brumby was a little bitty fellow, and I don't where he ever did put on long pants before he went to college. (Laughter) If you were leggy and tall like Buddy Bishop--I'm sure you don't know Buddy Bishop--but, if you were big and tall--of course I was a pretty big boy and I was ready for 'em. Jimmy was medium-sized. He wasn't a large fellow, but that was the year he got run over by a truck. He was running--he was going across to catch a streetcar down near Carmichael stop.

Poor old Annual was just beat up. Long study

S Why, that sure is big. another thing we had in high

G No, it ain't that big. That's all the big it is.

S Shuler Antley once brought me by a whole bunch of those and let me take a look at them.

G Another thing that's amazing to me about this whole thing is how few teachers we had, and how much we learned. At that time, Mr. Ralph Northcutt, and Dr. Perkinson, Mr. Mack Fowler, Mr. Boston, Mr. McNeel, and Mr. Morris were the Board of Education. We had Professor Keith, Superintendent, [and the] Principal was Cone--that was the guy I was talking about. Of course, Cone was principal, but he [also] taught math. He taught plane and solid geometry and trigonometry. He didn't teach algebra.

We had 16, including the principal, and that was the total teaching staff. That included two in the

commercial department. That included Miss Milam ~~and~~
and Miss Smith.

S Why do you think the teaching was so good? It seems as though everybody is of that opinion and certainly there have been a lot of distinguished graduates. Did you have small classes?

G Yes, they were not large--and we went to school longer, I believe, than they do now.

C What was your school year? Can you remember?

G What do you mean, my school year?

C The length of it--it started in September and went...

G Oh. It started in September and went through May.

S Nine months.

C But you didn't have the vacations that the children have today?

G No, we didn't have any Easter vacation at all.

S What time did classes start in the mornings?

G They started at eight, and we had long study halls. I remember--I never carried a book home, rarely. [There was] another thing we had in high school that we don't have any more. If you made three A's in a subject in a quarter--in other words, September, October and November--you were exempt, automatically exempt, from your quarterly exam. So everybody worked pretty hard to keep from taking the exam. Another thing that they emphasized back then that was particular for me--now, this wasn't just in high school, this was also in grammar school--was reading. Of course, I was a reading nut anyhow. I read every Tom Swift book, every Rover Boy book, every Horatio Alger book--and there were a lot of books, if you remember. My parents used to come in a fuss about the light being on at night and running the electricity bill up. (Laughter) I was in bed reading.

S Did they emphasize reading out loud then?

G No, earlier in school, a teacher--I remember in fourth grade or third or something, my teacher read a book once a day to the class. She'd read a

chapter. Like the book Heidi, I don't know if you ever read the book Heidi.

We had an English teacher at Marietta High who was a Shakespeare nut. Well, he was a literary nut, that's what he was. And he gave you a list of approved books you could get at the library--the Clarke Library. We didn't have a school library. We had to get all our books from the Clarke Library. The only thing I know of in the school library was a great big dictionary. I can't remember it having anything but that. He added five points that month to your grade if you'd read [a book] and turn in a report. You had to turn in a report. He had a form you turned it in on--you know, the plot and all the other details. He had it all lined out how you had to make your report. I always got an extra at least five or 10 points on my English on reading. (Laughter) Kids don't read anymore on account of that cotton-picking thing right over there [gestures at TV set]. That's exactly what it is.

- S What time did you get out of school in the afternoon?
- G Three.
- S Eight to three was the day?
- G Eight to three.
- C And [you] took how many courses?
- G I've got my transcript here, too. Bragging to my daughter about me being an A student and come to find out, I was closer to a C. (Laughter) She was a good student. She went her first two years--when we moved back down here--to Westminster. We were afraid the [public] school was going to close. That was when Mr. Sibley was going around interviewing the counties, people and what-not, to see how they felt about integrating and all. We were afraid it was going to close. We got her in Westminster for two years. All of her church friends and all of her social friends was from Marietta, Marietta High. She just begged and begged, and her last two years she went to Marietta High also.
- S This would have been '58 you're talking about--when you came back down here?

G Yes, in '58. She went to Westminster for a couple of years, and she graduated in '65.

C So, the problems with integration that you're talking about were in the early '60's, '62?

G That's right. It was after that decision, you know--after the Warren Decision in the Supreme Court. Linda, one weekend when I came back from New York, had a letter on my table. [It was] a long letter and written just exactly like you would [write] a report, you know.

"Dear Daddy, I am listing below the following reasons why I think I should transfer to Marietta High School." (Laughter) I get emotional about this. The last paragraph said, "It was good enough for your father, it was good enough for you, so it ought to be good enough for me." (Laughter). That was it, that was it.

C That did it, she won. (Laughter)

G I graduated with, not counting my commercials, 19 credits in four years. Let me get out my glasses [to read]. English I, Algebra I, Latin I, General Science, and World History. Got a credit in each, made four C's and one B. (Laughter). Straight A student, you see. All right. In my tenth grade, English II, Algebra II, Latin II, Biology, and Spanish I. So that was five credits. In my junior year I had English III, Geometry, Latin III. For one thing, Daddy made me take three years of Latin because he got a Latin course.

C And it was years, not quarters?

G That's right, a whole year. First two was grammar, the third year was Caesar. The fourth year, if I had gone four years, would have been Cicero. But I didn't take that. At any rate, I didn't need it. I was after a classical course. You had two courses; you graduated with a scientific or a classical [degree]. I leaned towards being a lawyer. Talked about it and talked about it but didn't do anything about it. You had to have a classical course to get into law school. If you wanted to go to Tech or Georgia, you took a scientific course. In my fourth year, I took: English IV and Chemistry, a credit in each of those; American History, a credit in that; a half credit in Advanced Algebra; and a half credit in Trigonometry. So I had 19 total credits in four

years. Now I don't think you have to have but 16.

S Did you ever go on to college?

G No, I did not. When I was going to work at Arrow at night by streetcar, I didn't have enough money to do anything else [but go] to what they called then University of Georgia Evening School--which is now Georgia State [University]. It was down on Luckie Street and it was taught by Tech professors. I took special courses. I took time and motion study. Later, after I became a foreman, a rate setter for the piece workers, I also took public speaking. Just special courses, that was all. I went for two years.

S Were the time and motion studies listed as engineering courses?

G Yes. That's true. That's true.

C Industrial engineering?

G Industrial engineering, that was it. I took that purposely because our plant was small at that time, and we didn't have an industrial engineer. If we needed some new rates to be set by some new models, they had to send one [an industrial engineer] down from New York. That was the closest plant we had. It was Troy, New York and that's up across the Hudson River from Albany, you know.

C Were there others from Marietta who worked at Arrow when you were there?

G Well, my Sunday school teacher was the superintendent down there.

C Yes, and he lived in Marietta?

G Lived in Marietta. Peabody was the parent name

C So he commuted.

G He married Annie Mae Crowder. He married Annie Mae Dunn. His name was Crowder.

S Is that kin to Jack Crowder?

G Jack's cousin, Jack's first cousin. That's where I met Jack. He hired Jack and Jack was truck body driver when I went there. Then Jack later became general manager of the whole southern division. conglomerate. Then these various companies all

[There was] another interesting thing about education. A lot of people said, "You sure did make a good progress." I said, "I'd have been pretty dumb not to have made progress." Here we had a plant, wasn't but three people outside of the superintendent that had a high school education. There wasn't but three of us and Jack was one of them.

S So, having a high school degree at that time was at least equivalent to a college degree today.

G I'm positive it is. It would be impossible to do today.

S It may have been even more like a master's degree.
(laughter)

G Well, that's true, that's true.

Back before I got hired at Cluett, I went down to Chevrolet in Atlanta and lined up three different mornings looking for a job. Never was selected even to step out. The personnel director, walked down the line. If he likes your looks, he says "Step out." If he was hiring 40 that day, he would have 500 there. If he was going to hire 40, he would ask 120 to step out.

C Well, that was during the Depression, too, wasn't it?

G Oh yeah, 120 to step out, and then he interviewed the 120 and hired 40.

S What's the relationship between Cluett and the Arrow Shirt Company? Is that like a parent company or holding company?

G Well, actually, Cluett Peabody was the parent name of the company, and was until last year. It has been sold out, and now is part of West Point Pepperell Manufacturing Company. Arrow Shirt was a product of Cluett Peabody. They had shirts, ties, handkerchiefs, underwear. This is the way the company started. Then we expanded and bought out others--for example, we bought out the J. Shulman Clothing Company which makes Kingsridge suits that are sold by Johnny Walker and Muses here in Atlanta. Bought that out in '55, Cluett Peabody did. Then they bought out some other divisions like Gold Toe Socks, and so the company became a conglomerate. Then these various companies all

became divisions. Arrow Shirt was a division of Cluett Peabody.

I see. I see at flower peddy.

C Was the plant always, as I'm picturing it in my mind, across the railroad tracks from Fort McPherson?

G

Fort McPherson, that's right. It was built in 1929. It wasn't "built" in '29. That plant was built to make rims for automobiles when they made Chandler Automobiles here in Atlanta. They made the Chandler Automobile up there where the old Farmer's Market was, further on up Lee Street. Back then, I guess there must have been 125 or 130 different makes of cars went into the business and gone broke. It wasn't customary for a guy to make a car all the way through until Henry Ford did, and then General Motors did later. They didn't make all the parts. But, Chandler, all it did was have an engine. They farmed everything else out. [The company in] this particular building, where the Arrow Shirt Company started, made rims for the ~~body~~ wheels. The name of it was Oliver Rim Company. After the Oliver Rim Company put up a plant for rims, right up the street Dobbs Tire Company put up a plant for tires. Chandler didn't last but a couple of years. It went out of business and these were vacant buildings. Cluett Peabody came down and rented with option to buy both of these buildings with some land adjoining it. They later dropped the option on the Dobbs Tire building, and picked up the option on the land and building down at Oliver Rim which was close to East Point--and added to it. When I went there, there was about 175 workers. At the peak, the plant had 1,150 employees with over a million square feet of ~~had~~ building. It has now all been torn down and is a Marta Station.

C That shows you how long it's been since I've been to Fort McPherson. (Laughter)

G The Arrow Shirt Company in Atlanta--they do [still] have one in Atlanta--is out on Industrial Boulevard in Hapeville. The company has plants in Bremen, Georgia, and Buchanan, Georgia, and Cedartown, Georgia and Jasper, Alabama and Carbon Hill, Alabama and Albertville, Alabama.

C Are those all Arrow?

G They're nothing but Arrow. That's the Arrow Division of Cluett Peabody.

Then up north they have a sport shirt plant--two sport shirt plants in Pennsylvania. That's about it for Arrow. They [Cluett Peabody] own a company called Alabama Textile Products Corporation, which is a different division. It is no part of Arrow. It manufactures shirts, work shirts, dress shirts, dress pants, work pants, [and] work clothes of all types on a special label for Rich's, Davison, Sears [and] Penney.

C Their own store labels?

G Their own store label.

C When you went with Arrow, you began as what?

G As a boxcar unloader and everything. (Laughter)

S I believe you said that the company Cluett Peabody was formed in 1847 in Troy, New York.

G Yes, in 1847 in Troy, New York by a man named Cluett. He later took in a partner by the name of Peabody who was a super-salesman type fellow and also a fashionable designer-type fellow. They formed the Arrow Shirt Company, which became the biggest--actually it started in the collar business.

C And they [made] those detachable collars?

G [They made] detachable collars, and at one time owned 97% of the world's collar business and had as many as 500 styles of collars.

S How did they get down to the Atlanta area from New York?

G Growing and looking for cheaper labor.

S About how much were you making when you started there?

G Thirty cents an hour.

S Well, that wasn't bad.

G Fifteen fifty a week. Well, let me tell you what. I got a boarding place with a family, a Christian

family, two men in single beds. She took in two boarders.

C Was she in East Point?

G Yes. In fact, I could walk to work. I was right across the street. Anyway, breakfast, dinner, a wrap-up lunch, [cost] seven dollars a week--a dollar a day. So that gave me another seven fifty, eight dollars to buy shoes and clothes. [I had] no car then. Didn't even think about it.

C Did you marry in Atlanta? An Atlanta girl? news

G Married an Atlanta girl who, when she was a younger child, had lived out in Due West here and had gone to Seventh District A&M School.

S What was her name? University material. Among the

G She was a Yancey. Right Field was in there.

S Yancey. Yeah, things were tough, it was really

G Yancey, Lorenne Yancey. I didn't know it. She worked at the Arrow Shirt Plant. I met her there.

S I see. And so she graduated from the A&M school? That was out of the Secret papers.

G Yes.

C And went into Atlanta to work just like you had? he

G Yes, that's right.

C Was she living in Atlanta also, or was she up to commuting?

G Oh, she lived in Atlanta. People flocked into Atlanta. You went where work was then. My brother-in-law, who became Vice-President of General Motors, never did graduate from high school. He lived in Smyrna. His brother had a job in Flint, Michigan working for General Motors, and he lied one year about his age to get the job at Flint. He took an examination and was selected to go to the General Motors Institute and co-op. That meant you had to work so many hours and went to school so many hours. He showed up so well that he was selected--right from General Motors Institute--as assistant personnel director. He later became Vice-President in charge of personnel for General Motors. He is named Earl Bramblett, a boy from Smyrna, Georgia.

C
What was it like to own a bicycle?
It was tough during the Depression years--
especially in a small town like Marietta.

G
It was tough, but we really didn't know it. Honest-to-goodness, I wasn't unhappy about a thing and I was kind of the--I don't know what you call me. I hunted and fished, played ball. I was on the football team. I wore out the bench. I was a "top scrub" as they described me in the paper. I don't know whether you know Dave Field of Field's Furniture Company or not, but anyway, this is our great write up here that we are famous [shows news article]. It says here, "Calhoun came down on Armistice Day to furnish holiday competition to the Marietta Blue Devils. They went back to the mountains with the sad score of a 32-6 loss. The subs for Marietta had their first real opportunity to prove themselves varsity material. Among the most prominent of these were Garrison, Mims, Teem, and Miller." I thought Field was in there. I guess Field was a regular; he wasn't a sub. (Laughter) Yeah, things were tough, it was really tough. To get a job to make a few bucks was tough.

I had a paper route just like most all boys did. You I carried the Atlanta Georgian.

S
I see. That was one of the Hearst papers.

G
That was one of Hearst papers. I had a route and my papers came in on the "little hook" train at the depot at 4:30 in the afternoon. I went right straight from school to the paper route. I had time to run a few errands for Mr. Oscar Sauls and some of the merchants. I had some deliveries to make. I had a bicycle and my route started right there on the corner which is now Chicago Hot Dog. That was Anderson Brothers then. That was my first customer. I started out on Powder Springs Street [and went] right down the line. Branched off into Trammell Street and all these other streets, Reynolds [etc.]. My route ended about at Two Mile Branch, which is about a mile from our house--a mile beyond our house. [It was] out there where Mike Clotfelter lives today.

G
I see.

G
The next time Martha Caroline (and) he married Agnes McCollum from Woodstock. She opened up a ladies store over there by where Coggins Shoe Store is now. Johnny bought out Oscar Sauls. Johnny was very dependable. He's been dead for many, many years. He got a few partners together and got some

S Did you walk it or use a bicycle? Mr. Sauls was
G young. He was about 15 years old at the time and he [Walker] bought
C I used a bike. He had a very successful store. His boy's
C The money you earned, was that your spending money
or did you contribute it to the family?

G No, that was my money. I finally saved up enough
to buy a bike. First, I walked it. Papers were
awfully small back then. They were awful small
(laughter). I had a hundred subscribers, see.
[What] you could clear depended on your collection.
I had two bad black sections. You could always get
new subscribers in the black section, but you
couldn't get paid. But I had two black sections,
so that cut down my average a little bit. I could
clear about \$6.50 a week.

S So you delivered and collected.

G That's right. That was my job. Delivered,
collected, and sold. You had to keep your route
up.

S Uh huh, I did the same thing when I was coming along but they don't have to collect nowadays. You mentioned Oscar Sauls.

G Oscar Sauls' was a men's store that Johnny Walker bought out.

S Oh, I see. Where Johnny Walker's is now?

G Where Johnny Walker's is now.

S Well, how does that relate to the Sauls on the south side of the Square?

G No relation whatsoever. Saul on the other side is Jewish and this Sauls on this side was Christian. I'm positive [he was] Christian. He had a men's store there. His youngest daughter by his second wife married Harold Willingham. Harold's first wife was a Sauls. In fact, it was the only men's store in town. Johnny Walker came here as the manager of McClellan's.

S I see.

G [He was] from North Carolina [and] he married Agnes McCollum from Woodstock. She opened up a ladies store over there by where Coggins Shoe Store is now. Johnny bought out Oscar Sauls. Johnny was very personable. He's been dead for many, many years. He got a few partners together and got some

C money and bought out Mr. Sauls. Mr. Sauls was getting a little age on him and he [Walker] bought him out and had a very successful store. His boy's brought it along and expanded it and done well even though they're closing up Cobb Center, I see. The whole center is dying, I hear.

S They're getting ready to do a facelift on their building on the square, though.

G Oh yeah, that's a good store for them. I've been very close to them because they sell Arrow shirts. Their best store still is Cumberland, and the next best store is Town and Country. They do a good business there. They have the East Marietta business. They get a lot of downtown business from all the professional people--lawyers, court house, doctors, preachers.

S They've been kind of letting their facade go to pot, but they're fixing it up.

G I would hope they would.

This new big building that Goldstein is going to put up--I saw in the paper this morning that he got an okay for it now.

C Did it get okayed?

G Yeah, they okayed it. He agreed to let the first story be brick, which wouldn't be glass and whatever it is they were going to make it out of.

S Granite.

G Granite and glass. The first story is gonna be brick, and then they will move back 25 feet before they go up for the other nine.

C I still have a very difficult time imagining that it won't be overpowering.

S Actually, they're going to go up three more and then they're going to drop back an additional 25 feet and then go the top five.

C So it will be 50 feet back? ~~resident of Arrow~~

S For the top five [floors]. ~~Shirt Company in 1949.~~

G Oh, they're going back twice? ~~way.~~ It didn't take

C Yes.

G Oh, that will help. I thought it would be awful overpowering, but the whole--Johnny Walker's side of the square needs it bad. In fact, all the square needs it. ~~in New York.~~

S There are several stores that could use a little ~~bit.~~ Would you tell us how you moved up so rapidly through Arrow Shirt Company?

G Well, I was gone four years in the Army--almost four years. When I came back of course, there were something like 12 million men in khaki. All 12 million wanted a white shirt quick, and most of them, thank God, wanted Arrows (laughter). The company couldn't expand fast enough, and I'd had a pretty good reputation. By the time I went into the Army I was superintendent of the Plant. We had two superintendents. We had a manager who was a boy named Kennedy whose father was a vice-president in Troy, New York. Jack Crowder was manager of finishing and shipping and I was manager of cutting and stitching. So I was superintendent. They called it superintendent, and he was manager. So, when I came back, they wanted me to go to Minnesota to open up some shirt plants. I did. I went out and opened up three shirt and underwear plants. I was out there for three years. My vice-president in charge of manufacturing had a sudden lung cancer and died, and I was made vice-president of manufacturing. Then the company kept on expanding. We kept building and building and growing and started making promises. The first thing you know, why, they decided they were going to go separate ways and have a president of a division. I was scared as all get-out to even tackle such a job. I had no experience in marketing or advertising. All I knew was how to make shirts. My boss said, "Don't worry about that. You can hire somebody to do that." (Laughter) So, I did and it just worked out good.

I believe J.P. Shaw knows more about the history of the people in Sartell because he was born as a baby out in the country, and moved in here when he was a year old. He lived here all his life. He was in the army, but he never did spend the night

C What year did you become president of Arrow?

G I became president of Arrow Shirt Company in 1949.

C [That was] not long after the war. It didn't take long did it?

G That's right, nine years, '49.

C And [you were] living where at the time?

G [We were] living in Scarsdale, New York.

C But [you were] coming back to Marietta summertimes, vacations or visiting?

G Well, we'd come back to visit the folks. We hadn't bought that house, you see. We didn't buy the house until '55. We lived in Westchester in Scarsdale until '58. In '55, I had already bought this other house and I moved everything down here. I commuted, and it wasn't too much of a chore, particularly after the jets came. You see, when I first started commuting, there were no non-stop flights to New York. The best flight was a one-stop on that airplane that Lockheed made--the one that had the wings that fell off.

S The C-5?

G No, the first prop jet. They called 'em all in and fixed the wings. At any rate, why then, when the non stop jets came--the DC8's and the DC7's, not DC7's but the 707--you made it in an hour and 50 minutes going up, and two hours coming back. I could leave at 4:30 on Sunday afternoon or I could get up at 3:30 and take a flight to Newark and get to work on time. I made it a real habit not being late for work all my life. I just couldn't stand coming in late.

S Well, that's no problem at all commuting when you can make a two hour trip.

G That's right.

S Some people take just about that long to go to Atlanta. (Laughter)

G I think J.F. Shaw knows more about the history of the people in Marietta because he was born as a baby out in the country, and moved in here when he was a year old. He lived here all his life. He was in the Army, but he never did spend the night

in Fort Mac. He had a job down there and they commuted, two or three of them, back and forth everyday. He knows Cobb County up and down.

S I've talked to him a time or two.

G I'm sure you're going to talk to Jimmy T. Anderson.

C Oh yes. We've talked to him several times, but we need to talk to him some more. What made you decide to move back to Marietta? Why did you buy the house initially?

G I bought the house because I wanted to retire early and move back. I had told my president when he wanted me to be president of Arrow, "Why don't you get somebody else, I'm going to retire when I'm 55, which will be in 1967." He said, "That's what you think now. You'll think differently." I said, "You don't know me." In the meantime, I had not bought that house. I'd already had my eye on that house for a long time, and when the Elks Club burned on Atlanta Street, the Elks Club went out there and got an option from Fred Meyers to buy that house. I had Luther Burton, who was a good friend of Daddy's, looking out for a house for me. Luther called me and said the Elk's Club had made them [the Meyers] an offer, but he had understood that there was a petition of neighbors against making a club out of that house and he didn't think it [the sale] was going to go through. I told him I didn't want to buy it until '67 or close around that time. At any rate, why, I bought it with the intention of retiring when I was 55. According to the rules of our company, I could retire at 55 with permission of the board of directors--which I was sure they would give after as much service as I had spent with the company.

C But you bought the house in '55 to keep it from being bought by the Elks Club?

G No. What happened was when I came through here in '55, and Fred [Meyers] was selling off lots. He was going to sell off lots down there in front of the house. There was a big sign there. I just drove up there and told him. I said, "Fred, you selling my property down there." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "You got a sign up down there." He said, "Well, Bob, my children are all grown, married, and we got too much here to fool with. If you want to buy it, you'd better buy it now." I said, "We're going to Florida on vacation. I'll be back here in three or four or five days, something

like that. We're driving." I came back through and made him an offer. He made me a counter-offer and I told him I'd let him know. I called him up and made him a counter-offer and he made me a counter-offer, and I bought it.

(Laughter)

C Now, who is this Fred?

G Fred Meyers. He's the one that bought the house. See, Grandpa sold the house to Croft Reed in 1921. And Croft Reed lost it. Croft Reed was Raymond Reed's uncle. He lost it--foreclosed by a land bank during the Depression. It stayed vacant, and at one time an Indian doctor rented it and sold herbs. People came from all over the country getting medicine. People would tell me, "I've been by here many a time to see the Indian doctor."

(Laughter)

At any rate, why, Fred was going to sell it. So I had to buy it. After, I made a deal with Mr. Yancey, Lorenne's daddy.

C Did he live in Marietta then already?

G No he lived in East Point. He worked at East Point.

C But he didn't mind moving back to Marietta?

G Oh no. He had lived here that time at Due West, like I said. They were tickled to death to move back. They had a lot of friends in Marietta and they were very active in the First Baptist Church right away, and lived here until they died.

C Well now, what caused you to move back in '58? You weren't going to retire until '67.

G Well, my daughter was in the sixth grade. I thought that at the age she'd be if I waited until I was 55, she wouldn't be climatized enough to the South. I ought to get her down here while she was, you know, in the sixth grade.

C Young enough to make friends?

G Yes. As it was, she thought she'd lost the world when she lost her sixth grade friends. That didn't last but one year. I took her back that summer and they had already forgot about her (laughter). She

- C saw right quick that they weren't all that dear to her either. And we were scared of the schools.
- C When you brought her back, did she go to Marietta public schools?
- G She went straight to Westminster. We went down in before they moved. I'm trying to think of the name of that headmaster then. I can't think of it now, but they have lower school, middle school and high school. Their high school, you know, is split. They have girl's high and boy's high. She would have been in middle school, so the headmaster took us over and introduced us to Mrs. Rivers, who was the principal of the middle school. We chatted with her and talked to her about the school, and she gave us an application. No, it wasn't an application, it was a test that Linda had to take at Scarsdale [given] by an accredited teacher and signed by an accredited teacher before they could tell her if she was good enough to get in.
- C And where to place her too.
- G Well, Scarsdale was incensed that one of their students would have to take a test to get in to Westminster.
- (Laughter)
- C Well, did the quality of education in the public schools at that time bother you a little bit?
- G Well, one of the problems with Linda was that she was born during the baby boom. She was born in '47, and everywhere we went to school, you had to add a grade or double up. When she was in they kindergarten she had to double up. They had a morning kindergarten and an afternoon kindergarten. When she was in the first grade, they had to double up. By the time she was in the third, they had built more so they could catch up with it. It was that way all the way through. And Lorenne's family was all living here and all my family was here, except my father was dead by then. Daddy died in '50 and all my family was here except my brother in Michigan. So, it just seemed the thing to do. I wanted to get back. I wanted to establish myself, too, with my friends and not wait until I retired.
- C Yes. Income subsistence wasn't enough to pay what it was costing me in Philadelphia. It's a high priced town. So, I applied to get out on the basis that I wanted troop duty. Sure enough, they gave

- S What did you think of Marietta by that time. It [unclear] must have been changing pretty rapidly. [unclear] July
- G Well, it was, but we was down here often enough to see the change. It's just when you stay away about two years that you're shocked. I think I was shocked after the war. See, I stayed 21 months in the South Pacific before I came home in '46. You know, the war was over in September of '45, but I was held over there because I was supply officer for a prison war camp. We had 84,000 Japanese prisoners, and 3,000 American troops that I was trying to feed and clothe and keep provisions for and whatnot. The Colonel wouldn't let me go until I got rid of some of those Japanese. (Laughter) And so he declared me "essential," which meant he could keep me six months.
- S What was your rank in the military when you got out?
- G Well, it was funny about going into the military. I knew I was going to be drafted. Lorenne and I married in '40, had no children, and then the draft came before the war. Naturally, being married, I was 3A. The minute Pearl Harbor came, why, I changed to 1A. It was just a matter of time. I didn't have enough education to get a commission, so I went over and talked to the man at Fort Mac, the recruiting sergeant, and they had a program called VOCO (Voluntary Officer Candidate). You took Army General Classification Test, and if you made as much as 128--which I believe 150 was perfect--they had to send you to officer's school after six months of basic training. I'm sorry, I made 128. If you made as much as 110 or something, but I made enough to get in, regardless. So, they had to send me to officer's school. I went to Camp Lee Quartermaster, which was natural. I got my commission as Second Lieutenant and they sent me to Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot. They needed Second Lieutenants there like they needed a hole in the head. (Laughter) They had them stumbling over each other. They had nothing to do. The civilians did all the work. At the end of the day, it took an officer's signature and you couldn't veto anything that they passed. This was inspectors inspecting clothes and cloth and all the things you use to fight and wear and everything else. I sat down there and I got tired of that. Besides that, my allowance subsistence wasn't enough to pay what it was costing me in Philadelphia. [It's a] high priced town. So, I applied to get out on the basis that I wanted troop duty. Sure enough, they gave

me troop duty in the South Pacific. (Laughter) So, I came out a Captain. I went in the Army in July of '42, Second Lieutenant July of '43, First Lieutenant July of '44, Captain in July of '45, and out in March '46. But I got paid through May. I had accrued leave.

C [You] came back to Atlanta or to Marietta?

G I came back to Atlanta. Then the company says, "All right now, build a house." I'd saved my money, sold the house. We had bought a house, lived in it one week. We moved in the weekend of Pearl Harbor. I'd sold the house while I was in the Army. [We] built a house in West End, and the company said, "We want you to go to Minnesota." I said, "I don't want to go to Minnesota." (Laughter) And they said, "Yeah, but we want you to go to Minnesota." So, I went.

S Well, when you got back from the war, I guess it had been several years since you had seen Marietta. The Bell plant went in at that time.

G Oh yeah, it was big changes after the war. But, my brother-in-law worked for Bell. He was an accountant. He got in cost accounting over at Bell during the war. He went into business with another fellow, a different business after the war. But, it [Marietta] had changed a lot. It wasn't until shortly after that till they closed the plant.

S Uh huh. By the time you got home it was closing?

G Shortly after I got home. They were in the process of cosmolineing.

C Had the Tumpane Company come in at that point?

G Yes, the Tumpane Company had come, and they were putting the grease and the stuff on the guns, tools and everything else to preserve them.

C The Tumpane Company--where were they from, do you know? Were they an Atlanta Company?

G I don't know where they originated, but they were all over. I don't know what they did here, I really don't--unless it was run some kind of school.

S Well, did it still feel like the same old place in 1946, or was the change so tremendous that you felt like it wasn't your town anymore?

G Well no, it really didn't to me. It hadn't changed that much, really. The big change, I think, has been since the C5A to tell you the truth.

C You mean Lockheed coming in?

G Well, Lockheed came in first to modify the old B-17's, and then they got their contract.

C Prior to war--before you left, the portion of town east of the square out to where U.S. 41 is now, was relatively undeveloped, wasn't it?

G Oh, yes. Franklin Road was the worst. East Marietta had the worst roads. There was nothing paved out that way. We had more developed going south. Of course, they cut South Cobb [Drive] through for Bell so people could get to Bell from Atlanta.

C They cut South Cobb, and did they cut [U.S.] 41 also?

G Well, they widened it.

C So, when you came back, what you saw was more development on the eastern part of Marietta.

G Oh yes. Eastern and southwest. Out South Cobb and out toward Mableton. Mableton and Smyrna.

C And East Cobb was still relatively undeveloped on the other side of 41?

G That's right. You see, East Cobb developed after Smyrna had this great development--and Mableton.

S Well, the people that you knew, were they happy about the changes that were taking place?

G No, but I think for the most part they were very philosophical about it just like I heard Mr. Woodruff say once. We had a VIP party once a year and he was a close friend of my boss. He was kind enough to come although he wasn't a man that just went everywhere. When the school integration came and all these changes came, he made a remark at this party that we've got a different world now. This was when Mr. Sibley was going around to the counties to check on integration so he could make a recommendation to the legislature, which he did. Mr. Woodruff says, "Well, we don't like what we see

C
S
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in a way, but in a way it's got to be done and it's the best for everybody." So, I kind of looked at it that way. Sure, I didn't like it because [before] you could get help easy. You could get live-in help overnight--household help. Now you use mini-maids or whatever. So, all those changes you don't like. On the other hand, you can't stop it--and they shouldn't be [stopped].

S Well, tell me about your house. When you came back, you bought it in '55 and you came back several years later. Was the house run down at the time you got it or had it been well maintained?

G Basically, inside and outside had not been [well maintained]. It needed paint. It needed the [old] paint scraped and burned because the paint had built up. The Meyers had five or six children and they had sent them all to college and they needed the money. [They] wanted to sell it because they had let it grow up to where you were only cutting grass 10 feet from the house all the way around. It was just a jungle beyond that. It took a good many years, really, to get it in what I call A-1 shape--which I had it in when I sold it to Calvin Adams.

C You bought the house and how much land?

G Thirteen and a half acres. That's all that was left when I bought it. Thirteen and a half acres and he's [Calvin Adams] got 13 and a half acres.

C He still has it all?

G Yes sir, he's got all that woods out there. I keep telling Calvin that's prime property out there for commercial development. He said, "I'm going to keep it just like you kept it. Let them pay me for that land and I'll let them do what they want to with it." At any rate, the house basically was very sound because it's one of those houses that took years to build. It's been reported that it took seven years to build. It's made out of heart pine--this we do know. If it ever caught on fire, why it would burn up in 30 minutes. The house has about 4,000 square feet on the first floor and has about 2,500 on the second and about 2,000 on the third floor. Anyway, its got 7,300 square feet in it. I remember the third floor as a little boy when I used to walk around to Grandma's. The third floor was used as a boys' dormitory. See, Daddy has all these younger brothers. I have one uncle that was just one year older than I was.

C Your grandfather was the one that had 17 children.

G That's right.

C So, he filled that house up.

G He didn't have but six girls and 11 boys. The was girls used the second floor. There wasn't but one bedroom and two closets on the first floor and no closets any other place in the room when it was built. The third floor was just one big, open floor. It was a boy's dormitory. [There were a] bunch of beds lined up. It was more fun going down there. Grandma--my second grandmother--had a baby every two years. My first grandmother had six, she had 11. She had a baby every two years. So she had 11 babies in 22 years.

It was a lot of fun going down there. Grandpa would stick his head up from the first floor and say, "All right boys, I'm coming up there with my belt in a minute." (Laughter) We'd have to tone it down. But it was great fun.

C So you had a lot of sentimental attachment to that house.

G Very much, very much. I had a lot of sentimental attachment.

C Had the Meyers made major changes in the house?

G No, the Meyers hired Montgomery Anderson who had graduated from Tech as an architect--Jimmy T.'s younger brother who graduated, by the way, in 1922.

C From Georgia Tech?

G No, from Marietta High School.

C Oh, so he was in Ruth Northcutt's class.

G He was in the same class, Montgomery Anderson. He was the class artist. He was the one that drew the pictures that they always have in the annual. Anyway, this was his first job--to restore this house. The Meyers--she was from Savannah and Fred was from New Jersey--had a good bit of money. He was in the insurance business and moved his business to Marietta. He spent a lot of money restoring it [the house]. He put in heat ducts and

insulated them. He did not put in air-conditioning. He really didn't need it because he had such high ceilings in the first two floors. [The] third floor gets hot as all blue blazes in the summertime. But, you had two windows on either side, and it really ventilated it right good. It was built well, and Meyers really had it restored in '39. I bought it 16 years after it was restored, you see. Since then, I've had to put a new roof on. I painted it every five years while I had it and it was kept in very good shape. The front porch, because of the height of the front, caught too much wind and rain and everything. The front porch was rotting out about every two or three years. So, I had a contracting company come in there and lay down concrete slabs and put a brick floor on the front porch, which solved the problem forever. The house is one of six original untouched. Calvin has touched it. Calvin has added two wings. He had to add those two wings because he couldn't seat people on the second floor and they needed that many people for the restaurant to pay off.

S You started to say it was one of six untouched...

G One of six--before Calvin changed that--houses that was not destroyed during the Civil War in Marietta. There's a lot of them that claim to be but are [only] partly. A lot of them claim to be that are not. The six are: the Howell house; the Wilder house out on Kennesaw Avenue; and the second Glover house, which is on the corner of Wright Street and Whitlock. That's four.

S The Hansell house?

G The Hansell house--is that the one on Atlanta Street?

S Kennesaw Avenue.

G The other is on the corner of Atlanta Street.

S Oh yeah, the Boston, Bostwick. Is that what you're talking about?

G No, the Boston house was not antebellum, but it's next to it. I forgot the name of the people.

S I was thinking there was a Bostwick-Fraser.

G Fraser. The Boston house was not. [It is the] Fraser house.

S The Wilder house is Robert Goodman.

G That's right, correct. I was told that on real good authority. I put that chimney in there myself. [Shows picture of home] I added that to make a garage. I drove through the chimney to get to the garage. You may have that.

S Oh, thank you. So, you're saying that those six houses are not only antebellum but had not been altered significantly up until Calvin Adams added the wings for the Planter's Restaurant.

G That's correct, and he added a kitchen, but you can't see it when you drive up.

S What year was it that you sold the house to the Planter's Restaurant?

G 1980.

S So, you've been living here ever since then?

G Yes. While they were building this, I stayed in an apartment over at Post Ridge.

S So the house just got a little too big?

G [It got] way too big, way too big for just Lorenne and I. Linda got married, lived in East Marietta and had her three boys to take care of. It was too big and too expensive to maintain.

S So you sold the house and 13 and a half acres to the Planter's.

G To the Planter's, to Calvin Adams.

S Yes. I wonder if we could change the subject. I wanted to ask you about Kennesaw College and your relationship with Kennesaw.

G Yes. Well, I'll tell you about my relationship with Kennesaw and how it came about. I had decided when I retired early that I had to have something to keep me halfway active. One of my hobbies was playing tennis, which I played regular before I gained so much weight and lost the use of my knees. So, I decided that, in addition to playing tennis--I couldn't play all the time--that I would give some time, which I had not been able to do during

this nine year period. All I could give was money to the church and whatever. As a result, I did a six-year stint on the board of the Cobb County Hospital. I was on the Metropolitan Red Cross Board of Directors for about six or eight years. I had set aside 10 years for civic duties.

C Immediately after your retirement you mean, from age 55 to 65?

G That's right. As a result, I was asked by Conley Ingram, Steve Tumlin, Conley Ingram, Bill Dunaway, Dr. Glenn Reed, Horace Sturgis and somebody else--I can't think who it is right now. They were at Reed's house and he asked me to come over for a meeting. They wanted to talk about it [the Kennesaw Foundation]. Well, unbeknown to me, they had already gotten together and said, "Garrison's got more time than anybody, so we'll ask him to be chairman." (Laughter) We didn't have a foundation at all and then they laid it out. Conley, being the lawyer, had already drawn up a paper, by-laws of the corporation, etc. and etc. So they asked me if I would be chairman, and I was. The terms at that time was three years. I don't know what they are now. I did two terms. At that time, it was very active because the school was growing like crazy. The Chamber or Commerce got in it. Our part of the legislature, the Cobb County Legislature, got in it and we had to do some real politiking. I don't know whether this ought to go on record or not, but we had to get to some of them Regents in order to get this job done because we had two that we knew that was bad against it.

C What year are you talking about now?

G The year they changed it.

C To a four year school?

G Yes. The year before was when we started laying the groundwork. I had two of the Board of Regents to work on. One in Albany was a good friend of a friend of mine who I bird-hunted with down there. He was on the Board of Regents, C. T. Oxford. He's dead now. The other one I won't mention because he's alive and he had a real political reason to be against it. I was a good friend of his because he's in the same industry that I was in. It carried, by the way. Everybody voted for it except one. That was a lot better than we expected. Harold Willingham is an excellent speaker. Even though he don't speak clear and he has a funny

manner of speaking, he's likable. You either like him or don't like him--he's got a lot of enemies but he's got a lot of friends. I asked Harold if he would help me work on the legislature. Harold and Raymond Reed used to run the county back 25 or 30 years ago--and Jimmy Carmichael. Between them three, they could get anything they wanted done. So, the Chamber got behind it and we had all kinds of meetings and plans and get-togethers and what-not. It came up two or three times and was voted down, but we finally got the thing swung over. The big job, as far as I was concerned, was to get this thing into a four year college because we needed it. Of course, the anti was really--was mostly that they was afraid this would make it more non-black.

For some reason or other, the Board of Regents at that time--some of those old timers--just fought making some of these junior colleges into senior colleges. We asked the Board of Regents for a 30 minute presentation, and Harold Willingham and I put it on. Harold did two-thirds of it. He did the real work because Harold was involved in getting the land. They had to get the land to donate to the state before they would build a college there.

C To originally establish it?

G Yes, before it was a Junior College. Harold was active in procuring and getting the land donated or bought or however they put it together--I don't know how--to get them to come here in the first place. That was the big thing. So, Harold put on a real good speech and we had our legislators like Al Burruss, who also was a good friend of the College's, Kennesaw College. Al had buttoned two or three of these Regents--so had Joe Mack Wilson--to butter them up on going for it.

S Right.

G And a good reason for doing it. In the meantime, we put that thing on [the presentation], and they voted. This friend of mine had always been against it, and I paid a personal call to him. He got up and made a speech. He says, "You know, these people they operate in my part of the country. Garrison has been with the Arrow Shirt Company and has gone from boxcar emptier to president," and he said, "What he tells you is the truth," and this, that and the other. So, it just went over. They voted 19 to one. The only one that voted against

was Etheridge. I believe it was Etheridge. He was a black man and I don't blame him, if that's what he felt about it. But Hill was for it. Hill, I think, has got the best head on him as a whole, of any of the black leaders we have in this part of the country. Jesse Hill.

S So you only lost one vote on it?

G One vote. [There was] a large donation to Southern Tech which I wish could have been Kennesaw College's, but this man was a textile man. Our industry, the apparel manufacturers association, we were instrumental in setting up a chair at Southern Tech on apparel manufacture--not only a chair, but also equipment, money for equipment and a course in apparel manufacturing which I believe isn't but one or two in the United States. There was a man in Atlanta who was originally from Winder, Georgia who owned the work clothes operation--and I can't even think of his name. Another thing, when you get old your memory gets bad. (Laughter) Claire Harris, his name was Claire Harris. Claire Harris had a lot of money and he loved the apparel manufacturing business. Claire called me and said, "Bob, I want you to make a study, just a personal nosy inquiry into the apparel courses going on over at Southern Tech." He says, "You know Hoyt McClure," which I did know, real well. Hoyt started Southern Tech. I knew Hoyt real well because Hoyt had been in the things like I had been into all the time. Something was going on all the time. So, he [Claire Harris] said, "I want to leave a sizable amount of money--not now, but in my will." He says, "I want also...you wouldn't think it of me," because I didn't think it of him but he said, "I want a memorial in my name." I said, "I'm sure, Claire, you could get one for enough money." (Laughter) At that time Southern Tech was under Georgia Tech completely. I went over and laid it on the line with Hoyt and said, "Hoyt, I can't beat around the bush about this thing." I said, "I'm going to keep the name away from you right now, but what do you think about this?" He said, "Bob, if we can get the funding, we can do it." And I said, "Well, I think he's thinking somewhere in terms of a quarter million dollars." To make a long story short, Claire set it up in his will and he just died relatively recently. I don't know exactly how much it was in dollars, but it was sizable. It [Southern Tech] was supposed to have named a dormitory after him, or a library after him or something. Southern Tech has been a great thing for our community.

C I think so, too.

S Were you involved at all in the attempt to get Kennesaw Junior College here in the first place?

G No sir. That work was done prior to 1967. When did it open?

S Well, it opened in Fall of '66 but it was '63 when the Regents approved.

G Well, see, I was still beating the bushes at that time.

S You were too busy doing other things. You became chairman of the Board of the Foundation in about 1969, was it?

G I believe it was about '69. I'm sure you can find that out.

S So, you were kind of at the end of your second term at the time that you were going to the Board of Regents and trying to get the four year status.

G That's correct, that's correct. Of course, we had Steve Tumlin backing us all the way. We had guys like Campbell Dasher. Like any group, you've got some of them that don't do nothing and some that will work hard. And so, what you have to do is get enough workers to get something done.

S When you went to visit your friends who were on the Regents and tried to persuade them that Kennesaw should become four years, what kind of arguments did you use to convince them?

G The growth of the county was the biggest, number one [argument]. The growth of the population of the county, the location, and the fact that we had an opportunity to draw from Cherokee and some of those mountain counties up there that just didn't....Here we were going to have I-75 highway going right through to Dalton. Of course, Dalton had a junior college. They still just have a junior college.

S That's right.

G That was the main thing, the growth and the fact that today's cost of living and tuition and life style are such that people can go to college. They

couldn't go if there wasn't a college available for them to commute to.

S When you started the Foundation back in the late '60s, what were your goals?

G Oh gosh, I'm ashamed to tell you. (Laughter) The first drive we had was real well-planned out. Of course, things changed so much because here we had the Trust Company of Georgia which later bought out the Security National Bank, and C&S down in Atlanta had bought out C&S in Marietta. They owned 5% of it. We targeted our money out of what you call your major givers, major contributors, medium contributors, minor contributors. So, that first year our goal was \$35,000. It was a strain, but I think we got close to about \$25,000. Sidney Clotfelter was probably our best money raiser at one point in time. I got some big money. I got Mills Lane, who was president of C&S, a good friend of mine. Everywhere I went I said, "Now, I don't want to come down here every year. I want you to give me a pledge, and I want it every year. (Laughter) "I don't want to waste your time and I don't want to waste mine." So Mills gave me a thousand. Trust Company gave me a thousand. See, I got two thousand right there. Then, of course, the minute the Trust Company bought out Security, we lost that. We had to get money out of Security. Well, thank God we had Campbell [Dasher] to handle that one. Now y'all got Jim, the president of the bank. He's on the Foundation and been there for a good number of years. He's president of the bank, of Trust Company of Cobb County.

Every year we kept raising it [the fundraising goal], and every year we were more and more successful. As we got more members of the Trustees, why, it gave us a broader group from which to go out and work and get money. I think this last drive that you all had was just absolutely fantastic.

S Yes. They're having some really successful ones in the last few years.

G Oh, real good ones. They came to us first because this county has never been a good county--even Red Cross or Community Fund. I've been on both of those during that ten year period. We had to get the money up for a new Red Cross building. We [the Red Cross] was in that old building that was about to fall down out there close to the Roswell Street Baptist Church. We had to have a building. The

only way we could get a building was to go out and scratch and get the money up from Cobb County. We had to work with the doctors and get something close enough to where the doctors would work with us on it and everything. But Cobb County has always been a very hard county to get generous donations from. It's not really a rich county, I don't think. There's not many Bob Woodruffs or George Woodruff or Dick Rich, or that sort of person.

S I see. So, it's more middle class.

C There are some wealthy people, but it's a moderate wealth compared to some of the wealth in Atlanta.

G That's right. Of course, all colleges are scratching. There's not a one of them--I got one from the University. I manage to hang on to that hundred year club.

S Were you interested primarily in raising the money for scholarships, or did you have some other goals in mind?

G Well, primarily for whatever the college needed. What I was concerned [about was] that we ought to have more people like me and Bill Dunaway and these people who have given scholarships in memory of [someone]. I understand Fred Bentley is promoting that now. He's working on that. I believe he and Neil Barfield are promoting more and more individual scholarships. You know, give ten or fifteen thousand dollars for scholarships to honor your mother or your father or whatnot. Mainly, number one, I think it's very helpful to have some money to help master's [degreed teachers] get their Ph.D--at least some of the basic things, some of the things they need. You know, they don't get the great big salaries.

C You're talking about when the professors go back to school for their Ph.D.?

G Well, help with some of their expenses. You can't pay them all. And I'm like Jasper Dorsey--I don't think Foundation money ought to be used to enhance salaries. But I think it ought to be used to help people be better teachers.

C It enhances the school?

G It helps to enhance the college and, I think, to promote the school. I don't know that the school

S needs promoting. Maybe there's a way we can get more blacks. I'd like to see more black students get better educations myself. That's the only way they're going to make good citizens.

C Well, maybe this public transportation will open that up a little bit.

G Well, I voted for it. One of my friends yesterday said, "I ain't going to vote for it." I said, "Well look, it will help a lot of people. It will help a lot of people get to work at these fast food places that's crying for workers." There is not a grocery store in Marietta that doesn't have a sign on the front door. How they going to get there, a two

dollar and a half taxi from here to Marietta?

C To earn three dollars and a half.

(Laughter)

S So, your philosophy really was that the Foundation would raise the money but would defer to the college on what to spend it on.

G Exactly, defer to the president and his or her board.

S So Dr. Sturgis used to come in and say, "We need money for this or that..."

G That's correct. We never once, I don't think, refused or changed anything. As far as I know, we never did do anything except what Dr. Sturgis wanted done. Somebody might have suggested something, maybe do a little extra when the Board of Regents had their meeting here, or something like that.

S I received part of that money when I was working on my Ph.D.

G Well, if it was nothing but typing up your thesis well it was worth something, I guess.

S It helped a great deal.

G Georgia, I believe, uses some of that money to add to the salaries.

S Do they really? People in the academic

G I understand they did. Whether they're doing that now I don't know.

S At Kennesaw, I think a few administrators got a salary supplement for a while from the Foundation.

G They did. One of the things that we discussed at one time, and we did use it for, was moving expenses. We helped with moving expenses and I think that is right and proper. I understand the state doesn't do it.

S No, it does not. Well, now that you are out of Foundation-type things, at least not as active as you used to be, what kinds of civic activities are interesting you now.

G I'm not really involved anymore now because my capacity to get around and do much is practically none. So I really don't do anything. I still have my list that I get from the Foundation meeting every year. I do not go see them, but I write a letter and remind them of their commitment. So far, I've held on to the ones I've had.

S You may have answered the question a little bit earlier, but are you generally happy with the developments in the county nowadays or not too happy?

G Yes, I'm very happy with the developments. This transportation thing I have mixed emotions about. I thought at one time we ought to use the railroad and the old streetcar line instead of Marta. I'm sure the Commissioners and the people that are into it every day are much more aware of what's needed than I am. I'm sure I can't contribute. If I was out in the rat race every day, or quite a bit, why, I would--but I don't go to Rotary anymore so I don't get any poop from anybody except what I read in the paper. I do read the paper solid from the front to the back.

C The changes that you've seen in Cobb--do you see those changes primarily as benefiting the county?

G Yes. I can't help but believe that if you grow, unemployment is held low. Our educational system is lacking, I think. I read the headlines today where we excelled the average in the United States. I wasn't very proud of it. I don't know why they put it in the headlines. People in the second, fourth, seventh grade beat U.S. average on skills test. Well, when you think of Mississippi and

Louisiana and Alabama and South Carolina, "average" ain't too good--not as far as I'm concerned. I think we ought to be putting more money into education. I really do. I'm not too sure our educators are educating like they ought to. You know, Dr. Crews was a member of our church.

S Alton Crews?

G Alton Crews. He was the smartest Superintendent that we've ever had, and they ought to have their heads examined for letting him get away. But, at any rate, he seems to have a better grasp than the rest of them because his SAT's are always higher than everybody else's. So, while that may not be the only measure, I think with the exception of education, it's good for the county. I see they're talking about one or two mills. I believe they ask the question, "Do you think it's all right to add one or two mills to your property tax for schools?" My only statement is, "Is that enough?"

S Yes.

C You don't have the opinion that a lot of our older citizens do who no longer have school age children? A lot of those older people resent paying those high school taxes, or what they see as high school taxes. You don't think that's the case in Cobb, or shouldn't be the case in Cobb?

G It shouldn't be the case. No doubt it's the case because they've already added another 5000 dollar exemption on our taxes in the city --if you're over 65. I went down and filled out a paper. I'd rather take that and give it to Kennesaw College or a church. I just don't see how in the world they can keep on giving these exemptions. The older people have got to pay. I've got three grandsons. One's six, and one is 11 and one is 17. I wouldn't be surprised if the one that's 17 don't go to Kennesaw College.

S Who did your daughter marry? What was his name?

G Keown. He's an engineer with, no his father is an engineer with Lockheed. He works for Yellow Freight Company. He's a freight manager. They live in East Marietta.

C Well, coming back in '58 and as an observer, how did you feel about local politics? Did you sort of stay out of that, or did you get involved in it to any degree?

G I didn't get involved in politics in anything at all except I accepted the position of Cobb County manager of Carl Sanders' campaign when he ran against Carter. My good friend Conley Ingram was my opponent. He was manager for Carter. I reluctantly accepted it because Carl had a problem. He had them fighting in the county about who was going to be his manager. One of them was Fred Bentley. Fred wanted to be his manager and he didn't want Fred because Fred didn't get along with certain guys in the legislature like Al Burruss. You know, politics is a bunch of strange bedfellows.

C That's right.

G So, Carl called me and said, "You're a neutral guy. You've never been in politics. How about being my manager up here." I said, "Carl if you'll take me, I'll be it." Of course, we lost. Not by much, but we lost.

C When you look at local politics, the county commissions that you've watched develop the county, how do you feel they've done?

G I think they've done very well. I think Ernest Barrett served very well even with his limited ability. Now, by Ernest's limited ability: number one, Ernest was an introvert; and number two, Ernest as being a member of our Commission, our Board of Trustees. He wouldn't ask nobody for a nickel. As influential as he was, why, we thought surely we'd get him to get guys like C. W. Matthews and some of the big road men and whatnot for money. Ernest is just not made that way and he can't help it. He's just not made that way. He's not bold [and] he's not outgoing. He was a hard worker, and what he lacked in ability, he made up for in time and dedication. I think we've got a pretty good balanced bunch now. I liked and voted for Thompson.

C Butch Thompson?

G Butch, he always did a good job. I knew Chuck Clay. I knew his grandaddy. I didn't know his daddy but I knew his granddaddy real well. He's a smart man. In fact, I think he's probably the smartest man on the board as far as intelligence. I believe that he will serve us well. I think we've got a good Board of Commissioners. The Council, after this police fiasco, I don't want to

comment on that. Vicki [Chastain] is a good friend of mine and so is all the rest of them. (Laughter) But, I think they're pretty good. We finally got facilities. I don't know if we have enough judicial facilities or not. But we have facilities which we never did have enough. We didn't have a City Hall big as nothing. We didn't have a place like we've got down there on Garrison Road. We've got facilities now, and because of the growth of the county, our tax rate has stayed reasonable, stayed very reasonable. They go together, that's one of the reason it's stayed reasonable. So we've got the facilities now so I think we've got a good group of people to handle them. I think we've got a good college, and if we lose Betty [Siegel] why, we're going to have to get another good one. (Laughter) And she'll go if she's asked. I don't blame her. I don't blame her at all.

S&C

Thank you for talking with us today, Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Robert T. Garrison, Jr., has contributed the following to the Cobb Oral History Project:

Postcard postmarked in 1900 from:

Genevieve, Iowa, to a student, Mrs. John
dated June 1900, from the town of
Cranberry.

Program for the 1900 Annual Meeting of the Student
Reunion for the Class of 1890 at the University of Iowa.

Marquette High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1900, with the High
School Diploma of the author, Mrs. John C. Garrison.

Softcover program for the 1900 Annual Meeting of the Student
Reunion for the Class of 1890 at the University of Iowa.

See a librarian for more.

APPENDIX

Mr. Robert T. Garrison has donated a number of materials to the Cobb Oral History Project. They include:

ACADEMY

ANDREW

Postcard picture of "The Planters"

ANNE

Genealogical Study of Malinda Forsyth Garrison
Ancestry dated 1960, researched by Mabel Hagood
and Crankshaw.

Program for the Fifty-Fifth Anniversary High School
Reunion for Marietta High School Class of 1928.

Marietta Daily Journal photograph of Marietta High
School Class of 1903, featured in May 30, 1971
issue.

BERTZ

Softbound genealogical study titled The Families,
published by the Burtz, Garrison, Hagood Historical
Society in 1982.

BULLARD

CARROLL

See a librarian to obtain these materials.

CHESTER

Cobb County

Crankshaw

CREEK, JOHN

Crews, ALICE

Crowder, Lorraine

Dasher, Lorraine

EAST, FANNIE, JR.

Garrison, L. O.

Garrison, T. C.

Garrison, T. C.

Garrison, T. C.

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