

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES DAVIS (SPEC) LANDRUM

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS ALLAN SCOTT

for the

KSU ORAL HISTORY SERIES, NO. 5

THURSDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2004

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Interview with James Davis (Spec) Landrum
Conducted by Thomas Allan Scott
Thursday, 12 February 2004
Location: Center from Regional History and Culture, Kennesaw State University

TS: Spec, just tell me a little bit about when you were born and where you born and where you grew up.

SL: Well, I was born in Stephens County, Georgia, in a little town of Martin. That's halfway between Toccoa and Lavonia [laughter].

TS: Okay. Not a big town.

SL: And there used to be a railroad coming through there when I was born. I was the youngest of four children, and all four of us were born in Martin, Georgia.

TS: So you had a depot there in Martin?

SL: Oh, yes. The *Atlanta Constitution* came in on the train about 11:00 in the morning back in those days, and that was our only newspaper.

TS: And what year were you born?

SL: In 1917.

TS: World War I time.

SL: Yes. And being the youngest of four children I was the only one, really, that got caught in the Great Depression. The others were old enough to absorb it.

TS: So 1917, that would have made you 12 when the stock market crashed and then it all started. So you were a teenager during the Depression.

SL: That's correct. The bank closed; we lost everything we had: the house, two farms. It was very hard on my parents.

TS: I bet. What did you do?

SL: Well, from there, fortunately, my father [Philip Davis Landrum]—after he cleared everything financially—was offered a position at the Bank of Lavonia by former Governor Ernest Vandiver's father.

TS: Is that right?

SL: Yes, and they were close friends. We were just six miles from Lavonia where we were born. But, anyway, in about three or four months after that, the job of business manager at Piedmont College came open, and my father and mother moved . . .

TS: What year was that?

SL: I was in fifth grade at that time. So that should have been about 1928 or '29.

TS: Wait a minute, you were born in '17; you should have been beyond the fifth grade by the Great Depression, shouldn't you?

SL: Well, no, my birthday is August 31. The rule was you had to be seven years old on September 1. I was a year older [than the rest of my classmates]. And Martin was a private school built by five benefactors in the community. It was a great farming and cotton area. My mother's father was one of those five benefactors, William Mitchell. My mother, Blanche, was a Mitchell. So from there we moved up to Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia, and that's where my sister Sara and brother just older than me, Joseph [William Joseph Landrum], lived for several years.

TS: And your other brother was Phil?

SL: Phil [Philip Mitchell Landrum] is my oldest brother, yes. He was in Congress for twenty-four years, I believe, twelve terms, and then retired. But while we were there—and when I was in the eighth grade at Demorest High School—that was the first year that they had had a high school in Demorest. Piedmont College had an academy called Piedmont Academy for high school students. That's where Johnny Mize was in school, Piedmont Academy, when he played baseball for Piedmont College.

TS: Is that right?

SL: That's correct. Two years. He was an amazing, absolutely amazing hitter. He was a big, strong fellow, and didn't have much speed, but he could hit the ball.

TS: He played first base, didn't he?

SL: Played first base. That was the best position they could find for him. He wasn't really fast enough to chase a ball down in the outfield but he was a great hitter.

TS: So he went to the St. Louis Cardinals?

SL: Yes, he signed with the St. Louis Cardinals when he was seventeen, and he was a hero in that area.

TS: Well, now, I remember him as a pinch hitter for the Yankees.

SL: Yankees and Giants both. He played with the Giants first, but he played with the Cardinals for a number of years on the Gas House Gang.

TS: Yes.

SL: He played for them, and he was the hero for all of us. When he came back after his second year of pro ball—and I believe he had played in a class B league somewhere in North Carolina, possibly Greensboro, I'm not sure, but anyway, it was the Cardinal farm team—when he came back after his second year he had a new four door Chevrolet [chuckle].

TS: I bet that impressed everybody.

SL: Oh it did that. One of the first things he did when he got home—he rounded up five kids. I was fortunate enough to live about 100 yards from him, and I was his caddy, when it came to rounding boys up or doing whatever he wanted us to do. He had told me to get four more boys beside myself, and he took us to Gainesville, Georgia, in that new car to see a movie. That was on a Saturday--they didn't have Sunday movies at that time—so I've never forgotten that in my life.

TS: Was that the first time you'd been to a movie or just the fact that you were with him?

SL: I had been to two or three movies previous to that. The first movie I went to, Tom, I've never forgotten that one either. It was in Toccoa, which was about ten miles from where we lived. On a Saturday. The music was played by the piano, somebody playing the piano over in the side view there. Then, of course, the conversations were in writing across the screen accompanied by the music. Tom Mix was the first one.

TS: Well, Ty Cobb grew up not far from where you were too, didn't' he?

SL: Oh, yes. My father played baseball with Ty Cobb in high school in Royston, Georgia. My father was born in Franklin County, which Royston is a part of.

TS: What did he think of Ty Cobb?

SL: My father was not very interested in athletics, but he said Ty Cobb was the toughest person that he had ever met.

TS: That's pretty much what everybody said, I guess. Have you ever read the novel, *The Year the Lights Came On*? Terry Kay? Was that authentic compared to your situation?

SL: Well, yes, in some areas, yes.

TS: Did you have electricity in Martin?

SL: Tom, I really don't remember.

TS: Were you always interested in sports?

SL: Yes. I was always interested in sports. More than anything else, academics or anything else. And my father was not a sports fan—and particularly football.

TS: He didn't like football?

SL: Right.

TS: Did that create conflict?

SL: Anyway, when I was at Demorest when I was in the eighth grade, I wanted to play football. Piedmont College had a football team. By the way, our former president [at Kennesaw] and founding president [Dr. Horace W. Sturgis] played football at Piedmont College. He was in my home when I was in the fifth grade, probably the fourth grade also. He and my brother were great friends, and he was very fond of my mother. She was a dietician, and all the students ate in one place at Piedmont College. Actually what happened is the dietician died less than a year after my father became business manager. They didn't have one, so he influenced my mother to take the job temporarily. She kept it. Horace was in our home occasionally. Particularly on Sunday evenings Horace would show up often, because the dining room only fed the Sunday meal at noon—breakfast and at noon. So Horace would come down to our house, which was less than 100 yards from the campus. He would come down to our house hungry with Phil, my brother. I got to know him well then. Is it all right if I talk about Horace a minute or two?

TS: Sure. He must have been about five years older than you maybe?

SL: Well, I was in the fifth grade, so he would have been . . .

TS: More than that, seven years.

SL: About seven, yes. But, anyway, he was a very likeable guy and quiet. So he was well known in my family. But, anyway, it's an amazing thing that Horace and I stayed in fairly close touch the rest of our lives. When he graduated from Piedmont—this I know because he came back and stayed with us two or three times—he went to Eatonton, Georgia, Eatonton High School, as the teacher of science, and that covered all the science courses. He coached basketball and he coached several sports like all of them had to do back in those days when they were teachers and coaches. But he coached the girl's basketball team at Eatonton High School to the state finals. So anyway, that gives another side of Dr. Sturgis to the average person in our area.

TS: How did the fact that he came from Pennsylvania . . .

SL: Yes, Erie, he was from Erie, Pennsylvania.

TS: Yes. And coming down to Georgia, did he have a different accent?

SL: Well, it really wasn't that noticeable.

TS: So he fit right in?

SL: Yes. He never really had an accent that was like the people in Massachusetts and that area.

TS: Right. Well, I guess Demorest had a lot of people from out of state anyway, didn't they?

SL: Well, Piedmont College actually was founded by the Congregational church. I think when Horace came down there, the church he was contacted by or through--the biggest church in Demorest, Georgia, at that time--was the Congregational church.

TS: Is that right?

SL: Yes. It was bigger than the Baptists, and we didn't have but three churches: the Congregational and the Baptists and the Methodists. And the Methodist appeared to be a very small place.

TS: Well, that's interesting.

SL: So, anyway, later on I played football at Mercer University back when they had football.

TS: Why did you go to Mercer instead of to Piedmont?

SL: Well, when I was in eighth grade at Demorest, they didn't have football. So, along the latter part of my eighth grade, I told my mother and my older brother, Phil, "I want to go somewhere where I can play football." It was that important to me. So my brother graduated, the year I was in eighth grade, from Piedmont. And he went to Bowman, Georgia, which is near Elberton, as a teacher and coach; and Horace was down the road a piece from him at Eatonton. But, anyway, so my mother finally relented when Phil told her that he would take me to Bowman with him. We were down there two weeks and had a break. Back in those days, cotton-picking time came a couple or three weeks after school started. Then there were two or three weeks to a month open there where everybody could go out and pick cotton. We were down there two weeks, and Phil came back to Demorest and brought me. Of course, we weren't picking cotton at that time.

TS: No, I wouldn't think so! [chuckle]

SL: But, anyway, while I was there, Mother made a decision that I would have to stay at home, and she had made arrangements for me to go to Cornelia High School, which was four miles down the road and a big high school. Cornelia High School was fine with me, but that was in the ninth grade. I played there. Amazingly, having not ever played a game in the eighth grade because we didn't have a team--well, we played tag and all those kind of things, and I had been out to the college practice every day—I knew a little bit about football. We played the double wing, which was a very good offense at that time. Georgia Tech used it in later years in 1938 and had a great season and won their first Orange Bowl game with the double wing. It was very deceptive, a lot of reverses.

TS: Now, I remember the single wing. What's the difference? A double wing you have a full back and two running backs?

SL: You have a tailback and a fullback there basically side by side except the fullback is just one step in front and beside the tailback and the running back, so to speak. And he is the ball handler. A lot of reverses and double reverses on the two wings out there.

TS: Oh, so you've got two wing backs, I see.

SL: I went down to Cornelia and an amazing thing, the coach at Piedmont, Dr. Harry Forrester, taught biology at Piedmont and coached four sports—he coached football, men's and women's basketball and baseball—and taught a full load. He was one of the great people I ever knew in my whole life and lasted all through the years. His wife taught at Cornelia, and his daughter was my age. So I had a ride to Cornelia High School every morning from my door. He lived a little beyond us and came right by, and I was ready to go. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the best football player on Cornelia's squad was the fullback. I weighed 125 pounds, I guess, but I could handle the ball—I mean, I'd just been around it all my life. But, anyway, the fullback was named Foster. He was the best player on the team, 185 pounds, and could run—went on to college and played football at Georgia, I think. He hurt his ankle three days before the game—he hurt it on a Wednesday, on the first game of the season. The coach says, “Okay, here you are.” We had probably twenty-five or twenty-six people on the team. I started the first football game that I had ever been connected with and played that whole game at fullback. I played three or more full games before he got well. Then, I went to wingback and got to run with the ball a lot more. That was a short history there. Horace left Eatonton and if I'm not mistaken he went to NYU to get his . . .

TS: The doctorate later on.

SL: Right. He went to North Fulton High School in Atlanta, which was a county school at that time.

TS: He got a master's at UGA, then worked on his doctorate at NYU while he was associate registrar at Georgia Tech.

SL: He started [his graduate work] while he was at Eatonton. Eatonton was just thirty miles or so from Athens, forty or something like that. Horace was at North Fulton High School as a teacher, and I was coaching—my first coaching job after college—at Canton High School. We played North Fulton. We played them down at North Fulton, and Horace came out after the game and spoke to me, and we visited a little bit. Then after I got back from World War II, I was coaching in the Atlanta school system, and Horace and Sue and [my wife] Mildred and myself were members of the same church for a number of years.

TS: Which church was it?

SL: That was the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer at Peachtree and Fourth Street with the red doors. Everybody knows it now on Peachtree Street. It was a beautiful church, and we had a wonderful pastor there. So we saw Sue and Horace every [week]. By the way, that's where his memorial service was held, at that church. One of the few that has ever been held in the church. Then he went to Tech in the registrar's office.

TS: Right.

SL: And I went to the University of Georgia as assistant coach for four years. Then something happened and I went over to Georgia Tech.

TS: You graduated in 1940 from Mercer, I believe, didn't you? And you played football there all four years you were there?

SL: Well, no, I went to junior college first. The Depression wasn't over, and I was on my own from the time I graduated from high school till I finished college.

TS: Which junior college?

SL: South Georgia at Douglas.

TS: Did they have a football team?

SL: Oh yes. Those were days when Roosevelt became President and had a lot of the alphabet [public works organizations].

TS: Yes, WPA and . . .

SL: WPA and all of those things. And on the college campus they had, I've forgotten the letters . . .

TS: NYA? National Youth Administration?

SL: For students. But you had to work.

TS: I think that's the NYA.

SL: Yes, right. Somehow or another they had enough money to give me some of my board and tuition. Then I had a job, and I had the night watch two nights a week on campus. In the football season they fixed it where I would not be on Thursday or Friday nights. But I had a job. I went on watch at midnight for three hours for the two years I was at South Georgia. So I paid my own way there.

TS: [Tape off briefly.] Okay, so you played football at Mercer after South Georgia and graduated from there in 1940. By the way, what position were you playing at college?

SL: I was a tailback in the single wing. That was before the "T." I could do anything at tailback that a lot of the really good ones could do except kick. I was not a great punter, but I was a good punter. If we were at mid-field, I could get it down to the twenty [or] twenty-five. Now, I couldn't kick it to the end zone. So I did that [punted] a great deal of the time. Plus the fact that it gave us another play, opposite play, which sometimes I'd run from punt formation on fourth down if it was short yardage.

TS: Did you have to play safety on defense?

SL: Yes, Tom, you wouldn't believe the changes that have come about in football. If you started the game, you could come out any time in the first quarter that you needed to come out. But if you came out you couldn't go back in until the second quarter. So you played offense and defense both. And for the most part, that would make you not be too aggressive on one side of the ball or the other. The passing game then was not like the passing game now, and so the safety man probably was the luckiest person on the field because he didn't have a lot of passes thrown at him, and it was a little easier for us. But I would feel sorry for those linemen and particularly the blocking back in the single wing. He was a linebacker as well, and on the offense he was a blocker.

TS: Right. But that's how you could get away with being 125 or 150 pounds.

SL: Yes, well, I weighed 155 at that time. One thing about my football at Mercer, we never could beat Georgia, but we played them every year. In '38, I ran a punt back for a touchdown against Georgia. I threw a touchdown pass against Georgia that year. They beat us 27 to 19. I think that was the score.

TS: Pretty close.

SL: And the following year I threw a touchdown pass for our only touchdown, and they beat us 16 to 9 on the last play of the game. It was tied 9 to 9. Mercer never beat Georgia in fifty tries.

TS: There must be some old grainy film somewhere showing you throw that pass.

SL: But that was my football career.

TS: So you graduated in '40, and then what did you do?

SL: Went to Canton High School as a teaching coach.

TS: What was your degree in from Mercer?

SL: History. I was a pretty good history student. Amazingly—this is awful—I never had a course in education. At Mercer, [the discipline of] education was not a big thing at that time. I marched into that classroom just like I marched out to football practice one day, and I stood up there and started teaching. But I studied more that first year teaching than I've ever studied a year in my life. I was smart, smarter than I have been in later years. I always knew who the smart kids in my class were. If there was any doubt about something that I wasn't sure of, I always knew whom to ask! But I had a lot of fun. I was there a year and a half till the War came.

TS: So you started in the fall of '40, I guess and were there '40-'41 and half of '41 into '42. And then did you get drafted at that point?

SL: No, I went to the draft board and asked them how long it would be before I would be drafted. They told me I would be drafted prior to the next football season. I was the football coach. So I decided that I would just resign at the end of the first semester and go ahead while I had a choice.

TS: So you volunteered for the draft?

SL: I volunteered. But I was very fortunate in the War, absolutely fortunate. I was not accepted. I wanted to get into the Navy Air Corps, and I didn't make it physically. I was 23 or 24, and they weren't taking 24-year-olds to train. They wanted 19- and 20-year-olds to train, and I know why.

TS: You're talking about for the Navy Air Corps?

SL: Yes, for the Navy Air Corps. I tried the Army Air Corps, and basically that was the same thing. I did have a little problem physically but not serious.

TS: Was it the broken ankle [from playing football] that you had?

SL: No, blood pressure, I had a little bit of blood pressure and getting up there. It never did bother me, but, anyway, that was the cause. So I didn't do that. When I was down at the Army recruiting office talking to them about the Air Corps, a sergeant down there said, "You would really like to fly?" And I said, "Sure, I sure would like to fly." He says, "Well, you can go right now if you want to go into the glider." I was single, I was free, and I didn't have any reason to be serious about anything. So I volunteered for the glider corps. Now, I was so lucky. My class was the first class not to complete the glider training and go to Europe for the invasion.

TS: Where did your class go?

SL: At that time I was already a staff sergeant, flying sergeant. That's what the glider pilots were. So they gave us the opportunity to get a commission and be navigators or bombardiers. There was a clause for everybody that volunteered for the glider program, that if they wished they could take their discharge. But you would be eligible for the draft if you did. I took my discharge and went back home and thought awhile. Then, fortunately, I was able to get into a program and get back in. I got a commission and was in Europe for 28 months. We got there in August [1944] after the invasion, and I stayed an extra year for my own personal . . .

TS: So you were second lieutenant at that point?

SL: At that point, yes. I came out as a captain.

TS: Now, gliders were used in the Normandy Invasion, behind the line for the paratroopers.

SL: Yes, and I think there are a few still alive but not many. Most of them were killed.

TS: Pretty dangerous.

SL: It was.

TS: But there's still a lot of heavy fighting taking place at that time.

SL: Oh, yes. Actually, we got there a good while before Paris was [liberated].

TS: The Battle of the Bulge and all that.

SL: Oh, yes, the Battle of the Bulge.

TS: Were you involved in that?

SL: I was twenty miles away from [Bastogne] during the Battle of the Bulge.

TS: Very cold weather.

SL: Yes.

TS: So when you were there did you get to Berlin?

SL: No, I never went to Berlin. I had enough points to come home shortly after the War ended, and I volunteered to stay an extra year. At that time I was debating whether or not to stay in the Army with a regular commission, and that was one of the things I stayed over for.

TS: Well, why not while you're moving up in the ranks?

SL: The main thing I stayed over for really, deep down—and afterwards I realized it—was that it would give me an opportunity to see Europe. I spent some time in Switzerland, and I spent some time in Belgium, and I spent some time at Amsterdam. Being a company commander I could write my own three-day passes. Also for a week. I did that a good bit. I experienced something that I've remembered all my life. I had a German prisoner as my orderly daily. He came in from the pen. His name was Joe, and he spoke broken English, which was great. He and I became big buddies. Anyway, that's it.

TS: So what did you do when you got back home?

SL: I came home, and the girl that I was most serious with, probably, in my life before Mildred, was happily married. There were lawyers in my family, several, including my sister and my oldest brother and two uncles and so forth. My older brother, Phil, was telling me that I ought to go to law school. But I wanted to coach. I had coached two falls of football, and I wanted to coach. So I went down to Atlanta. Atlanta schools at that time were Boys High, Tech, and Girls High, and Commercial High. But that year of '47 they ended the four schools and went to regional schools. There were six of them at the beginning, and another one was added a year later to make it seven. I went down and talked to the athletic director. They had one athletic director for the whole city, and he did the hiring and so forth for all the schools. Sid Scarborough. Sid and I became good friends. I got a job teaching at Roosevelt High School the first year, and Roosevelt had the facilities of Girls High. It was one of the better schools. I went there as an assistant in football, assistant in basketball, and head track coach, and full load teaching. I started to Atlanta Law School at night, and I went through that first year of teaching and one quarter of my second year of teaching at Roosevelt High School. One day I said to myself, "You're not doing anything except going to school, one way or another. You've got to make a decision." And Sid Scarborough came along one day and says, "Spec, the head coaching job at Grady High School will be open in a couple of weeks now. Would you like to have that job?" I said, "Man, yes!" Grady was where Boys High and Tech High had been together. It was the best school, probably, in the State of Georgia. Tom,

- I'd say, and I know I would not be giving you false information, 90 percent of the student body went to college. It was amazing, over there on Peachtree and . . .
- TS: I remember running in a track meet there in the early '60s a time or two, and they had a good stadium, a good track.
- SL: Oh, yes. So anyway, I ended up at Grady High School, and then came to coaching at Georgia, and then over to Georgia Tech.
- TS: So you jump from Grady High School to Georgia.
- SL: University of Georgia. Back then freshmen were not eligible for the varsity in athletics, and I was a freshman coach at Georgia for four years and very happy about it too.
- TS: So you were tired of high school coaching and wanted to coach college?
- SL: Well, Mildred became pregnant while we were still at Grady. She was teaching, and all of a sudden we didn't have but one salary. We'd been living on two salaries. When the offer came it just came out of a blue sky. I left Grady, which was probably the best thing for us.
- TS: So what years would these be that you were at UGA?
- SL: I coached the freshman team in '51, '52, '53 and '54.
- TS: Was Wallace Butts the head coach?
- SL: Wallace Butts was the head coach all that period of time, right.
- TS: Must have been some really good players that went through?
- SL: Well, there were, but Georgia was down at the time I went over there. My last freshman team at Georgia was the first football team at Georgia that beat Tech for eight straight years.
- TS: That used to be a really big game, didn't it—the freshman game between Georgia and Georgia Tech?
- SL: That was on Thanksgiving Day, and it was for charity at the Crippled Children's Hospital. It was a big thing, you're right. The four games that I was involved in—actually I was involved in one more for Tech—we never had less than 35,000 people at the game. It was a wonderful thing. We'd take the team over on Wednesday. It was always played in Atlanta at Grant Field for the purpose of raising money. We had the team over there from Georgia, and we would visit the hospital on Wednesday afternoon. I'm talking about for three hours! It was a great thing for the kids and for the players themselves. That was one of the great things about athletics.

TS: So then you got recruited to Georgia Tech?

SL: Well, I resigned at Georgia. Not any real problem; just a matter of money, number one, I guess, and number two, I was given an assignment that did not have as much future as I thought it might have at my age. I parted ways very cordially with everybody at Georgia and went to Tech. Then a lot of people at Georgia didn't speak to me for several years!

TS: So this is the Bobby Dodd era.

SL: Bobby Dodd. Linda Dodd, Bobby Dodd's only daughter, was at Grady High School when I was there. He and Alice (he and his wife) were very good members of PTA. Grady High School never had less than 800 people at a PTA meeting at that time I was there. That was the kind of place it was. When Dodd called me and asked me if I would like to come over and join his staff, I said, "Yes sir!"

TS: How many years did you stay at Georgia Tech?

SL: Until Dodd retired from coaching. That was thirteen or fourteen years. I stayed one more through the first fall of the new head coach's tenure, and then I moved onto campus [as] Director of Campus Affairs, which was under Ed Harrison [Edwin D. Harrison], who was president. I had that there for two years.

TS: And what were the responsibilities of that job?

SL: Well, graduation, for instance, was one of them. The red carpet tour that the Chamber of Commerce had done for years in Georgia—their first visit after they congregated in Atlanta was to Georgia Tech every year. Things of that nature.

TS: Did you know Howard Ector at Georgia Tech, I guess?

SL: Howard is one of my all time friends. I'll tell you a good, funny story: Howard and I played against each other when he was at Tech and I was at Mercer. We played Tech in Atlanta one of those years. I threw Howard Ector the only touchdown pass that he ever scored in college, a touchdown pass.

TS: Uh-oh, he intercepted.

SL: But he was on the other team. Howard ran an interception. Afterward he caught me going off the field. He says, "You so-and-so, that's the only touchdown pass that I've ever caught in my life." And we became fast friends, not just casual friends, and we were very close after he came back from the War. After he got back from the War, even before I went to Tech, we were very close friends. Of course, he was a very close friend of Kennesaw [State University].

TS: Did you stay at Georgia Tech until you came to Kennesaw?

SL: The president of Georgia Tech [Ed Harrison] was a very close friend of mine. I was directly working under him as Director of Campus Affairs. [Until] he left to join J.P. Stevens as one of their vice-presidents in a big corporation like that, I had felt that I would stay there with him. Really, it wasn't an exciting job that I had at Tech, but it was just occasionally. Some fellow came up and offered me more money than I was making at Tech and a good bit more, and I decided that I would take it. It was not a good move for me. It didn't turn out well because I didn't look close enough at whom I was associating with. So then I went with the Georgia Conservancy as president of the Georgia Conservancy.

TS: I didn't know that.

SL: I was president of the Georgia Conservancy for, I don't know, three years, maybe, thereabouts. And we made a great deal of progress in the Conservancy during that period of time.

TS: So this would have been late '70s?

SL: Yes, not late.

TS: But in the '70s. So this would have been about the time that the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is being created?

SL: Yes. We played a big part in Interstate 75 at Lake Allatoona. The Conservancy really was responsible for getting the thing agreed to by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Conservancy.

TS: Yes. The route to protect the environment as it goes around Allatoona.

SL: Yes. The road (I-75) from just past us here at Kennesaw was not paved, but it was paved south and north [of campus].

TS: Right. I-75 had been completed from Cartersville north and from North Marietta Parkway south.

SL: You remember that. Well, we played the role. And the other person who was in that role for the Georgia Department of Transportation was Bert Lance.

TS: Yes.

SL: Bert Lance and I became great friends. He had been a big football fan, and he knew me a little bit. He called me, and he said, "Spec, I'm driving back to Calhoun every night"—he was head of the DOT in Georgia—and he says, "I'm going to come by your place, I want to talk to you." And he did. So I got the board and we met out at Walter Mitchell's

farm in Roswell, a private meeting that nobody knew about. Bert came out and made his pitch to the Conservancy. We found a member of the Conservancy at Shorter College, a professor up there who was recognized as a leading conservationist and expert in the area. We got Bert with him, and within two weeks we had the agreement. That was my biggest thing that I did at the Conservancy, except, possibly, we established the Coastal Chapter of the Conservancy at Savannah while I was president of the Conservancy. Then one day Bert wanted to know if I wanted to come over and be the government liaison person with the state people and so forth for his bank. So I did that. Then, pretty soon President Carter was elected and went to Washington and took Bert with him. That's when I decided I didn't want to go to Washington.

TS: So what did you do then?

SL: Actually I had a period of time in there when I was debating what to do. That's when I ran into Horace at church. He said, "Spec, we've got a place [for you] out at Kennesaw." Mildred was already teaching here. He said, "If you're interested, you come out and I'll introduce you to Cullene [Morgan] Harper. If you and Cullene seem that you might want to work together, you would be a good person. We're just beginning our alumni association." That's where I met your good wife [Kathleen Sherlock Scott, a KSU alumna]. She and I had some disagreements at times, but all and all, she was a great help.

TS: Yes, I was noticing your title back then was Coordinator of Development and Alumni Relations.

SL: Right.

TS: So you were raising money.

SL: Yes. And June Krise [another alumna] was the toughest one I had to deal with.

TS: Tough in what sense? Disagreements?

SL: No, no, she just always, always, always wanted to do something different than how they were doing it.

TS: I see.

SL: At that time, Dr. Sturgis decided to retire, and they came to the point that he did retire. The committee that was appointed, what do they call it?

TS: The presidential search committee?

SL: The presidential search committee, I don't know who did it. I guess it was Cullene. She was on that committee, and she came in to see me one day. My office backed up to Dr. Sturgis' office. The secretary was out in front of my door. Then, Cullene's office was back beyond the secretary's. But one day Cullene came in. Cullene and I had a great

relationship. The day that Dr. Sturgis asked me to come out and visit with Cullene, first thing she asked me, really, other than saying hello, was “Are you going to try to get my job?” I said, “Lord, no, Cullene. I give you my word of honor that I will never try to get your job!” I liked Cullene very much, and she needed somebody like me in her work anyway. But we got along fine. Anyway, Cullene says, “Spec, the committee needs a place for the five people who have been asked to come to campus to relax and have a phone and so forth. Would you mind them having your office when they come in for an hour or two or three, however long they want, and also would you take them anywhere on campus or answer any question that they might need answered.” I said, “Oh yes, I’ll be happy to do that.” So that’s how I met Dr. Siegel. And Tom, the amazing thing that I have never forgotten, the other candidates that were brought to campus were told the same thing: that I was there. [They] brought them in and introduced me. I was available to take them anywhere on campus or give them any help I could. The four other candidates besides our present president who came into my office, somebody brought them over, Cullene or somebody. I gave them my little spiel and they said, “No, I’d like to leave something here in the office until we move around the campus.” They came back and said, “Thank you.” When Betty Siegel came in, I say, “Dr. Siegel, here’s my office and it’s yours. Anything I can do for you, let me know. I’ll be outside or somewhere in the building if you need me for anything. Otherwise here’s the office.” And I started out the door. She says, “Wait a minute. I want to talk to you.” I’d gotten back in my chair behind my desk, and I got up, and I went around to get in another chair so she could sit at her own desk if she wanted to. She said, “No, you stay over there.” So she sat down and she quizzed me about Marietta, everything you can imagine. I mean, not . . .

TS: She wanted to know.

SL: Yes. She wanted to know. I guess we spent an hour in there. She left, and shortly after that she was named president at Kennesaw. So I thought to myself, “Landrum, boy, you’ve got a friend in the president!” Because Horace and I were not really real close. On the other hand we were real close from way back and family-wise. This was part of our first conversation when she was still an applicant--she had made a commitment to, I think, the committee and, I think, some trustees that intercollegiate athletics was among her goals, the things that she would do while she was here. I think that carried her into that selection, I really do. Because I knew Wyman Pilcher [a community appointee to the selection committee] real well. He was one of my close friends. Wyman told me one day after this, “Spec, when she said she wanted intercollegiate athletics, I changed my mind.”

TS: How did you know Wyman Pilcher?

- SL: Oh Lord, it goes way back. When I left [the University of] Georgia, Wyman Pilcher called me and says, "Spec, I'm just right in the beginning of my bank and my real estate up here. I guarantee if you come up here and go to work for me you'll be happy about it." I said, "Wyman, I don't know anything about that." And he said, "Yes, you do. You know enough that we can make some money up here." Crawford Pilcher, Wyman's older brother, and my older brother were close friends. I had known Wyman one way or another, I guess--I met him on the golf course somewhere at the beginning because he and I played golf a great deal after I came up here. But, I think, he was a key in getting this thing started.
- TS: I guess Betty Siegel thought so. This building [where the interview was being conducted] is the Pilcher Building. Dr. Siegel came in in '81. Was it right after that that you became athletic director?
- SL: Well, Tom, being where I was located, there right almost in her office, naturally I saw her more often than most people on campus. Cullene and I both did, Cullene, of course, being a development officer. Two or three months after she was here, she told Cullene that she needed somebody to introduce her to some people. Cullene told her that she thought I would be the right person to do that. So I did that, Tom, at first. I guess that's where we really got acquainted because we had a lot of time in the automobile to talk about lots of things. I did introduce her to some people at the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta and to the person who was in charge of the Coca-Cola fortune, [the] Woodruff [fortune], who ran his business.
- TS: Bob Woodruff?
- SL: No. Boisfeuillet Jones [President of the Emily and Ernest Woodruff and Robert W. Woodruff Foundations, 1964-1988]. We went up to his office and talked to him, and we met some other people. I took her to see some of the [people of] prestige that she really hadn't met in that period of time. Then, one day she came in, and she says, "Tomorrow I've got to go to Mercer University. I think you told me that you went to Mercer." I says, "Yes, but I don't know whether they want me back on the campus or not!" [laughter] She says, "I've got to speak at Mercer at noon, and I've got to speak at the University of Georgia at seven o'clock that evening. Would you drive me down there? We'll have to spend the night in Athens because it probably won't be over till ten o'clock." I said, "Well, I know I've got some things I can do in Athens." That was the first time that we really talked about athletics. I knew of her interest, and we talked about the athletic program. I gave her a lot of my thoughts about it, and one day she said, "Well, we've got to get on this." So I say, "All right." She says, "Well, who are you going to recommend, if you know of anybody, about being the athletic director?" I said, "I know the best person you can find." She looked at me, and I said, "I don't think you know anybody that can do as good a job as I can do." She laughed, and she says, "Are you serious?" I say, "Betty, the reason that I left college athletics was that I wasn't headed in the direction that I really wanted to be, and that was an athletic director." And that's true. In, I guess, less than a month she had made a decision and asked me to be

athletic director. I was so very happy. We made the right decision about the athletic program. There's never been any doubt in my mind about that.

TS: About starting one?

SL: About starting one and what we would do with it. Of course, the first thing everybody wants about athletics is football. I knew enough about college athletics all over the United States, but particularly in Georgia, that if you had a football program at a place like Kennesaw [in the early 1980s], you didn't have anything else because you didn't have any money. I talked to her about that, and she said, "I absolutely agree."

TS: Because back then we were a 4000-student school.

SL: Yes, 4,000 students. There was no way you could field a football program without getting into the community and having all sorts of fund raising and people involved in it. Then, the athletic program is not still on campus. I said, "There's one thing that I want us to agree on that we won't have a football team until way down the road when we can do something about it." Tom, that was the key relative to Horace Sturgis that he never mentioned or nobody else ever thought about, I guess, because Horace was not against athletics. As a matter of fact, true fact, shortly before he died I had a letter from him. It says, "Dear Spec, you know that I never really agreed for athletics to come to Kennesaw. However, the way that it's been handled is a compliment to you and the president. I just want you to know that."

TS: So he was not against athletics, but he didn't think we had the money to do it right?

SL: Yes. He knew we didn't have enough money. He knew from being at Tech. He knew that if you didn't have the money that you were going to have to go outside to get the money, and then your athletic program was going to be ruled somewhere else besides the president's office and the campus. You see that's happening all over the United States now. Even right now, you know the most important one thing about football in colleges in the United States today?

TS: What's that?

SL: Television.

TS: Yes.

SL: They tell the teams now how many time outs that you can have in a game, for instance. I mean, there's an ironclad rule, and that's just a beginner. And really, you know, what's happened over at the University [of Georgia] with the president?¹

¹At the time of the interview President Michael F. Adams and the UGA Foundation were engaged in a bitter public dispute that originated, in part, in the president's decision not to extend the contract of Athletic Director Vince Dooley.

- TS: So, you and Dr. Siegel agreed that you wanted to keep the president in charge of the program and you wanted to, I guess, keep it small enough to where you could have winning teams in a few sports?
- SL: Right, right.
- TS: In the sports that weren't as expensive as football.
- SL: Right, we were in full agreement.
- TS: So basketball won't cost as much as football?
- SL: Oh no. See, you've got twelve people, fourteen at the maximum. I think twelve is about the normal thing in basketball. And equipment, oh, the football equipment costs more than the whole athletic program, coaches and all salaries involved. And travel—Georgia Southern, for instance—they're our size. Georgia Southern probably has a budget of, I don't know, maybe half a million dollars for travel.
- TS: I guess so because they go everywhere.
- SL: The Southern Conference—maybe I shouldn't say this—probably is the best conference that we could join, relative to travel expense and for also interest because we're at the same level, I think, as Appalachian State and Furman and those colleges—The Citadel. So anyway, that's the way we started the program. One thing I would like to mention along this, Tom, because so many people don't know anything at all about it: starting off we had volunteer coaches, okay? Now, in men's basketball, one of the better coaches in the whole state of Georgia, regardless of colleges or universities or high schools, was on our campus in the PE department. Dave Harris. All right? Now, Dave wanted to coach and I wanted him to coach. But Dave had some family responsibilities that some of us didn't have because he had his boy. Dave coached the team one year. But Dave could not spend the time to go see a high school game or do so many other things that were not on court. It was impossible for us to compete. Dave was disappointed, but [he] and I had come to a common agreement—and were good friends, thank goodness—that we had to do the right thing. Grady [Palmer, the head of the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department] would not allow him to take one class load off.
- TS: They didn't give him a course release to coach basketball?
- SL: No, he had a full load and coached basketball. He wanted to coach so badly, and I wanted him to coach so badly, but then I looked and said, "We can't compete if we have to do this." Not even against Southern Tech. That's why Dave had to give up coaching the basketball team, and it's just part of our history. But we're in great shape now with

the student body the size that it is. And going into Division I is going to be a good experience but it's going to have to bring in added finances.

TS: We'll talk about that in just a little bit, but tell me now why did you pick NAIA to join?

SL: Okay, that's a good question, and it's easy to answer. Number one, money. It costs a lot more to get in the NCAA immediately than it did the NAIA.

TS: I see.

SL: The other one, and maybe really more important is that all of the NCAA competition was further away. People came to us. As soon as they found out we were starting a program, the athletic director at North Georgia College was on the phone the first day he read it in the paper. He was a regional officer of the NAIA. Berry College called us, Shorter College called us, that's three right here.

TS: To schedule games?

SL: To get in the NAIA and be a part of the . . .

TS: Oh, they called, encouraging you . . .

SL: Yes, come play us. Because money-wise it was helpful to them and certainly helpful to us. Well, there were others: NAIA. Shorter and Berry and North Georgia and Southern Tech, and they were strong trying to push us. And Georgia Southwestern and the Georgia College at Milledgeville. At that time, they were all NAIA but shortly after that a couple of them, like Georgia College went into NCAA. But it was money and locale and transportation. And rivalry. We did pretty well. By the way, Dr. Siegel was nominated and served for two terms on the national committee of the NAIA.

TS: Is that right?

SL: Yes. We went in with a lot of backing from our friends here.

TS: I almost had forgotten some of these names now but Gary Wisener was the women's coach?

SL: Yes.

TS: Who was the men's coach that replaced Dave Harris?

SL: Phil Zenoni. And he was a good one. He stayed through my tenure and was good.

TS: Yes. Actually we had a lot of sports to begin with. We had soccer and . . .

SL: No, we didn't have soccer.

TS: Didn't have soccer to begin with?

SL: We almost had soccer, but we had some problems with people making commitments to us about bringing a soccer program to us here from the community who didn't meet their agreement that they would do so-and so, like book the fields and things of that nature. But now, [women's] soccer has finally come, and in my opinion, for what it might be worth, we are making a grave mistake by not starting a men's soccer program immediately.

TS: Why didn't we?

SL: Well, it was difficult enough to start the women's program, but look what they did [Division II national championship in 2003]. Football is fine down the road, but right now men's soccer and women's soccer will put more people in the stands, bring in more revenue, than any other sport we have at Kennesaw State University.

TS: Is that right? More than basketball?

SL: Well, the way the men's basketball program particularly is going, it will be equal, but in the past it hasn't been equal. As a matter of fact, the men's basketball program is strong, as strong as it's ever been. And of course, fast pitch [softball] is strong, and so is baseball. But men's soccer, the media, the Cobb County paper, for instance, and the Atlanta paper for that matter, absolutely every day almost for three or four months at a time in the fall and the spring, soccer is on the sports pages. All of the high schools, now, soccer is a big thing, and it's so inexpensive. This past soccer season I was here for a meeting relative to the feasibility study that they were doing. I went down to a soccer game—got finished with the meeting, and it was halftime. I walked down there. I had told the coach that I was going to try to get down to the game that afternoon. I went down there, and there were more people in the stands at that soccer game than at any event that I've ever seen at Kennesaw State University. An athletic event. But the program is inexpensive. Now, we do have a problem.

TS: What's that?

SL: If we have a men's soccer program, we have got to have another field, a practice field; I mean two: one for the women and one for the men, and a building that would house the practice area. Both teams can play their games on the same field down here without any problem. But if you use men and women on that field, both, there won't be any grass left. I think that's the one thing that if I were asked to make a decision on or give an opinion on, it would be that right now is the time for men's soccer to be added to our program too.

TS: During your tenure as athletic director, were you under a lot of pressure to have winning teams?

- SL: No. Not from anybody on campus. We were very fortunate; we had a great relationship with the Marietta people, the *Marietta Daily Journal*. It was excellent. Otis Brumby and his people down there, the sports writers, we had a good relationship with them.
- TS: So Dr. Siegel didn't call you in and say, "We need to win, no matter what it costs"?
- SL: Not once in her life, or my life, did she say anything. She said, "We want to win." And I said, "Yes, we're going to win." But she's never, never put any pressure on me.
- TS: What about facilities when you were athletic director? Did you think they were adequate?
- SL: No, they were inadequate, but the program needed to be started. Look what it has led into--the Bobbie Bailey [Athletic Complex] and the [Spec Landrum] Centre and those kinds of things. I had a wonderful, wonderful relationship with the people on campus to a great extent and with the president and with the press and with some members of the trustees that I knew. We never did ask for much, but everything we ever asked for we got.
- TS: By the way, how was it set up in terms of whom you reported to? There was a faculty committee, I guess, that . . .
- SL: Yes, I think that's the best thing that I did as athletic director.
- TS: Was to get that committee created?
- SL: Dr. Siegel gave me full responsibility to do these things. What we did, Tom, was really an advisory board for athletics. I spent a lot of time talking to people on campus. Roger Hopkins was a wonderful, wonderful help. He was our business officer of athletics, Grace Register was [the contact person in Business Services]. If we had Grace in Washington now we wouldn't have a deficit.
- TS: She watched it tight?
- SL: She stayed on my back all the time. What we did, we made a decision first that we would have a representative from every department on campus on the athletic board. I suggested that to the president, and she said, "I think that's a great idea. Find out who you want for whatever and let's see if they'll serve." We did, and they were all very cooperative. We had a few little jealousies and things of that nature, but you have that everywhere. But all in all there was never any doubt about us not growing and continuing with the athletic program.
- TS: What was Herb Davis's role in all of this? [Dr. Herbert L. Davis, Dean of Science & Allied Health].

SL: Herb was the second person I went to. I knew Herb, and he and I talked about football occasionally over coffee or whenever, just whenever I ran into him. He was interested in the program. In the athletic program you must have certain rules and regulations that are enforced, academically, particularly. So I went to Herb and asked Herb if he would agree to take that responsibility to be sure that we were meeting all of the rules that the NAIA had written out and demanded. I give you my word. He did it. Two or three times we were saved by Herb with just some little thing that would happen. He continued on when Dave [Waples] came in as athletic director. He continued in that capacity until he retired. And, Tom Roper, who taught business law, and Dr. [George] Beggs's right-hand man, Will Rogers.

TS: Fred Roach [a Will Rogers scholar]?

SL: Fred Roach was from [the history] department. It was absolutely unbelievable. The faculty around campus, when I would run into them or visit a minute or so, there were so many of them interested in the athletic program. For instance, there were at least five people on campus who came to me and volunteered if we had academic problems with a specific student. If they had that student, they would give that student counseling and tutoring on their own. Things like that . . . it was the greatest period of my life working and getting that program started.

TS: Well, you retired in '87. Then, Dr. Siegel asked you last year to come back and head this feasibility committee. Tell me a little bit about that committee.

SL: Okay. She and Dave had talked. . .

TS: Dave Waples?

SL: Yes, Waples. She and Dave talked about this. I don't know whether Dave suggested me or whether she suggested it, but the two of them combined. Dave called me and told me that he and the president had talked and they were going to have this committee and they wanted me to chair the committee. I said, "Well, I don't think I can do it because I'm not down there." But it worked out, and the two of them gave me a free hand. I didn't choose, but I okayed every person that served on the committee. Everybody that was recommended by the athletic department or—I don't think [the president] ever gave us a recommendation—but everybody that was on there was recommended by them, and it worked out fine.

TS: Who all was on the committee?

SL: We had three people from the community and me. Roger [Hopkins] was on the committee, and Pat Devine from psychology. A male and a female athlete. The president and vice president of the student body were on the committee. Those were the ones that I suggested to the committee—the student government people—because I believe in them. But let me see, where have I left anybody out?

TS: You've got three from the community, Roger Hopkins, a male and female athlete, and Pat Devine.

SL: There were eighteen people on the committee.

TS: Pretty big committee.

SL: Big committee. It took some time to get it started and particularly with me being so long away from that type of thing.

TS: So Dave Waples was not on the committee?

SL: Dave and his coaches were not members of the committee, but they were, what do you call them?

TS: Ad hoc?

SL: Yes, they were allowed to come to the meetings. But when we got into what you might call executive session they would automatically dismiss themselves.

TS: Right. Were there some university advancement and development people on the committee like Wes Wicker?

SL: Wes came to two. Earle Holley [the vice president for business and finance] was on the committee.

TS: Tell me a little bit about the feasibility committee? What was your charge?

SL: The charge was to give the president a report on moving from Division 2 to Division 1, the practicality of it and hopefully some input as to when, where, how, and so forth. We were very fortunate. It took us three meetings to get to know each other. Then all of a sudden we gelled, just like coaching a team. You're ready to go out and play a game. We were ready to go out and play a game. With the help from the committee--it wasn't me--we did an excellent study for her and went into a great deal of detail and came up with a conclusion that Kennesaw needed to move from Division 2 to Division 1 in order to keep abreast of what the rest of the university was doing and the academic programs and so forth. That was the report. She was very pleased with the report, and I was pleased with the report. It was some really wonderful people on [the committee]. Within a very short period of time after that she made a decision, after talking with some of the people, I guess, like development—and development's going to have to play some roles in this thing now—and adjusting a few things in the athletic department. It was going to be a good bit different operation, but it's being done. The Big South Conference was supposed to be on campus a week ago for a full day with the commissioner of the conference and a couple of the college presidents asking us to come into [that] conference. The Southern Conference, in my opinion, would be the best for us because

of less travel and because of schools where an immediate rivalry would be available. That's very important.

TS: You said earlier that was Appalachian State, Furman, The Citadel.

SL: Western Carolina, Wofford, The Citadel, Furman, Georgia Southern.

TS: Oh, they're in there?

SL: Yes. So you look at that, and really the travel is so much less than any other conference.

TS: Who would the Big South be?

SL: Oh, Liberty in Virginia. They've also got the University of North Carolina, Asheville. Greensboro is in the Southern Conference, but not for football. The key to us is not having a football program at the present time, but planning to have one it would be best if we could get in the

TS: So we would be in the Southern Conference but without football if we took that.

SL: Yes. Travel-wise, you're riding buses. When you start going much beyond Appalachian State and The Citadel, that's a long way to go to Central Florida and those kinds of [places]. I think the thing is moving along well. I haven't talked to [President Siegel]. I do plan to talk with her for a few minutes in the morning before we go back to North Carolina and catch up on just where things are going right now. I think from all I can gather, a decision will be made probably by the time of the next semester after this one.

TS: What was the impetus for this committee coming into being, do you think?

SL: From what I have gathered from her in a couple of conversations about the committee, a lot of interest from the trustees comes to her. Beyond that, other college presidents. She says every time she sees [another president from places] like Georgia Southern or Western Carolina, where she's well-known, they want to know, "When are you going to start playing us?"

TS: In our current Division 2 Peach Belt Conference, most of the schools are half our size or less.

SL: Yes, and competitively that's not good. We can win too easily. If we're not winning in that conference, we ought to give athletics up. The Big South, if it weren't for the travel, would be a good conference to be in because they're not quite as strong, team for team, as the Southern Conference. We could go into the Big South and win. But we would also miss a lot more classes and have a lot of worn out kids going to class and those kinds of things. Tom, one thing I wanted to mention and I had forgotten about it. Back when our advisory committee agreed on [our motto], it was something I was proud of. It was something I think a lot of people on campus were too. That motto was on our stationery

back at that time, but it's kind of faded. Our motto was "Kennesaw College, Where Academics and Athletics are Teammates." I suggested that to [President Siegel] not too long after the feasibility study. I said, "We need to get that back on there." She said, "I didn't know it had been taken off!" It's something that I think is important, and so maybe you can be an ally in asking some questions yourself about it.

TS: All right. I've got you two last questions. First, when was the field house named for you, and talk about that a little bit.

SL: Oh, the gym over there. Honestly, I don't know. My guess is back around '96 or '97.

TS: That was a big honor.

SL: Oh, Tom, that was the greatest honor. I could never have even dreamed of it. It never entered my mind until one day I was called. I just absolutely am not worthy of it, but on the other hand, it's something that I will [take] to my grave as being one of the brightest things that ever happened to me.

TS: Who was responsible for that?

SL: I'm sure that . . . [chuckle]

TS: President Siegel?

SL: President Siegel.

TS: Okay, here's my last question. This is a tough one. Where did the name "Spec" come from?

SL: Oh, we'll have to do a whole new tape! I was a little boy. I was as freckled as freckles can get on a person. Back in those days, in the summertime, young kids, [age] eight or ten, didn't wear anything but a pair of shorts and [went] barefooted and everything else. I was freckled. Up at Piedmont College I was always around some athletic thing: tennis or any kind of ball, marbles, anything. They always had a July 4th party or celebration there at Demorest in the big park. There was a park up there at Piedmont College right across from the campus. There are five springs in a radius the size of this room that had different kind of water in them. They always had a big Fourth of July parade and everything there and contests. One of the contests was that they had a pole about this big around. It was greased. On top of the pole was a dollar bill. Whoever climbed to the top of that pole got that dollar bill. Well, actually, the first time I tried, I don't think I got more than three feet off the ground. My brother, Phil, told me before the next July, "If you need any money. . . ." A dollar then, boy, that was a monthly . . . That went on as I began to grow a little bit. I'm not bragging. I was a really good athlete in all sports. I could play anything. Finally, that included climbing. So one July 4th when I was in the sixth or seventh grade, I guess, I climbed that thing. They started yelling, "Go Spec!" That has been with me the rest of my life. It started Speckle, and it went to Spec. As I

said, I was a pretty good football player in college. I played well against Tech and Georgia and those guys and met a lot of those people who have been friends all of my life. And sportswriters. I was in the Atlanta papers fairly often during football season, and the Macon paper and [others]. The nickname just stuck. Finally I just reached the point where nobody except my family [called me James], and half of them called me Spec. My mother never did. My oldest brother didn't. They called me James. It just stuck with me, so I gave up! I walk in somewhere now, I say, "I'm Spec Landrum."

TS: Well, thank you very much.

SL: Tom, it's been a pleasure.

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