

University of Illinois Student Life and Culture Archives

Interviewee: Fred Turner

Interviewer: Greg Miller

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Fred Turner: [Unintelligible]. This letter I told you last week from a former Illini [unintelligible], I often disagree. And that was true. They did, but they didn't like people just [unintelligible] along the songs. Somebody to argue with about it and debate whether or not the same. But he had some other, some other ideas that I think [he was not very involved?] and some of his other assistants that have known, by the way, in the world, he always said he could get a letter today. He didn't answer, but he acknowledged it today. If it's somebody wanting to know something or asking, I'm sure we answer it or say, "I have it and I will answer it. I will let them know you got the letter." And he wrote this little book one year later. Well, it's a good little book. [Public hear?] it still matter of fact, I administered in the state and the publisher still sent it to the university.

A little check out in the same book is still and sold, but he was a great letter writer. He wrote letters himself all the time. He'd write a letter. Somebody congratulated me, somebody and tell me a star. And he was something of that to them. But he did an awful lot of that. He didn't let people sit around and wait. If you went in the office without an appointment, going to see him, the people and he used, he used students, except for his own secretary and the assistant deans, he used entirely student employees. And the time he retired, about 30 student employees, all part time in the office, had so much per hour. I'm lucky to get that. I started out with \$0.10, and then after a month I got raised \$0.15 an hour and the chief clerk for \$0.25 an hour. So [it was much?] to pay for that at that time. But he, he would not let a student sit and wait a long time to see. If he came out and found somebody sitting in the front office. "Are you waiting for me?" "Yeah." "Well, can you wait a little bit longer or I'll be make an appointment and come back so you won't have to leave them in one sitting." Wait a long time. He much rather, he operated as much as he could with the door open. It always be door open and people out to the door and administration building here and see who is there.

And if somebody is out a long time, he'd come out with this fellow "What are you sitting out here for, waiting for? You waiting for me? If so, let's get him in here, or else let's make a appointment for him."

Greg Miller: Is that the way you tried to run your office?

FT: Sure. In other words, don't. Don't embarrass people. Don't any more than you have to and some you can. The tricks of the trade like that. And he was a stickler for in his writing haven't a misspelled word in a letter, [sending?] the letter out. He was cause he was, his area was rhetoric, taught rhetoric.

GM: Didn't he start the rhetoric school here?

FT: Yeah, and journalism too. And Frank Scott started the [journalism. At first journalism, as well as rhetoric?]. Frank Scott left us to go to Boston as editor-in-chief of one of the publishing houses there. And he came there after being done up there. But another things like that, I think, being transmitted to his students, another trick that he always was if he was, if he was mad about something and wrote a mean letter to somebody, he would never mail it the same day.

GM: He always thought about it.

FT: He'd write it and then put it in the, in the drawer and tray and the next morning he'd tear it up. Almost never sent. You'd just never, never send a letter when you're mad.

GM: That's the way a lot of people go about-

FT: Get it out of your system and then read the things to yourself.

GM: It makes some more sense he [inaudible].

FT: He never had any children. They, they it was a great regret in her life and those parts that are very attractive women. She was a bell of her class and in the same class, although he was older than Sheba, [inaudible] the young people. Then after they were married they went [away] one time on a European trips. Felt sure they were on the way to having a youngster but that [inaudible]. They never did find out why they didn't have, so they didn't have any. He liked students and was clear that he would help in any way he could.

GM: You know, in those days, though, I just get the feeling that it's a lot different than it is now. That the administrators, even deans, just don't have as much time to talk with students as they might have before. The whole thing has become less chummy, less friendly. It's more of a business.

FT: I think if, if I accomplished anything along that line in the time from '31. So I retired, and especially after I got to be the dean of students in '43, I did everything I could to eliminate the the thing that he just made, and I did it by trying to add enough assistance in various departments so that a student could find somebody to see.

And, and we had them designated so that a student went to the right person to get the advice. And we tried to have enough assistance. So we retain this opportunity for a student to go and see a person who knew something about what he wanted to talk about. We kept adding people all the time for that purpose.

GM: I think university still tries to make sure people get around, but there's a, I know that it's hard for a lot of students to know where to go. And of course, I think that the place is so big. But it is hard to get in to see people you can't. It's hard, for example, to see Jane Loeb or someone like that.

FT: I don't even know Jane Loeb. I know her name, but I wouldn't know the woman.

GM: Yeah, well, there's a lot of administrators on campus. It's hard. And of course, they're very busy people.

FT: Other hand, by using appointments, you ought to be able to see Jane Loeb. Of course, that's one angle on it. The other angle is that you might see Jane Loeb and she can talk to you for ten minutes if you need to answer the question. Well, I know what the problem is, but I'm not the person to ask. All right, I don't know. We tried to get our people whenever when I was actually on the job, that man came to me and said, I, I need the answer to this question. I, I felt sure I either didn't know the answer to it or thought somebody else should answer. I called the person I said in there, and "They got a kid here that's got a got a question. I can't answer. It's a question you should answer. When can he see you?" And usually they went right from, from my office or one of our officers to the person who could. Well, this, this, this beats telling the kid, "Well maybe you go to so and so. Maybe he can answer your question." Because the next man I

call may have said to me, "Well, I don't know who it is, but if you'll see this man who's on my staff, he can answer this question and call him or I'll call him." And they went and set up to see him.

GM: Has the job of dean of students changed since you [inaudible].

FT: Well. Yes, I think it has. Although I think that I think that Dean Slatterly is doing a real job attempting to. He has a much bigger job now than I had [inaudible]. But he doesn't, I don't think he even carries the title of dean of students.

GM: Not anymore.

FT: Going by chancellor of student affairs. But he he is sure of making an attempt to personalize the operations, which I think had lost something prior to the fact that he went in there in between this and the one man in between who had a rough time. And while it he [inaudible] been around two years and even three years, it was pretty much that he'd come out of the graduate office. I don't think he fully comprehends what [he's up against?].

GM: I'm not too sure I understand the real scope of what the dean of students used to do or does now [inaudible] Slatterly now.

FT: Well really he coordinates all of the service functions that are outside of the academic or the exceptional admissions he has. And health services is separate. He doesn't- No, it's back in his bailiwick now. Well, he works well. I know that he works [inaudible]. I had it when I started being a student of the health services under me, and I quickly got a committee appointed study separating the health service from the dean of students.

And the reason at that time was this, that the more than half of the work of the health service at the time I was dean of students, was devoted to faculty and nonacademic people, and they had so much more of a work in which I had no part or no interest in. But I didn't want this thing under me. And we did get it left in those days.

GM: You mean really, the health service wasn't that student oriented?

FT: It was, it was faculty and nonacademic and student in all three of them. Present time, they don't do very much for the faculty. They won't even take faculty from the hospital.

GM: [Inaudible]

FT: Well, it's just a different program. I'm sorry if they don't seem that being the deed of gift on McKinley's gift was that it should be for faculty and students too and university employees and townspeople. And there was a lot of time they didn't get anything done for [student affairs?]. And and I think it's too bad that they don't, but they haven't been able to keep going. But the operational costs have been in the problem that is so expensive to operate. That is not easy. I thought that who am I to be critical of any of these changes? Because I know there are situations.

GM: Yeah, that's the thing. You can't really be critical about [inaudible]. In a way they're kind of out of most people's control anyway, because they're just the things that happen over time and you can't. The times change. You really can't be critical I mean because it's bigger now than...

FT: Well, that's part of it. Times change, but customs and mores change too. When you when you think back to, well, let's take, for example, a student party when I was a student, first of all, you had to get permission for a student, student organization want to have a dance. You had to get a sponsor for them, faculty, and they had to get a chaperon, and then they in addition to that, that was official. Then they, they always invited a bunch of faculty and townspeople. Yes. And, and friends. So here was a mixing of students and faculty and townspeople. Well, that began to drop all over in the '30s.

The townspeople and faculty did mention most of it, and now I suppose a few alumni [inaudible]. But mainly who is [the victim?]. No in the picture like they used to be. But the change has come about and it's, it's the way things are.

I think, actually, that the things that could be said for the old form, because there are a lot of good friends, some of them pretty good financial support for houses that had no connection other than the fact that they invited them to their parties and well, and they became financial helpers. Even now, look on your fraternity brothers for a little bit of law support sometimes something like that.

GM: I knew you were a fraternity brother, but I didn't know which one.

FT: I was SAE.

GM: They rushed that year?

FT: Yeah, they were. Yeah. I hadn't joined a fraternity until I was a junior. And at that time, anybody joining as a junior was looked on [as some scant/stamps?] because they didn't need anyone who's a freshman. And that guy, my friend, he took them three of us and juniors and we all paid all of our obligations. And one of them was my roommate, and he went on to get his doctor's at Wisconsin. At the time of his death he was the chief research chemist for the [inaudible] people out in California. And the second one was entered law. He became president of one of the big banks in Chicago and retired up in Wisconsin. Well, they had a letter from him about this article Jack [inaudible] said he'd seen in the [kidney, tomato?]. And the three of us were all taken in the junior. And I think we kind of broke the back of the competition. An upperclassman said breaking away in the spring. But they were good years. And I went on and stayed. Did work in the national fraternity. [I was one of the presidents later on?].

GM: Today fraternities and sororities can be very social but I know that at least in the history of the university, they've really often been very political.

FT: Well, they, this was in campus policy. They, they didn't pay too much attention to the national politics, although there were some of them that did make it up a little bit in state and national politics. But campus politics meant a lot more then than they do now. Class elections were [a bigger thing?]. See, every class had its own [inaudible]. When you stop and think the major social function here is going by with the junior prom and the senior ball and the military ball, those are the three reasons. Which one's left? Military ball is left and it's pretty small, apparently. Used to be a few thousand couple dance. Lot of officers, lot of townspeople. Even officers from Rantoul and even out of Chicago come down to the military ball. And the class dances, the junior prom and the senior ball used to be have to have it two nights in a row to accommodate all the people that want to go to it. You don't have that anymore. And the elections, all the committees, the senior committee and the junior committee and freshman class officers and sophomore and the elections were really pretty spirited affairs and the election of the union presidency. That was a big. The election for director, student director of the Illini Board. They were elected on a popular ticket.

GM: Did you ever run for anything?

FT: No, no, I didn't have much time for activities. I think about the main thing that I ever did in the way of activities outside of the office. I did one summer. In what year? Senior. At that time, we had the students could vote in the honor system in examination, and I served one summer, one summer session on two minor commissions and that was about the extent of my activities. And in that time, gotta eat and pay your rent.

GM: Back in the [men's?] fraternity, where was the house?

FT: [Inaudible] 211 Daniel. That house was built there in 19,1904 for the [inaudible] bill. Got a lot done. Well when 3rd Street hadn't been painted when I was there. Daniel Street had just been painted and 3rd Street was still dirt. So was 2nd. 1st was paved, 4th was paved, 5th was still dirt. So a lot of that happened [at once?].

GM: Let's see. I believe, I believe the [inaudible?] body still tries to keep fraternities of campus.

FT: Yes, he did. And it was [Merrill?] who invited them. He got in, he said, "Come on."

GM: It was a lot easier then joining a fraternity when you'd have to be secret about it. Well, was there a lot of competition for membership? Now it's kind of, now it seems they have too many, too many people who want to join fraternity.

FT: Well, there was competition. The rushing, rushing used to be fighting events back then. They had to have quite strong regulations to keep you from cheating on rushing. People travel by train in those days and they said some of the best rushing was done on the train coming down from Chicago by getting, getting on the train and spotting the boy you were after and getting them off the train. Trains came in the ground level and getting them off instead of on the station side, getting off on the side away from the station before anybody else has a shot at him. Oh, the rushing was, it was informal at the same time. It had a lot of regulation about it. The students themselves put it in to try to keep people from cheating on the thing. But it was, it was competitive. And I believe now the sternness seemed to be making a pretty good firm comeback here in the latter '60s, the early '70s, and even [inaudible] seem to be coming back.

GM: Are you glad to see it [in?].

FT: Yes, I am. I learned that very definitely from being part. So he felt that fraternities and student organizations generally were a good thing, in that while you deal with individuals as such, you can also deal with groups of individuals. And he felt that fraternities had a responsible character about them. They had offices, they had property, and they did the deal with the president of the fraternity for all of [the announcements?] to him. The idea that the one to get across and he would come to you of his problems and not necessarily mentioned any names. I've seen mention, "I've got so and so and so and so." What are we doing here? And there is no name for a [inaudible] that tall and discuss it from the bottom of the hill. And maybe he'd come back and tell the dean that he had worked out, that [inaudible] at all. [Inaudible].

GM: You think that's what students need? You think students sometimes get shut off and again, they kind of oh isolated life. Some of them live in dormitories.

FT: Yeah.

GM: Do you think they need that organization?

FT: Well, I think it's helpful because it gives them a chance to identify themselves. And that's not only true to other students, that, they do it on their own life. The person who has no connections and no identity other than just some stuff. I think he was. I think he would turn to the [sorority?] [inaudible] as a [two million?] solution, offering a student a chance for identification of something that he can. He can certainly make friends of. He had to find other people. Whether it's fraternity or sorority or some other out of the class.

GM: People are still talking about hazing these days.

FT: Yeah.

GM: Was it prevalent back then?

FT: Yeah, yeah, there's been people have been doing it as long as I can remember. I don't know, I thought after the war, they pretty well killed it here because the veterans that came back after the war just said, this is nonsense. We won't put up and we don't have to. And they didn't have

much. And it seems to have come back a little bit. At least talked about it all the time. And somebody's investigating. I don't know, I think.

GM: Yeah, I think, I'm not sure what the board of fraternity affairs is doing now.

[Crosstalk]

FT: Well, it's, it's a [inaudible] and the excuse has been that it unifies the freshman class group and makes them feel closer. It doesn't unify all of them. Doesn't make them feel good either. It just seems to me like a child.

GM: Today it seems as the kind of hazing we ever hear about it just kind of.

Well, there's an exercise running up and down stairs, pushups till you ache, that kind of thing. Was it ever, was it more roughhouse back in the old day?

FT: It was more paddling. But I've seen upperclassmen paddle each other on that's harder than I've seen them paddle freshman. It was all in the spirit.

GM: And these guys class fights?

FT: This was before my time. They had eliminated the [classroom and crashed?]. When I came again.

GM: Figure that was Dean Clark.

FT: Yeah. [crosstalk] They actually got into some pretty serious injury. They tried to substitute some other sorts of games, tug-of-war, things like that, but that didn't take over the old [football?] contest. Pretty rugged. Somebody's bound get trampled in. I think they died a good match on that. There's a lot more spirit between the classes then there was now.

GM: You know you've been here, so a good period of time. You really watched the place, you know, grow to prominence, you know? Are you, have you been proud to be part of that?

FT: Yeah.

GM: You felt really involved in the way the university has been growing all these years.

FT: Oh, yeah. You can't avoid it. It's nice to see a place move the way it has. And I think our division has made a good record in that because the, I was actually for many years in the [national team?], for secretary for 20 years and, and, and the president and I [some activities?] less and less. But Dean Clark helped start the national organization and I picked up where he left off and stayed with us and I got to be their secretary, which I had for a long time. And I still have, I think friends in more institutions around the country than the average person, because I know somebody, almost every major institution. Now a lot of people that I knew best have retired or gone, but our program had a good reputation is looked on. And the proof is the fact that we've had lots of assistance and we've had other people hired and we had the training there. I could come and set up something at our school and we never discouraged if you got to get off and go out. "No, go ahead."

GM: Do you miss the daily contact with students?

FT: Yeah, yeah, I do. I do it in as much as I would have time to do it. But now when you get to be my age, you don't work as fast as you used to. I know I'd never get anything done if I seen very many people.

GM: Is that what you were? Exactly why did you retire? You didn't have to.

Yeah, I did. I was 68 years old.

GM: Oh, you did?

FT: Yeah. See, the the centennial, the university centennial started in '67 and ran through '67 in '68. And I was scheduled to be 68 in '68. That's when I retired. The president appointed me chairman of the Centennial Committee in '65. And the committee started and began its work in '65. And then in '66, he he said to me, "How do you how do you want to handle?" He was saying, "Want to continue being dean of students or just take on the centennial and do that alone." And I felt like I'd like to retain my title as dean of students at the same time. Discard most of the work, except I had been the chairman of a committee that was called a coordinating committee doing [circles?] in the Navy [crosstalk], Navy campus and the medical campus [inaudible]. I'd like to retain that coordinating committee.

And he said, "Oh, I'll just make the I'll make you university dean of students and director of the centennial, and you'll spend most of the time for the centennial, which I did in '66 to '68.

GM: What are you, what did you aim for in the centennial celebration? What kind of things did you want to see emphasized?

FT: Well, we had a serious problem there because the president said at the outset, "We can't, we can't afford. We can't ask the state to send a lot of money to spend on the centennial. And let's have a dignified celebration but keep the cost of it down to the place." And the general idea he expressed, and that's what we followed, was to take the ongoing events, the institution, and add to them in quality and and quantity and try to get things happening that were notable, but do it on the basis. For example, the Miller Lecture. Instead of just getting a Miller Lecture, let's find the outstanding man world this year in the centennial year, and bring here and use the lecture. If there's to be an art exhibit, let's find the outstanding exhibit and its current any place in the world and bring it here. And if we're going to have a visiting faculty man, let's add a few dollars to what we've done for it and and try to try to get the man here that's really the most outstanding man we've had yet. In other words, we put all the quality into all the ongoing events.

GM: You think it was a good year?

FT: Yes, I do. I think it was an excellent centennial year. And did you see a report on it?

GM: I've never seen it before. I've seen the little statue so.

FT: Well, the reason you haven't seen one but I've got three of them. They only printed 250 reports. And if you'd like to look at one sometime-

GM: I would.

FT: I'll lend one to you. But you must be very careful [inaudible] stealing because I've only got three of them left. Not sure what, we love people to look at them and give them back. President's office has, I think they have pretty [inaudible]. I don't know why why we didn't more reports, any big quantity of them.

I think the success of it maybe can be judged by somebody else's word on that. Same time we were having our centennial, Rutgers University was having their bicentennial. In fact, I went to say the Bicentennial convocation just to see what they were doing on the thing brand or flood out there, but they had it anyway.

GM: Everyone talks about the budget crunch of the university and they are little over 100 years, and people are asking some real hard questions. Well, where the university is doing?

FT: Yeah.

GM: You said it was a good centennial year because it looked pretty good. Does it look pretty good, you think going into the second century,

FT: Yes, I do. Well, when we got it all through, I sent this man at Rutgers. He sent me a copy of their report that's in the book, and I think I gave that they have another in the archives now. And I sent him on our report and he, you know, said, "I don't think your report is near elaborate as ours. And I think your celebration lead ours a mile because you you've got so many people involved in it." And you look through this report, you'll see that we did involve a lot.

Students had a fine involvement in it too. The centennial, the motto and the student designed the flag. Students had designed that and made it, we used it. And that's a good part of. Everybody involved in some way. And fact that pay nobody anything around here for it. For my centennial, I got my students our.

GM: Matter of fact.

FT: Anyone who's ever done, the only one would ever done to the human figure, the statue of [St. Anne?].

GM: And that's a good story too.

FT: Well, I got relatives and [inaudible] and that's why I kind of-

GM: Ever been up there?

FT: Yeah, I've been there a couple of times.

GM: Well, it's interesting. Interesting old town. Who gets your cards? You send them to faculty members, friends all around.

FT: Friends. And they go coast to coast, North and south. Friends all. We used to send out a good many more than we do now. A lot of people we used to send them to are dead. But we send them to our friends instead of Christmas cards, and I think they have done a little bit of good because we've got a fair number of people say they make a point of always going to see whatever, whatever comes up on the card after the last. And there's a doctor in Champaign from Carle, and he called us up the Sunday after Christmas and said, "Well, we've been down to see the church already. We always go see where they are."

GM: Well, that's nice. When do you have to start making the woodcut on it?

FT: Well, not later than the summer.

GM: Oh, I see.

FT: It takes me, one year just out of curiosity we figured how much time it did take to build one and it counted up to near 400 hours. The research and the getting the pictures and transferring it. It's like type, it has to be on the block.

GM: Yeah.

FT: They're all in to print.

GM: You use the wood or linoleum?

FT: No, we use wood. I've never cut on linoleum. I don't know whether I could do that or not.

GM: I guess you get a smooth ending.

FT: With the linoleum?

GM: The nice thing about the wood is you get the wood grain.

FT: I do, and I like wood. Like to work with wood. And that wood we use is not usually a good wood for the purpose, yellow poplar. And it has an interesting characteristic very few woods have. It's not real hard and it's not, it's not soft at all. But it's very fine, fine fibers. And they don't pick up. Some wood and a little fiber up against it. And working with that just don't want to do that. You, you know, anything about antiques at all and have any interest?

GM: I don't really know much about that [crosstalk].

FT: Most of your antique furniture, it's Midwestern antique stuff. You can find an old chest and it'll have walnut fronts and cherry posts. Everything else. Honestly, not tulip wood. They used it as a cabinet wood. And you go, in the end of the day in Turkey Run State Park there's a tulip tree out in front of the lodge. Well, you know, you know, there's a tulip tree there in front of the lodge and it must be at least 60 feet from the ground up to the first branches. And it's a good three feet through the trunk.

Well, they saw big boards out of them and many earlier houses in Indiana. You'll find lots of houses in Indiana that that have doors and door cells and door frames and windows and window frames made out of wood. And it has the curious characteristic that it'll stand up, painted or not. I've seen old houses in Indiana, the doors and windows sills. It looked like they've never been painted. And yet they're perfectly sound. If they're kept dry around [inaudible]. And termites don't like it.

GM: Really?

FT: For some reason.

GM: You, you collect antiques yourself?

FT: No.

GM: Just got kind of a kind of passive interest in all these things.

FT: I'm no antique person.

GM: You mentioned that you like wood.

FT: I have worked a lot of wood. I've dealt with it. Based around the house. And we have the [inaudible] Michigan with a lot of stuff up there.

GM: Oh, oh, you have a little summer home up there right on the lake.

FT: Yeah.

GM: That's nice.

FT: Well, I hope it isn't washed away. We haven't had a report since the January 11th storm, which they say was one of the worst they had in years on Lake Michigan. I don't know, we have

a year ago in August we had to spend the money to build a break water because we were beginning to lose trees.

GM: I had some friends who were up there along the Michigan coast too, and they were always worried about something washing away.

FT: Well, it's been serious. The level of the lake's been so high. It's the second highest in all time history.

GM: I understand that, is it right that the worst, the worst kind of washed away or taking place along Indiana.

FT: Oh, we got problems here. You didn't get in the closet moving.

Unknown [possibly secretary]: Is it moving?

FT: It's moving.

GM: I'll stop.

FT: [Just called?] the secretary.

GM: Really?

FT: She's pregnant. By the time she had a daughter, about 14, and she lost her first husband and remarried. Now she's got a baby coming but then she [inaudible]. Take a look at that. [Inaudible]. Well, where were we. You're on Lake Michigan. You said you have friends. Where are they, you know?

GM: Well, they're along the southwest part of Michigan.

FT: Yeah.

GM: Not a long way.

FT: Know what town?

GM: New Buffalo.

FT: Yeah. So farther north. We're halfway between Muskegon and [inaudible]. They've had far more serious problems down there longer than we had. But now, according to the *Tribune*, the

Grand Haven area, which is only about 50 miles southwest, is catching bad. And Juniper Beach, which is just south of Headwaters, which is about. Oh, that's about 25 miles north. They caught it then and last summer.

GM: Is it just the level of the lake or-

FT: It's the high. Yeah, it's the high level of the lake. And the damage of course comes from waves.

GM: Well, I know a couple of years, couple years or quite a few years ago the breakwater out along Gary. And that's been threatening the dunes and changed the [lake?].

FT: Well, we got this [ridge?] water building in August 1970, '73. And last summer when we went back up there and [inaudible], the lake wasn't quite as high than the year before and now it's dropped some more. But you can't tell. Waves are funny things. You can't imagine how destructive they are when they come in.

GM: How often do you get up there?

FT: Well, we go up as early as we can in the spring when the snow is out and open it up, and then we go back in June and last till Labor Day and go back in the fall when I'm closing. We have now about three and a half, four months in.

GM: Up there how many years?

FT: Well, our own house, we've had only about 20 years, and we've been going there since 1933, and we rented for a long time. And then I bought some land from the man we rented from. We built our own house. Nice house, very comfortable place, adequate. Yeah. Well, we have, we have. It's built on the side of the hill, on top of the level.

It's not like a two-level house, but the upper level is only about six feet above the lower level. [Crosstalk] Downstairs we've got living room, dining in one room, kitchen [hall?] just one big room with a fireplace and one bedroom. Bath downstairs and upstairs and a couple more bedrooms. None of that.

GM: You ever get down to the lake and fish?

FT: No, we don't. I'm not much of a fisherman. I like to fish, but it's too much trouble. [You've got?] a boat, you can't fish along the edge. Now there is a small lake mile north of there you can go and fish but again you gotta get a boat, an anchor and you sit, you know. We spend a lot of time on the beach. All afternoon when the weather's good on the beach. And then I spent a lot of time fiddling around the woods and cutting firewood. I did quite a bit of amateur carpentry work, and we both like to get out and work on the hillside [inaudible].

GM: I've often thought that it'd be nice to have a place away where you can kind of just-

FT: Well, this is truly that, because it's not any kind of a sudden thing. The man we bought from had two miles of frontage and we, I think they're now 22 houses in the two miles. So it isn't crowded and it isn't an organized settlement at all. And four of us would go the same driveway to go in. We're about, say, three city blocks from the county highway up to our house. Yeah, and four, five houses now, it added off that one driveway. Well, we have our, the nearest thing we have to any association is we each chip in ten bucks a summer to put a little gravel on the driveway and that's it. But we're not-

GM: You said you've got a couple acres of land around to be kind of pushing you off the people?

FT: Yeah. We have [inaudible]. Actually, our nearest neighbor is a lady from St. Louis, and we can't even see her house. And she's close. It's right around the hill. The man we bought from thought we were crazy. We bought a ridge from him. A wooden ridge that [served?] and built it on the face of this where it comes out on the face of that. But it hasn't managed, isn't it? You do get tremendous wind there. And the wind, the way we were built. The wind was always, see the trees up above, practically laying level on the grass with the leaves and down below. Hear it and see it and we'll get a good breeze but it won't be that violent when it goes over the top. Yeah. So it does happen. And the man we got from finally conceded it. Did all right.

GM: They should've charged you more.

FT: Well, it's an interesting thing. There's very little land available up there along the lake. Lakefront property is going up [from?] being done.

GM: So the taxes. Well, I guess it's having a second home is more popular now than you'd think. People have enough trouble just keeping up with.

FT: But there's a nice product control on our- One of our other neighbors, professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago. And one retired president of [inaudible] College. Very, very nice.

GM: You know, I just, I was again, I've been going to the library and trying to see just what I could find about you here and there. And what really impresses me, that you really spent most of your adult life here at the university. You walked in and you walked into Dean Clark's office and got a job, and you kind of, you've been sort of in the state ever since.

FT: This is a desk that he was using the first time I ever talked to him.

GM: Really? What is it about this place that is so attractive to you? Over the years, what's made you stay here?

FT: Well, [inaudible]. I was, it was certainly not, I wouldn't have stayed. Didn't matter of making money because I'd never been paid a high salary. On the other hand, I've been comfortable, been able to get by nicely, and I've enjoyed the work. I've liked it. I didn't expect to be in this book called. I think I told you that in the board. Did I or didn't it?

GM: No, you didn't.

FT: I meant to.

GM: I see.

FT: But I'd worked, I worked for Dean Clark for ten years. For four years while I was a student I was a clerk in the office. I started in here as a clerk, and that was right, I want to see, that was in 1918, and that was the end of the war. World War One. And of course, I came in as a freshman in uniform, matter of fact, all freshmen were in uniform, with privates in the Army, but in the special so-called Student's Army Training Corps we're getting our \$30 a month in our keep and supposedly drilling and also going to classes. And that year the university was on the quarter system, the only year it ever has been, in my knowledge. Ever since, it's only year since I've been around here. But the quarter ended before Christmas. Let's see. We started in the fall, I started

late, and then the war ended November 11th. That was the armistice. And then things fell apart and then it was Christmas time and and a lot of students who had been in uniform here dropped out, didn't come back.

But the veterans began to come back and see, we got out before Christmas and I had already applied for a job as a clerk in the office in Clark's office. And I applied to a name that I got to [read to you?], A.J. Denatta. [Counted his name.?]. A.J. Denatta, for years the secretary of the board of trustees and and secretary to the president. But he was the chief clerk in Dean Clark's office. He hired me and he said, ["Look close by me, lad. You'd come back right after Christmas."?] So I started to work right after Christmas, between Christmas and New Years in 1918 and I've been here ever since. I suppose you asked me why did I stay. Well, each time I might have thought about leaving, there was some kind of emotion that came along that made it seem justified. But really, the change from the pre-medical work to to stay in here was an accident.

I had finished up, I was finishing up my degree in '22, and then a man named Arthur Warnock, Arthur Ray Warnock, been an assistant under Dean Clark and he was going to Penn State to be Dean of Men out there. When he went, Dean said, "I'm going to bring you back on of these days as associate dean and I'm going to retire ahead of time. Well, in the summer of 1922, the arrangements were all completed for Mr. Warner to come back here in the fall of '22 as associate dean and Dean Clark had planned to take the things off and possibly retire the next year. Although the [inaudible] could have stayed, with any rate at the very last minute. I mean, Dean Warnock holding Clark that he just plain couldn't leave Penn State, that they made such a flattering offer to him and had put so much heat on him, he was going to stay there.

And Dean said to me, "All right, if he's going to stay that's that and he'll stay there. And I wonder, since I'm kind of in a lurch here now, it's late, but do you want to postpone? You don't have much money to go to medical school, and I want you to wait a year and stay with me, and then I can get something else worked out."

Well, in the course of that year, he talked to me about staying on as an assistant dean with the understanding, he said, "You got to do graduate work in something, I don't care what. But go ahead and get a doctorate degree because you'll need it if you're going to stay in this kind of

work for me with the HD.” That would be your union card deal with whatever factor you're dealing with.

I was ready by the end of the year to stay with him. I did stay on as an assistant to him. Completed my doctor in '39 that same year. As a matter of fact, I got my doctor's degree, awarded it commencement on the same day that president announced I was succeeding Clark. That's President Chase. And he said, “Well, I want to appoint you acting Dean of Men for a year until I was sure he had that degree and then went on to have it.” I served as acting dean then for one year.

GM: And you wrote a book on the history, Illinois.

FT: It was my thesis. And it was on [inaudible]. You didn't see that thesis, did you?

GM: 988 pages. I know that much.

FT: You see the second shot there on the bottom, the two green backs. That's a rough draft. The two bound volumes above it with the black colors are the same thing. Copy. That's it. But it's a pretty good definitive history of the university from the start up until and in the Illinois Industrial University, which was 1885. That's when the name was changed to the University of Illinois. So it looks really just, just...

GM: I saw your outline.

FT: Yeah.

GM: And it looks really in-depth like it's been-

FT: It is. The man I worked under was tremendous. He was really something.

GM [Inaudible] real quick. Who did you work under?

FT: Named Robert Siebold. Who was a professor of education. I think one of the most astute scholars I've ever encountered at any time. He was a tough cookie. He wasn't popular and tall. He was so tough and rather unpopular. On the other hand, he really was a tremendous scholar. I know you don't know Bill Sanford, the director of admissions.

GM: I talked to him.

FT: All right. Far as I know, Bill and I are the only two people who ever tackled Dr. Siebold in the thesis here just because he scared them away. Well, I took him because I liked him in spite of the fact he was tough. I liked him very much. And I went to him and asked him if he'd be willing to supervise the thesis for me.

And he said he didn't know whether he would or not. He didn't know if he want to bother with it. And he finally said, "What are we going to do?" I don't know what I'd like to do. And he said, "Well, we'll do that." But when he got into it, no one could have been more helpful than he was. He was a strange man in many ways.

He was a Harvard product and he used to go back to Harvard every week. But he, he got me into libraries and he got things, some other from Washington and lots of other libraries, that I never could have had about his help. For example, I went to Harvard to check out some stuff and went to the library there. And even at that time, it was years ago, the first time I ever encountered a policeman on a turnstile in a library that patted your hips and checked your brief case in and out of library. The policeman said to me, "What do you want here?" I said, "Was told by a man in Illinois, Dr. Siebold to come to the library here and ask for a certain person. Possible assistance if they knew Dr. Siebold. This was the policeman on the door, but he knew Dr. Siebold as well. But I didn't think that.

GM: You know, there probably weren't too many histories or any histories at all on Illinois back then. I hate to say back then.

FT: Yeah, yeah, that's right, there is one. Do you ever see this?

GM: No, I never have.

FT: Well, it's a rare book now.

GM: It's for the library or your own personal?

FT: My own copy of it. [Inaudible]. I think, matter of fact, I think Edward Draper, who was the son of Andrew Sloan Draper, gave that to me. Well, do you know who Allen Nevins was? He wrote this [poem?].

GM: His name is familiar.

FT: Well, he was great historian. He left here and went to Columbia and was at Columbia University practically all his life. And then after he retired of Columbia. He went on Huntington Library in California and was there until he died. But he was one of the great American historians. And he wrote this as a young fella. Told me one time, he said, "I'm not very proud of that now, but I sure needed the money at the time I wrote it." It's one of a series. There are a bunch of books similar to that.

GM: Is it a good book?

FT: Yeah, it is-

GM: Thorough history?

FT: It's a very useful book. It's not. It isn't in-depth at all, but it's at most everything you need to know up to 1917 is in there. He did well on it.

Unknown: I know that went sober for this book. He found it difficult to do anything more than just 1896. He did. He got into so much, so much material. I couldn't believe the man's index just.

GM: Did you help him on that book, Solberg? Did you help Solberg at all?

FT: No [crosstalk]. As far as, I was on the committee.

GM: Were you the chairman of the Centennial Committee?

FT: No, I was chair on the Centennial Committee, but he he was, there was a committee on the history. I was on that committee too. We met once and that was about the end of it. And then they had trouble getting that book out. He first thought he could do it in one volume and then said it'll take two at least. And then he said, "I'm going to take five, and I'll be lucky if I can get one finished in time for the centennial." And he just barely did. We didn't get it out in the centennial.

GM: Is he, do you know if he's ever going to finish?

FT: I have no idea. I'm a little doubtful because he hasn't, as far as I know, done anything with the second volume that he maybe worked on it, but not to my knowledge.

GM: He uses the phrase in the book, “man supposes and God disposes.”

FT: Yeah, well, he’s been in Italy some year or two since he’s written that, whether he’s actually done any more, I don’t know. And I shouldn’t say that I, that he hasn’t done more. He may be working on the next volume.

GM: I assume that you think it’s pretty important that we get a good history.

FT: I do, I do feel very definitely on it. Yeah. I don’t think I could do the kind of thing, couldn’t follow. But I would like to do if I had the time, I’d like to get a little pocket [history], but I think I can handle up the early part of it and then [inaudible] down the stairs to do the second part. Only University of Washington’s got a good little paperback pocket history of the University of Washington to sell for a buck and have a good many pictures in it. And they have it around the bookstore and people can pick it up. They want to get something.

GM: I don't think the people who are here, the university in this area, realize, you know, who all these people who, who, these buildings are named after really were. They try. You know, people say Burrow.

FT: Yeah, and Burrow was a man who really changed the whole character of the institution in three years as acting president.

GM: It’s funny. After reading Solberg’s book, Burrow seems to be a very-

FT: He was a tremendous man. And Peabody, whom he succeeded, Peabody. And Peabody was never a popular president and had his troubles. Peabody didn’t like [the place?]. He got the name changed. He got permission to give degrees.

GM: Expanded the curriculum.

FT: Yeah, he expanded the curriculum. And he got the first appropriations that were ever secured from the state to pay back the salary. So he did accomplish some things that no one else had done up at that time.

GM: What made you go ahead and write a [inaudible] on the university?

FT: I don't know what got me interested in it, and I think it was a possibility of doing something worthwhile here. And it seemed to me that if I were to stay around the place, I'd know all I can about it. And I never lost the interest in it. And I'm still asking.

GM: How long did it take you to work on it?

FT: The thesis?

GM: Yeah.

FT: Well, I'd see, it was just about two years, and that was supposedly while I was working full time done, but I was getting six hours a day in the office until, you know, eight hours a day on the thesis. And the last year I did accomplish that which wasn't an easy life for my family.

GM: I would think it wouldn't have been.

FT: But it was fun and say this, this man Siebold is my advisor.

Couldn't have been more helpful. I'll tell you a story about him. I think will show the character of the man. The morning I took my family examination, he came in the office. I was scheduled to be at the exam 11:00, 11 to 1, my committee was due to meet. He came to the office and he said, "Are you disturbed about this exam?" And I said, "No, I'm not disturbed." And said, "Well, you don't need to be." You and I know more about this subject than anybody on the committee. What is it? More importantly, I haven't proved it. And if anyone objects to anything we have said, I'll consider it a personal insult. Highly offensive. Well, that kind of backing and you don't get very concerned about going into the examination, but it was really relatively easy. The preliminary is the tough thing you can get [over it?] but the final examination [randomly by nine?]. Excuse me. And they quickly came out and.

GM: To be really, you know, you still sit here at Dean Clark desk, and I and you came up with the dean, I assume that you really think highly of the man.

FT: Yes, I do, and I will say this say this for Dean Clark. He was the first dean of man.

GM: Yeah.

FT: At least there, there is one man, there's one man who claims this man in Oregon had the title ahead of Dean Clark, but that's not well substantiated. And what he actually did has never been

proved. But Dean Clark, but it definitely proves the point of this is the first real active, full-time dean anyplace. And he, he was a great innovator. He had ideas, a lot of imagination. And he, really I can't think of any area even though it was very primitive, I can't think of any area of student personnel work today that Dean Clark didn't dabble in the least experiment. For example, nobody ever, nobody ever did anything with the testing until after World War Two, when a couple of psychologists on the northwestern, president of the University of Pittsburgh had devised these Army psychological tests for the military people.

And then almost immediately, those things were adapted for admission to colleges. Dean Clark had had a couple of psychologists playing with these things in 1912. And you find these first kids, his first assistant dean for foreign students in 1907, our first one I know of in the country, anything. But he saw areas of need, and he did something about it, and he liked it, to play with ideas and see. If he found something good, he kept it. If he didn't find something good, he threw it out. He really was a very imaginative person. I think, actually, that his stature has greatly increased even since the death long time ago, in 1931. I think in the in the area of student personnel work.

GM: Did he give you a lot of ideas?

FT: Yeah, yeah. Couldn't avoid it. He didn't do it as a staff meeting idea. He just he lived it with him. He regularly took assistant deans every afternoon when he didn't have a committee meeting [inaudible] the students around the hospital. And we had at that time, we had three students in the hospital. He figured they were probably about as down as anybody could be. [Inaudible] visit kids in the hospital from 4 or 5:00 like a minister does, and he'd always take one of us along.

Well, you get a feel of doing something like that. And at that time, whenever a kid had to get into surgery or I and the parents were usually in the distance, and they wanted some assurance Dean Clark stood by you, sat right in the operating room during the operation. And you'll call the folks up and talk to them about and care for the sick student and it probably-