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Interview with

O. J. CURRY

March 29, 1979

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Floyd Jenkins

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Approved:

O. J. Curry
(Signature)

Date:

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Business Oral History Collection

O. J. Curry

Interviewer: Dr. Floyd Jenkins

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Dr. Jenkins: This is Floyd Jenkins recording for the Business Archives Project, North Texas State University in Denton, Texas on March 29, 1979. Today I am interviewing Dr. O. J. Curry, Dean Emeritus of the College of Business, North Texas State University in Denton. Dr. Curry was the first Dean of that College and was Dean for twenty-five years. We are doing the interview in his farm home on the old McKinney Road east of Denton about six miles from the Denton County courthouse and about two miles west of Lake Dallas.

Dr. Jenkins: Let's start by going back and looking at your family background. Give us any and all of your roots that you can remember and would like to record, working right on up through your birth date and place, and kind of what it was like growing up out there.

Dr. Curry: I was born on a farm near the east side of the Coleman County line and the west side of the Brown County line, October 25, 1904. And when I say I was born on the farm,

in those days everybody was born on the farm, or wherever they happened to live. I suppose there may have been a hospital in Brownwood, which was eighteen miles away, but people living in our community had never been in the hospital. They lived and died and nobody ever went to the hospital. Here is my baby picture. My mother says I was a fat baby and hated blinky milk. Any time anything was a little sour, I would set up a howl.

Jenkins: I remember blinky milk, yes.

Curry: Yeah, right. Well now, as to my background, I don't have very much information. I know that my Grandfather and Grandmother Curry--this couple up here--came from Tennessee, and they settled over near Itasca. And then in due time they moved out to Coleman County.

Jenkins: Do you know about when this was?

Curry: I guess they left Tennessee probably about 1865, '70, something like that, and moved to Coleman County, I don't know, 1890 or something in that territory. My Grandfather and Grandmother Jackson, I have less information about them. My mother used to talk about living in Polk County, Arkansas, which is a few miles east of what is now Wilhelmina State Park. And when they came to Texas, I don't know. But they, too, settled in and around the area where my Grandfather and Grandmother Curry lived. And this was rather . . . I don't know whether it was a unique community or not. My

Grandfather Curry had four sons and two daughters, and all of us lived within a three mile radius. And then my mother's sisters and brothers kind of lived on the fringe around this area, and there were three non-related families in the community.

Jenkins: Do you have any idea how many acres or square miles . . .

Curry: Oh, let's see. The Curry family would have about a six mile square area, and then the Jacksons and the women and their husbands . . . some of them lived within that six mile area and some of them just outside and some of them, maybe, six or eight miles away. So we had cousins by the droves. And the big community activity, of course, was Sunday. We never saw anybody, except rarely, except on Sunday. And always some of the kinfolks came to our house, so we went to their house. And through the summer time, and, well, any period when we weren't busy on the farms, we youngsters, they would either come to our house or we would go to their house and sleep on the floor nights and just play together and live together. So that's part of my early family connection.

Jenkins: We've got your grandparents, let's get your parents together back there somewhere.

Curry: Where my father and mother met, I wouldn't know except they were living in the proximity and I am sure it was not unusual for them to be together. And I don't know how old

they were when they married. I have no idea. The first child was the oldest young lady right here in the picture.

Jenkins: Her name?

Curry: Verdie Lee. And then came Nettie Belle, and Nettie Belle died at about fourteen or fifteen years old, I guess. I just barely remember her and the funeral and that sort of thing. Then this brother three years older than I am.

Jenkins: His name?

Curry: Buford. He lives in Alice. He is a retired oil field mechanic, pumper gauger. And this is my younger brother. He is six years younger than I am.

Jenkins: And his name?

Curry: Well, his name is Walter, but nobody ever knows it. He has always gone by the name of Buster. And the way that came about, Buster was sick, had a cold or something or other, and I happened to be with my Dad, and we went to town to get some medicine. And Dad had talked to the doctor about what seemed to be the problem, and the doctor had given him a prescription. So we went to the drugstore. And there was no name except my Dad's name, and the druggist wanted to know who this was for. And Dad looked at me and said, "What's that boy's name?" And I was a little embarrassed or tongue-tied or bashful or whatever. So he just turned around and said, "Oh, Buster." Well, one of mother's sisters had looked at him when he was a very small baby and said, "Ain't he a Buster?" So that is the boy's name.

Jenkins: He was intended to be a Buster.

Curry: He was intended to be a Buster. Well, we grew, primarily, on the farm we grew cotton and maize.

Jenkins: They are still growing that down there, aren't they?

Curry: Yes. You won't find any in that area now. I guess there is no cotton at all grown in that territory. It has nearly all gone to ranch, cattle and sheep and some goats. And some wheat and oats, but no row crops.

Jenkins: Oh.

Curry: It's gone.

Jenkins: Oh, now there is no row crops.

Curry: Yes, now there is no row crops.

Jenkins: I am thinking about driving between here and Austin and seeing miles and miles of cotton and maize.

Curry: Yes, but this is west, southwest. And, of course, the children, along with their parents, were the farm labor. From just about the time you could walk you were a part of the farm labor doing something. And one of the things I used to dread more than anything else about the farm labor, was about this time of year, and you would have to harrow with a team of mules or horses, it was an old section harrow, and the wind was blowing, and it was raw on your face and that dust was flying up and you would come in at night and your face was blistered with that sand and dust and all. About that time of year you were trying to go barefooted, and those old clods hurt your feet. There was always a rock

you could step on. That and suckering corn. Those two jobs I really didn't like. And you would start out to chopping the cotton. In those days we didn't believe cotton would grow unless there was one stalk about every fifteen to eighteen inches. So we would have to, once in a while there would be two of them or three of them in a wad, and you would just have to reach down and pull a couple of them out. So that's the way we operated . . .

Jenkins: You also chopped?

Curry: Oh, yes, chopped the cotton. And then come wintertime you chopped the wood and hauled that in. You know what farm life . . . but I guess a lot of people don't know.

Jenkins: How many animals did you have, work animals?

Curry: Oh, well, we had four that we used all the time, two big horses and two big mules. And then we had one or two others in case one of them had a sore foot or something, we always had an extra spare. And then Dad had a riding horse. A lot of the time about the only way you could get from here to there was horseback, and mud and that sort of thing.

Jenkins: Now did you give us the date of your birth?

Curry: No, I didn't. October 25, 1904. Other things I think people might find interesting, the weeks we were at work. Saturday afternoon we probably went in to Santa Anna, Texas, which was our shopping area.

Jenkins: Is that still there?

Curry: Oh, yes. Santa Anna.

Jenkins: I've missed it somehow.

Curry: Well, when they named the town they wanted to name it Santana for an Indian chief who roamed those hills and prairies out there. And they sent it in to the postal department, and they thought that the people out there had made a mistake. They had never heard of Santana, and they just assumed that they were trying to name it after the Mexican general. And so that's the way they sent the name of the town back--Santa Anna. And so it is. And that's a unique place because the two mountains, you know, just rise out of the prairie, and there is a gap between them. And, well, I will come to this in a minute, I have spent a good many hours up on those mountains. And there is all kinds of legends about the Indian maiden that jumped off the cliff and . . .

Jenkins: Lover's Leap?

Curry: Lover's Leap.

Jenkins: Do those mountains have a name? On the map?

Curry: Just Santa Anna Mountains. No, I doubt that they are even listed on them, because they are not more than, oh, let's say three hundred feet high, probably, but they look high because they just come right up off the plains.

Jenkins: But they were known locally as Santa Anna Mountains.

Curry: Oh, yes, Santa Anna Mountains. Anytime you mention the town Santa Anna most people say, "Oh, that's where the

mountains are." In growing up, Sundays and rainy days and things like that were the only times that we really had to play very much. We would go to church, of course, on Sunday morning, and then Sunday afternoon in the summertime, mostly we fought wasp nests and bumble bee nests and went swimming and everything else that boys tend to do.

Jenkins: We didn't call it skinny dippin' then . . .

Curry: No, well, that's what it was, and we had--I guess in these days you would call it a club--in those days just three or four of us boys. On New Years Day we would get together and go swimming. And if we had to break the ice, that's what we did. But that didn't endure. That club didn't stay together too long.

Jenkins: What about trips to town? Do you have any recollection of anything unusual happening there?

Curry: Yes, two or three things. One, in the winter we would go about once a month, I guess.

Jenkins: How would you get there?

Curry: In a surrey, hack, and if it was unusually cold on Saturdays and sometimes it was, Mother would heat great, big rocks and wrap them in blankets and put them down on the floor of the hack so we could keep warm.

Jenkins: That's a new one on me. I hadn't heard that.

Curry: Well, it's surprising. You heat a great big rock and then wrap it, and it will stay warm most of the day no matter how cold it is. And then you put the blanket over your

feet and sit there with your feet on that rock and you stay warm. There are more ways than one to keep warm. And then in the fall when we would start picking cotton, the first bale Dad would take all of us to the gin. And that was the highlight, first of all to see the gin machinery running. And he always liked to save the seed on that first bale. And Dad would get a big sack of bananas and crackers and cheese, and on the way home we would feast on that stuff. And as little as you may think of it, that once or twice a year was as often as we had cheese. Now bananas we had fairly frequently. During chopping season and cotton picking time and maize heading time, we headed maize with knives in those days, you know. Just put the maize in the crib in the heads. And when we caught up with our work, if we did, on our farm, my brother and I would hire out to somebody else in the community that needed some help. And this was a community, too. No matter what happened to a family, if somebody got sick, the man who operated the place, the rest of us would just go over there and plant his crop and cultivate it and take care of it until he got to where he could do it. And when I was, well, let me go back and say my early school experience. There was a one room school about, roughly, two miles or a mile and half from our home.

Jenkins: Was it in a community?

Curry: Yes, it was the Buffalo community, or as the natives called

it, Poverty Flat. That's what my grandfather always called it. But the official name of the school was Buffalo. And that's where I started to school. Would you believe that Addie Brown, my first grade teacher, went to my fifty-fifth homecoming of my Santa Anna High School graduating class last October? Addie Brown was there.

Jenkins: How old was Addie?

Curry: Well, you know, I guess she was at least eighteen when she was teaching there, so that would make her fairly . . .

Jenkins: How many people were there? How many folks were at that reunion?

Curry: Well, of our school class of 1923, there was only . . . I believe there were twenty-eight or thirty of us who graduated in 1923, and there were only eight or ten.

Jenkins: That's pretty good.

Curry: But on our fiftieth reunion I think there were twenty-two of thirty or something that were there.

Jenkins: Well, are most of them still reasonably close around?

Curry: I would say half of the graduating class never got out of Coleman or Brown County, and then the other half, well, Jim Russell was superintendent of schools out at San Diego, Lee Land is a big businessman over in Dallas, Teddy McCohen is in a bank in Dallas. That sort of thing. But, most of them, right there.

- Jenkins:** And the rest of them mostly around in Texas, I suppose.
- Curry:** Yes, yes, a few of them out of state, but most of them never left the state. I guess Jim Russell, who died last year, and me are about the only ones I can think of that got out of the state for very long. Well, in that little one room school, of course, my older brother and my sister were in school, too. And my older sister, Verdie Lee, was-- I think . . . we went through the eight or ninth grade in that school with one teacher. And there were, I guess, thirty or forty youngsters in that class in that school.
- Jenkins:** In nine grades, scattered through nine grades.
- Curry:** Nine grades.
- Jenkins:** Was the ninth grade the last grade?
- Curry:** Yes, and we just sat . . . we had long benches. Nothing except a long bench where we all sat. The first grade sat up front, the second grade on the second benches, and the third grade on back to the back where the big guys were. And I learned more in that one room school than these youngsters can learn in three years, because when you weren't reciting up there on the recitation bench you were listening.
- Jenkins:** You were probably helping the younger . . .
- Curry:** Yes, the older ones would help the younger ones, and this was an interesting experience in gifted versus the special students of nowadays, you know. Because we had several great, big, old boys, grown men, really, and girls, too, that couldn't read second grade reading and couldn't add

nine and five. But they had never been to school, a good many of them, you know, until they happened to be in that community. This was a warm, neighborly group,

and they would say, "Look, that boy ought to go to school." "Well, but he has never been to school. He would be embarrassed to go." "Don't let that bother you. He needs to learn to read and write." And they would come in there, even from eight or ten miles out.

Jenkins: And with all those grades they could fit in anywhere.

Curry: Yeah, that's right. And there were some . . . I would look at them now and say dedicated and gifted teachers that were teaching in that one room school. How they could manage that many people and, of course, one of the highlights of your recollection of those days was the recess period. Of all the games we played.

Jenkins: What were some of them that you played?

Curry: Well, did you ever play monkey bridge?

Jenkins: It sounds familiar, but I don't remember it.

Curry: Well, what you do, you get over like so and a guy comes behind you and he puts his hands on your legs, and you get maybe fifteen guys backed up there and then the game is the other team runs and leap frogs on the guy at the back and comes as far forward as he can. And your bridge has got to hold the last one of those guys, and if you collapse they get to do it over, and if you don't collapse you put them down.

Jenkins: We just had a different . . . We called that eleven on, but I remember it.

Curry: Well, of course, baseball. We didn't have any other kind of ball and most of the time we didn't have a baseball, but we could take a rock and throw a sock around it or something or stick ball or whatever. Well, I believe it was only three years that I went to that one room school, and then we consolidated.

Jenkins: You started, though, in the first grade in that school.

Curry: Yes. We had a consolidated school, and that was about three and a half miles away. You know it is kind of difficult for me and my generation to think about all these buses running everywhere. When we consolidated my dad thought that might be a little far for us to walk every morning and every afternoon. Besides that we wouldn't get home in time to feed the hogs and do the chores. So he suggested that I save my money chopping cotton for the neighbors and picking berries and that sort of thing, and then if I didn't have enough, between us we would get a bicycle. So we ordered a bicycle from Montgomery-Ward as I recall it. I got a notice eventually that it was at the freight station in Santa Anna. So we went in on a Saturday morning, and my brother and I assembled the bicycle and I rode it home eight or nine miles. Well, I rode the bicycle then when the weather was suitable, but many days it would be raining, or in the winter a brutal north wind blowing, and I walked three miles in and

three miles out. I never thought anything about it. And then, of course, along the road you would pick up some other youngsters walking to school or riding bikes to school. It was always fun except the last mile, and there was nobody between me and that last mile to get to our house. And this created some interesting and unforgettable moments and evenings. My granddad and grandmother's home and farm was not more than a couple of three hundred yards from where they built this consolidated school. And if it came a heavy rain I couldn't get home. The creeks were out. So I would just go down . . . I always knew that if it rained a big rain, I knew better than to try to go home. I would just go down and spend the night with Granddad and Grandmother, and this was a great experience.

Jenkins: And Mom and Dad knew where you were.

Curry: Oh, yes. They knew where we were. And in due time we got telephones. And this was another unforgettable experience. The first telephones that anybody ever saw, you know.

Jenkins: Do you remember about when that was?

Curry: Well, I must have been . . . It was in the order of sixty-five years ago because I remember as a kid, maybe I was six or seven or eight years old, a rainy evening the telephone would start ringing. Long, short, long and two shorts, two shorts and a long. Dad would sit there and say, "Hu oh, that's Paw, and he is calling all of us to listen to the phonograph." And Granddad had gotten one of these Victor

phonographs with the big wide horn, you know, with the dog 'His Master's Voice'. And Dad would go to the phone and there would be Aunt Lily and Aunt Nettie and Uncle Oscar and Uncle Willie.

Jenkins: Everybody listened.

Curry: Everybody. All his children. "Gonna play the phonograph." And they would have Amos and Andy and music and all this sort of thing.

Jenkins: Well, what about the coming of . . . Did you have electricity from the start?

Curry: No.

Jenkins: How about heating and lighting and the development as you remember it?

Curry: Well, we had a cookstove--wood. And for years we had just a wood heating stove with a pipe that went up through the ceiling. But as we became more affluent Dad had a fireplace built at the east end of the livingroom, and we heated with the fireplace and cooked with wood. And in about 1915, I guess, they drilled a gas well on the east side of our property, and got a pretty good gas well. But, I don't know, they didn't hook it up to anything except they did run a half inch line from the well, which was four or five or six hundred yards from our house into the house so we would have gas.

Jenkins: So it was your own private gas well, I suppose.

Curry: Yes.

- Jenkins:** Just the natural pressure?
- Curry:** Oh, yes. And my Dad and Mother were burning gas for heating and cooking from the time, I guess, I was eight or nine or ten years old until I left home. Now eventually they shut the gas well down.
- Jenkins:** Never did make a commercial well out of it?
- Curry:** No, no, but they knew where the gas was, and within the last eighteen months or two years you wouldn't believe the number of gas wells that have been drilled and hooked up as soon as they raised the price enough to justify it, and oil wells along with them. If they would just get out of the way we would have more gas. I don't know about oil, but I know that we would have an unlimited supply of gas. Everybody out there has got a gas well. I have two cousins still living out there on little old poor farms, that they got gas wells and oil wells on. Well, where were we?
- Jenkins:** I was asking you about electricity.
- Curry:** There was no electricity. Of course, you don't need electricity in your home to operate a telephone. I guess there was no electricity in any of those homes until REA came into being.
- Jenkins:** Were you already gone from home by the time . . .
- Curry:** Oh, yes.
- Jenkins:** You used kerosene lanterns.
- Curry:** Oh, yes.

Jenkins: And candles.

Curry: Candles. Well, no, just kerosene lanterns. And another one of the boyhood experiences you never forget, the old camp meetings. Build a brush arbor, and I wish I had one of those old lamps--lights--that they used. You pumped them up, I believe they were kerosene.

Jenkins: Kind of like a Coleman?

Curry: Well, they were great, big, old round . . . flat-sided . . . looked like a skillet, you know, that was just sealed with a place in the top. And then it had a long crooked arm that came up and just looked like a gas burner. So you pump it up and it took a pretty warm something-or-other to get it burning, but once it got to burning . . . and it wouldn't blow out in the open wind, you know. And these camp meetings were something else.

Jenkins: This was the annual revival type of thing.

Curry: The annual revival time with all the loud preaching and shouting and praying. Oh, boy.

Jenkins: Was this non-denominational or was it . . .

Curry: Well, no, there were the Methodists, and the Baptists, and the Methodists had theirs and the Baptists had theirs. Generally, though, a good many of the more devout ones attended both revivals.

Jenkins: Any opportunity.

Curry: Yes. And it was the big social event of the community.

Jenkins: All day singing and dinner on the grounds?

Curry: Yes. Now then another thing we always had in the summer-time was a singing school. My father's cousin, my second cousin, was a great singer. In fact, in the old song books you will find on a good many songs Oscar Curry, music and lyrics both. Well, this was really before I was born that Cousin Oscar, Aunt Lily and Aunt Nettie and Dad and Uncle William and Uncle Oscar and Cousin Martin were some kind of special singing group. And they had a contest around Comanche and Coleman and McCulloch County. And there was an organ prize for the best singing group. And that was the organ that was in our church. That group won it and put it in the church. But here is another thing, unforgettable. Many Sundays all of Granddad Curry's children would go to their house for Sunday dinner. And, of course, the girls brought stuff and helped with the meal. One unpleasant thing about it, the old folks ate first and all the kids, you know, waited for the second table.

Jenkins: The neck of the chicken.

Curry: Yes. We got kind of hungry and aggravated because the old folks would sit around the table and talk after they got through eating. And I didn't think that was quite cricket. But after that was all done, they would go into the living room and sing. And as I say, they were good. I frequently wonder in today's television and discos and all that, what these young people could have done.

Jenkins: Was there a piano in the house?

Curry: Not in Granddad's house.

Jenkins: They would just sing.

Curry: They would just sing.

Jenkins: Did you sing?

Curry: Yes, yes. In my first two years in college I was on the men's quartet.

Jenkins: I see. I didn't know about your singing. You never gave us the honor.

Curry: No, no.

Jenkins: We could get you and Tom Noel in some . . . Tom Noel was a singer.

Curry: Oh, he was, huh? Well, I am now a little tone deaf. I used to sing, well, I could sing bass or tenor either one, but on the quartet I sang tenor. And a fellow by the name of Clingsted was the voice instructor. He left Daniel Baker and went to T.C.U. and was on their faculty at T.C.U. for many years. Well, to get back to this consolidated school. I grew up then from say ten years old until I finished tenth grade.

Jenkins: Now was that the top grade?

Curry: That was the top grade that they had out there. And we, of course, ran track and played basketball and played baseball, but we didn't have any inter-scholastic baseball, just basketball and track.

Jenkins: How much of that did you do?

Curry: Well, I played basketball and ran track. And this little three room, three teacher school won the Class B or whatever they had in inter-scholastic league in those days, won the state championship for us.

Jenkins: What did you run?

Curry: I ran the quarter and the half. I was better in the half than the quarter, but I ran both races and high jumping. And my closest friend, the same age as I and the nearest neighbor boy practically, well, we were together the time we started school until we finished that tenth grade. But the reason we won the state championship was a chap by the name of Leo George, and he ran the hundred and two twenty, period. And we would, maybe, pick up a few points to add to it. I guess two first places, generally, would win a state meet.

Jenkins: Was he a trainer? Did he train, or was he one of these guys that . . .

Curry: No, he was just one of these guys that just did it.

Jenkins: We had one of those. Just come out there and go.

Curry: He would run rabbits. That's the way he . . . But then back to two things. One of these camp meetings, after I was fourteen or fifteen, I guess, and my older brother and two or three other boys, neighbor boys, they decided that it would kind of be fun when that shouting and singing and praying and all got to going to have a run away. So we got

a bunch of trace chains and that sort of stuff, you know. And one night as all this praying and shouting and singing and all got to going, we started to beating those trace chains on the wheel of the wagon and hollering "Whoa. Whoa." And a couple of the boys rode their horses in that night, and of course they started running around riding their horses and hollering, "Whoa." It kind of broke up the meeting. I finished the tenth grade. Way back when we were in this one room school, one or two of these teachers . . . Well, the teacher at that time was a non-related family that lived sort of in the middle of our six square mile area, and they were among the most affluent in the community. And this teacher bought some books. One of them I will never forget was Uncle Remus. And I got started reading it. And then they had, I guess, the beginnings of Inter-Scholastic League over in Coleman, which was our county seat. And they had a literary contest. And this teacher wanted me to enter the contest. I don't remember the details of it. I was in the second or third grade, and all I remember is that we were in a building of some sort, a church or school one, and they handed us a sheet of paper and had written on it, "Write a story about something." I have no idea what. Well, I wrote a story. And the winner was to get thirty books or something. Well, of course, they were grading the papers through the track meet and all. Of course, I was just a little shaver and wasn't in the

track meet, but we came on home. And along about ten or eleven o'clock that night, our house was back from the road maybe a hundred yards, and we heard people yelling. Well, we found out, this was Saturday night, and Sunday morning they said I had won this library. Well, that's the first inkling I had that I might, you know, have a little something extra. Well, about that same age, I guess I was twelve, this neighbor boy of mine, a friend, we got involved . . . the county had what I guess is a forerunner now of 4-H activity. And one of my first cousins, Garland Powell, this neighbor boy, and I decided that we would sign up for a project. And my cousin, he and his daddy raised hogs. So he took a pig. And I don't remember what my friend, neighbor, did. But we had a little corner of a field that was next to a creek down there and was kind of sandy that stayed moist a good deal of the time if we had any rain at all. So I asked my dad if he would let me have an acre down there and plant corn. "Why, you can't grow corn out in that country. You can grow nubbins and such!" And you had to keep records on it and all this sort of thing, you know. Well, darn, if all three of us didn't win a trip to the state fair.

Jenkins: My gosh.

Curry: So can you imagine three country kids that had never been . . . I had been to Brownwood once when Brownwood was a town of maybe five thousand. And we go to Dallas to the State Fair.

Jenkins: Now this was about what year?

Curry: About 1912. Something like that.

Jenkins: What was at the fairgrounds? Do you remember?

Curry: Oh, the big place where they have the livestock.

Jenkins: That was there already?

Curry: Yes, that was there. A lot of carnival type stuff. I don't remember, I am sure they had exhibits of one sort of another, but they didn't let us much . . . See, they had a tent up right on the fairgrounds, and that's where we lived. We had cots and bedding and all that sort of thing. So I didn't see much of Dallas. But this was a great experience to be with, I don't know, a couple of hundred other kids, I guess. Winners of a trip to the state fair. Well, I finished then the tenth grade out there at Buffalo. And I had no resources. I had a pretty good riding horse and my cousins and whatever, and they had some Walker hounds and we started running nights, running the coyotes and just horsing around.

Jenkins: Now you were about what age?

Curry: I was between sixteen and seventeen. And one of my cousins and I worked on a, I guess you would call it county roads driving a fresno. Do you know what that is? Three mules and a scraper, whatever.

Jenkins: Yes, I worked on a county road. Not with a fresno.

Curry: Of course in the wintertime this played out. But through the summer we worked on the roads. Then come, I guess the

county ran out of money around about October, and he got an old Model T Ford, a cast-off, and we put it back together. And we decided to take a trip. Now one of our cousins was working in Houston at a service station. So we load that old Model T touring car with food that we could pick up around the house, canned food.

Jenkins: Now this was shortly after World War I if my calculations are right.

Curry: Yes. Now I want to come back to World War I in a little while. We drove then from home out in the country from Santa Anna, got to Brady about noon, stopped by the side of the road and had our sandwich lunch or whatever. And along where we stopped by the side of the road there were chickens out there, a house up there maybe a hundred or a hundred and fifty yards away. So Pete says, "Maybe we ought to have chicken for supper." "Yeah, maybe we ought." So we catch one of the chickens, you know, and drive on down to the Llano River and spend the night there. And we decided . . . We hadn't killed this old rooster yet, a young fryer. We would just save him until the next day and catch fish. So we started fishing there in the Llano. I guess we caught three or four channel cat about a pound or two pound size, put them on a stringer. Well, we saw something up in the hills there away from the river and decided we would go up there and see what that was. We went up there and

played around a little while and looked back down at the river. Here was a hog enjoying our fish, so we had to have the rooster, fried chicken that night after all.

Jenkins: You didn't have hog, though?

Curry: No. If we could have caught him we probably would have. Well, we went on down to San Antonio and camped in and around the river there in the park and spent two or three nights there. On over to Houston. This cousin working there in a service station, we stayed wherever he stayed, in an apartment or room or whatever he had. And through the day, you know, he would service a car. And he had a five gallon can or two so we filled this car up when there wasn't another customer right behind it, he would just empty . . . hold the hose up and what was in the hose, you know, so before the day was over he would have a couple of cans of gasoline for us, and we could keep driving our car. Then we went on down to Galveston. Well, on the road our old Model T was leaking oil. And I told Pete that I would get on the running board and look under there while he was running it and see just where it was leaking so maybe we could stop it. Well, he got the idea that it would be great fun to throw me off that running board. I was just laying up there and he was driving twenty or thirty miles an hour, and he just stopped. Well, on that shell road, you know, I guess I slid fifty feet, and it just took all the skin and

flesh off of this arm. You can see it a little bit even to this day. Well, we got to Galveston, threw our quilts on the sand. And of course that arm was hurting, and sometime in the night I looked out and the moon was just coming up over that water. And I couldn't believe the beauty of it. Well, we stayed at Galveston then for . . .

Jenkins: That was your first trip to the coast?

Curry: Yes. That was our first trip, except the one to the state fair, out of the county, really.

Jenkins: First trip to the ocean. First view of the big water.

Curry: First time we had ever seen anything like that. Unbelievable. But we stayed in the water a great deal of the time, and by the time we left there three or four days later that arm was practically healed. It burnt a little when I would first get in, but it sure healed that arm.

Jenkins: Never did see a doctor, though?

Curry: Oh, of course not. Well, one other thing we did while we were in Austin. We decided we wanted to see the insane asylum. And, you know, they let us go all through the place. And one of the things that is indelible in my mind, to this day I can see it. I don't know, I guess a man was forty or fifty years old. Just as bald headed as anything could be. And he had what looked like a big chicken drum leg. And he beat on his plate a little while, and then he would eat it, and then he would just throw it.

All kinds of stunts going on in that dining room.

Jenkins: You were really getting educated.

Curry: It was an education I will never forget. I had never seen a crazy person so to speak. And it was hard to believe, and in a way it was pathetic, but to us fifteen, sixteen year olds it was hilarious. You just wouldn't believe what those people were doing. We laughed about it for weeks. Well, okay, we came back home, and I guess it was mid-September. Just started picking cotton. And this was Saturday afternoon. The cotton needed to be picked and we hadn't gone to town. And along about three o'clock, I guess, in the afternoon, I see a fellow walking across the field toward me. And it turned out to be a fellow by the name of Roy Holt, and he was principal of the high school in Santa Anna. And he came out and he said, "I would like to talk to you about going to school." I said, "There is no way I can go to school." "Well, maybe there is." He said, "I understand that you are a pretty good basketball player and a good track man." "Well, I enjoy it if that is what you mean. I am not all that good maybe." "Well, tell you what. We need football players." I weighed about a hundred and twenty-five or thirty pounds. "Well, yeah, I would like to go to school." "Tell you what. You come up Monday morning. We will get you a job. And you've got some kinfolks there in Santa Anna, and they might let you stay with them." What I had was my dad's

aunt, my grandfather's sister and their two daughters, and the two daughters were old maids. They had a big house, and they needed somebody to kind of keep the grounds. So they were glad to have a seventeen year old boy to kind of look after the place. So, okay. I washed dishes at a cafe to kind of pay part of my room and board there with them and played football. Well, this worked fine during football season. That also was harvest season, cotton picking time. So when the football season was over so was cotton picking, and they didn't need a dishwasher at the cafe. So I went back home. And I was doing well in my school work, and I enjoyed people in the class.

Jenkins: What were you playing in football?

Curry: I played every position in the line before the season was over. I started out at end, and this was the first football game I had ever seen, and we were playing Coleman High School.

Jenkins: So you started playing without even practicing?

Curry: Well, no, we practiced a couple of weeks.

Jenkins: But you had never seen football?

Curry: No, I had never seen a game. And the equipment that we had, the shoulder pads were soft and the hip gear was soft. It was leather, but there was none of this stuff you have today. And on that Coleman High School football team was a guy by the name of Luke Miller. He later became one of the great stars at Texas A. & M. And he was a senior that year. Well, we kicked off to Coleman and, of course, Luke

took the ball. And he came out to try to get some running room. He was a very fast runner, and I just happened to be in his way. Well, I lammed into that guy, and those soft shoulder pads . . . I didn't know there was a funny bone right in there, but there is, and he hit it. And I will never forget. It just tingled and it tingled. I guess for twenty minutes I could hardly raise that arm. I didn't know but what I had a shoulder knocked off, or what. But I kept playing. As the year went on the tackle got hurt and I played tackle. The center got hurt and I played center. And the halfback got hurt and I played halfback. Okay, comes Christmas time . . .

Jenkins:

How did y'all do that year in football?

Curry:

Oh, we won a couple of games. That was more than they had won the year before. One of the games we won was down at Brady. Of course, the towns that we were playing were all twice as big as Santa Anna. I think we only had fifteen or sixteen guys on the squad. So if anybody got hurt you were hurting for substitutes. Well, down at Brady, this was during the McCulloch County fair, and they had played polo on this field, the day before the football game. And so help me the dust was just mulch three inches deep. Those horses had been running over it, you know, and it was a hot afternoon. Well, after about three or four downs, you were absolutely wet with perspiration, and in

another two or three you were nothing but a mud ball. You just had to wipe it out of your face. And man-o-man what an experience . . . you couldn't get any footing. That dust would just flow from under your feet. But we won the football game somehow.

Jenkins: You were down to Christmas.

Curry: Yes. Down to Christmas. And Aunt Net and her girls decided that they could get along without me the rest of the year. And I went home and talked to my dad. "I believe I could ride a horse eight or nine miles in and eight or nine back." Well Dad said, "Are you sure you want to undertake that sort of thing?" I said, "I had rather do it than walk to Buffalo three miles in and three miles out." "Well, okay, you can." We had a horse we called Topsy. So I saddled him up on Monday morning when school started after Christmas and rode him in. Of course, they had stalls there for the other people who drove buggies and whatever. Put my horse in my stall and went to class and rode home that night.

Jenkins: Took about as long as it did to walk the three and a half miles.

Curry: Yes, just about. But it went along pretty good until the first of March or somewhere along in that territory, the middle of March, and Dad says, "I've got to have my plow horse. Well maybe," he said, "we will go up to first Monday and see if we can find an old plug."

Jenkins: Where was first Monday now?

Curry: Well, it was up at Santa Anna. They had a big wagon yard and every Monday, you know, people would bring their stuff in there, mostly livestock, to sell. Well, there was a little old thin, skinny Spanish mare, and he said, "Do you reckon that one would do?" I think it was five dollars or ten dollars they were asking for her. "Well," I said, "if she can stand up, yeah, I can ride her." So, okay, we bought her and took her home and left her in the lot. Fed her over the weekend, Saturday night and Sunday. Monday morning I threw a saddle on her, and that old girl was gentle enough. Led her out the lot gate and got on her. There was a plank gate coming into our back side and then out into the lane out to the road. And we got through the gate okay, and I was trotting along out to the main road, and I just kind of laid my hand back on the hip, you know. Man, that was the signal. Boy, did she . . . and she took me by surprise, but I managed to hold on. Then I ran her most of the way that eight miles. I'd let her blow once in a while and then I took her on in. Well, comes track season about this time of year. So after school, well, we were playing basketball. So I would get through, and it would be sundown and then ride home after sundown. And then I got wet. It rained on me going home so I would go into a store and buy a raincoat. "Oh, yeah, this will turn the rain." You know. So the first time it rained, this was great. I guess twenty minutes, not a drop. It was one of these cloths, duck kind of raincoats with some kind of treatment,

I guess. But any rate you stay out in the rain a while and that thing is just . . . water started coming through it. So that was money thrown away on a raincoat that wouldn't keep me dry. Well, to make a long story short about this senior year, I graduated along with these other twenty-eight or thirty people. And that was the end of that, except I kind of had a hankering to be an engineer. So I went to Houston, out to Rice to see if I could get a scholarship. And they started talking about what math I would take and what this I would take and what that I would take. And then this fellow said, "Now don't misunderstand me. That's not the regular calculus or college algebra and this is not the regular English course. This is a course for athletes."

Jenkins: Rice did that?

Curry: And I think, "Well, to hell with you. If I can't do what the students do, I don't want any part of it." So I went back home. And told my dad I wanted to go to college. "Well," he said, "I will help you all I can, but it won't probably be very much." But I would work through the summer and had enough to go to Daniel Baker which is in Brownwood, a Presbyterian college. I was not a Presbyterian. I am now, but I wasn't then. But I could make my first tuition payment, buy my books, and I had an aunt and an uncle that I could stay with in Brownwood.

Jenkins:

You had them scattered all over, didn't you?

Curry:

Oh, yes. They are still out there. Of course, the aunts and uncles are all gone. Well, the cousins are scattered. I guess, really, oh, I may have thirty cousins out there, but I don't know but two or three or them, three or four. So, okay, I went to Daniel Baker. The first night, I guess, the second night I don't remember which, they had a freshman prom or something or other where the people could get together as freshmen, you know. Would you believe, I met Mary there that night. And her sister had been out there before, and my high school chemistry teacher was a graduate of Daniel Baker, and he had met Mary's sister. So this was an entree. We knew people that knew . . . Well, we are getting ahead of the story a little bit there, but I did get to Daniel Baker. Well, it was completely across town from where I lived to Daniel Baker, but I had walked to school before so this was no problem.

Jenkins:

How big a school was that at the time? Do you have any idea?

Curry:

Oh, three or four hundred, I guess. I started playing football. But we were riding in from practice one evening, and just before we got to that underpass I needed to . . . well, I was going to football practice and jumped off the car, and it was a brick street. And I hit one of those bricks and, oh, did I ever sprain an ankle. So that ended my participation in football. But I was broke, and I needed a date every once in a while. So I started picking turkeys.

Jenkins: I know a chicken plucker that you know real well.

Curry: Yeah, well, I was a turkey plucker, and every afternoon and nights when I had spare time I would go down, and you could come and go as you wished.

Jenkins: Piece rate, I suppose?

Curry: Piece rate. Every turkey you plucked you got a little old chip token. You turned those in when you left each day and got a dime as I remember picking a turkey. And, you know, there is a real skill to it. And you had to kill your own turkey, too.

Jenkins: How did you kill them there?

Curry: Well, you had a killing knife and it goes up through his mouth right behind his eye. And if you do it right his feathers just relax, and you can strip them off in nothing flat.

Jenkins: You didn't do it like chopping his head off like Mama did chickens.

Curry: No, if you chop his head off you had to scald him almost or skin him to get those feathers out of there.

Jenkins: I wonder if the same thing is true of a chicken. I have never . . .

Curry: Yeah, if you know just where to hit that bone.

Jenkins: I have never heard of that. He just relaxes.

Curry: He just relaxes.

Jenkins: And you didn't even have to scald them?

- Curry: No, no. These were all dry picked. And the inspector would kind of read the riot act if you got a bad kill because you had to pull too many feathers out and left kind of a rough looking bird.
- Jenkins: Were you studying anything in particular, or you just wanted to go to college?
- Curry: No, because all they had was liberal arts.
- Jenkins: You wanted to go to college.
- Curry: And this was a way I could get started. Well, come mid-term, how am I going to continue? So Dad said, "I tell you what. I'll go on your note, and the Reeves brothers I am sure will lend you the money." Now this was the family that their daughter, one of the brothers' daughter, had taught out at that one room school. They lived in the community. So, yeah, they would lend me the money if my dad would go on the note. So I borrowed the money and got through that year. I worked through the summer.
- Jenkins: Do you remember how much you borrowed?
- Curry: A hundred and fifty dollars. Then I worked through the summer and got enough together to pay the tuition and so forth the second fall.
- Jenkins: What was the tuition then? Do you remember?
- Curry: No, no. Seventy-five dollars, I think, for a semester. Then your books and all that. I mowed lawns and picked turkeys and so forth, but I had to borrow another hundred and fifty dollars to get through that year. And I had now completed

two years. So I get a job teaching over at Melvin, Texas, and that's a little town between Brady and nowhere, I guess. The nearest town west of Brady would be San Angelo, probably. And I was a grade school principal and athletic coach.

Jenkins: And you were how old?

Curry: Twenty, twenty-one, I guess. And we had a pretty good football team, a pretty good basketball team. Football and basketball was about all we had. Didn't have anybody to run track much. That was the first year, we also had a good girl's basketball team, and I was coaching that. You know they say you learn by experience?

Jenkins: Yeah.

Curry: But experience is the most expensive teacher that anybody ever devised, I will tell you that. This girl's team as long as . . . everything was fine until we got to a game. and then Mama, and I make a substitution. . .

Jenkins: Kind of like Little League.

Curry: And Mama wants to know why I took her girl out of that game. And there is no way you can explain it to her. Her girl ought to be in there. And by the time you make two or three substitutions you don't have time to watch and pay any attention to the game any more. You are trying to keep Mama off your back. Let's back up a minute. I've got an interval in there. When I was eleven years old, I guess, about that age, my dad ran for county commissioner

and got elected. So we moved off the farm and went into town. And I was in the sixth and seventh grades in the Santa Anna school. And this was an experience, too. Our house was a great big house that this Aunt Net owned, and they had in the meantime bought another much bigger place, one of the old mansions in the town, so we rented Aunt Net's old home. And the Santa Fe Railroad was, maybe, fifty yards out in front of that house, and it was on a steep grade. And how many times would those big, old freight trains come barrelling through there day or night and just chug-a-lug, chug-a-lug getting up that hill. And on many occasions just couldn't quite make it. And they would back up maybe four or five miles and take another run at it. Sometimes they would get up it the second time, and many times they didn't. So they would have to sit there until a train from the east caught up with them, and the two of them together would push that one that stalled going up the hill.

Jenkins:

I don't suppose y'all ever greased the tracks, did you?

Curry:

Oh, yes, and made all kinds of fun. Scissors and whatever by putting nails in the track and that sort of stuff. Well, this was an interesting experience to be in a big school. Big school, you know, maybe there were five hundred kids in that school, versus a hundred out there at Buffalo. Well, after two years we had had our fill of living in town, and so we moved back to the farm even though Dad was still

commissioner.

Jenkins: Was he running the farm while he was a commissioner?

Curry: No, in the meantime my older sister had married, and she and her husband lived on the farm the two years that we were in town.

Jenkins: Did he take up farming again, then, when he went out?

Curry: Oh, yes. We are now in the second year of teaching out at Melvin, teaching seventh grade. Which was a delightful experience. Those youngsters at that age are so impressionable, you know. This was a Swedish community, primarily. And they were ranchers and farmers, and a good many of them quite well-to-do. And as I say, I was coaching football and basketball.

Jenkins: Do you remember what your salary was?

Curry: A hundred and twenty-five a month, and we paid twenty-five dollars a month, I believe, room and board.

Jenkins: You were in high cotton then, weren't you?

Curry: And I saved eighty to ninety dollars a month. Another Daniel Baker boy was the high school chemistry teacher. He had a car. I didn't. He lived in Brownwood, so most weekends we would go back to Brownwood and give me a chance to see Mary and go out to the farm and see my folks.

Jenkins: Was she still in school?

Curry: Yes, the third year she was still in school. In the meantime I went to the University of Texas. Well, let me finish that second year at Melvin. The landowners didn't like the kind of taxes they were paying, school taxes. And so come . . .

I guess we taught until Christmas, but the school didn't open the first of January. Well, in the meantime they had discovered a shallow oil field, oh, within six or eight miles of our home and within a mile and a half of my granddad's place. And I had an uncle, Dad's youngest brother, who lived in Dallas and managed some chain clothing store. Bell's, I believe it was, which was big in those days, Bell's Clothing. So he visited out there as they were discovering oil at about eighteen hundred feet, and it was gas driven and those things came in in gushers. So he decided that if I would run the store, since I wasn't teaching, and in the meantime I had gotten a job with Amerado Petroleum Company, just roughnecking. But since everybody out there was working for an oil company in the daytime, he figured that if he built a store, just leave the door to the store closed during the day and come in after work and then I could run it until all hours of the night. So Granddad and Uncle Tad built this store and he stocked it, and in the meantime he had opened another store in Brownwood. So he brought inventory out from the Brownwood Store. And I worked for Amerado in the day and opened the store at night.

Jenkins: But the store was your first business experience.

Curry: That was my first business. Well, after a month or so there were five or six, seven thousand people in that place. And I get the idea, "Well, gee whiz, this place

needs a post office. And if I put a post office here on this wall in the store, seven thousand people or their representatives are going to be in here at least once a day." So I go to Brownwood and ask how do you go about getting a post office. Well, they gave me the form and told me what all to do. I fill out the form and answer all the questions about why Fry, Texas, needs a post office.

Jenkins: Now where was Fry?

Curry: Well, again, you have to know where you are. I would say it is northwest of Brownwood about twelve or fifteen miles and nearly due east of Coleman about fifteen miles. Well, lo and behold, in due time I get a letter saying "On such and such a date you have an official post office, and you are the postmaster." Okay, I go over to Brownwood and find some old boxes that they had discarded from the post office, and I put them up in the building we had. And put a sign out that says U. S. Post Office. Well, sure enough this brings in lots of business.

Jenkins: And there had never . . . Where had there been a post office before that?

Curry: Well, Brownwood and Santa Anna and Coleman. This was prohibition days. And in the meantime they had built a hotel right across the road over there. Two stories, no less.

Jenkins: Now the date was about when?

Curry: This is 1926-'27. Okay, across the street on this block a

big cafe went in. On down the street were other businesses of various and sundry types. But I had the post office, and, well, boots and shoes, work clothes. I started to say this is prohibition days and tents and cots and twenty gallon crocks and ten gallon crocks and malt blue ribbon and corks and capping machines, you know, home brew all over the place. So this went along fine and I was making money. I was working for Amerado, forty cents an hour, ten hours a day. No overtime, and noon on Saturday. But this cousin of mine that I took the tour with out of high school, he didn't have too much to do so I got him to stay in the store in the daytime and the weekends so I could have a little free time on occasion. And so we ran the store, and I continued to work at Amerado. Well, one or two experiences with Amerado. As they drilled in these oil wells there was gas driving it, and they called it wet gas. And we ran two inch lines, generally, to take this gas from the wells to a casing head refining plant. Now casing head refining is, we simply have compressors and this gas flows into the cylinder and the compressor piston comes down on it and liquifies what is in there, and then the gas is flaired off, or pipelined off, either one. Well, I worked in these gangs in laying pipe, generally, with big chain tongs, and once again I weighed up to a hundred and thirty pounds on the ends of those big chain tongs, but I could handle it.

And every once in a while we would have to expand the size of the refinery by putting in another big compressor. And the way you do that, you had, I guess, ten foot by ten foot wooden boxes with sides up about eighteen inches high. Six guys get in this box with fourteen inch shovels. And you pour sand and crushed rock and cement in that box, turn the water on, and you start cutting that mix. And you work in that thing thirty minutes and you are out thirty minutes building that base. And you start at seven o'clock in the morning and you quit when you get that base finished. Which is usually about eighteen to twenty hours. Now you talk about grueling. That was something else, particularly for a hundred thirty pound guy. Well, I hung in there. And well, I guess, after I had been in this gang a couple of months they promoted me to the connection man into the refinery. They brought these pipes up to the refinery door and it was my job to do the plumbing and hook it into that compressor. Well, this was pretty good. I did a little bit of everything. The superintendent would have me wash his car and wipe up the brass around the place, and when they brought a line in I would hook it up, of course. Well, when it came time, though, to put in another compressor, I was one of the guys they put in the box.

Jenkins: Temporarily demoted.

Curry: Temporarily demoted. Well, we got this one, the big compressor, set on the foundation, and I was helping the

superintendent and the gang. He always was there when we were hooking them up initially. And I was up on top of the compressor putting a fitting, oh, I guess it was eighteen inch diameter, on a gasket so that this could tie into the line that would flare the gas or go into the pipe line. And I had it tight. And he looked up and he said, "Slim, is that tight?" I said, "It's tight." He said, "Take one more quarter round on it." Well, I put the wrench on there and I said, "It is tight now." "Put another quarter round on it." I pulled on that big wrench and broke the head. Well, I was eight feet in the air standing on a little edge, and when that thing broke, back I went. Well, down here eight feet down, seven feet down, there was a gate valve on these wheels, you know, but the wheel hadn't been put on the valve. This big, brass stem was sticking up there about yea long. And here I was, I hit the ground with my leg up like so over that stem, but here I am pinioned on that stem.

Jenkins: And it punctured?

Curry: Oh, yeah, it went plumb that far into my leg. Plumb into the bone. So they get around me and strip me off that . . .

Jenkins: I bet that was an interesting experience.

Curry: And hightailed me in to the hospital in Coleman. Well, aside from pulling some flesh out of there, that came up off of that stem, fortunately it missed all of the ligaments, and of course they put something on it to keep it from getting

infected and bandaged it. And the next morning, besides being stiff and a little sore when I would walk on it, there didn't seem to be any great damage. So in the afternoon I was restless in that dadgummed hospital room, and I had an aunt living in Coleman, one of Dad's sisters. So I said to one of the nurses when she came in, "Hey, there isn't anything wrong. Why should I be laying here in this dadgum bed. I've got an aunt that lives a couple of blocks down here. Why don't I go and visit with her a while?" "Why, you can't get out of the hospital." I said, "You want to bet?" "Well, no, you shouldn't do that." I said, "Oh, well, okay." So as soon as she left the room I put on my pants and shirt and shoes and slipped out of the hospital and visited my aunt a few hours. I kind of wished I hadn't, though, before I got back because that dadgummed thing kind of let me know that it wasn't well yet.

Jenkins: You were walking on it though?

Curry: Oh, yes, sure. Well, in another couple of days they did release me from the hospital, and I went back to work. And now it is getting close to September. And what the heck am I going to do now? Well, this Roy Holt that took me out of the cotton fields and started me to school in Santa Anna calls and says, and by this time he was superintendent of schools in Eldorado, Texas. He says, "Our football coach has just resigned and our principal. He was football coach and principal of the high school. We are going to split

those jobs. Which would you like to have, principal or high school coach?" I said, "I'll take the principal's job if it is all right with you." So, okay, I go to Eldorado, Texas, that's fifty miles south of San Angelo, that fall, and I was principal of the high school.

Jenkins: And you were about how old then?

Curry: I am twenty-three, about, at this time.

Jenkins: And you had been principal twice.

Curry: Yes. A grade school and a high school. Okay. In the meantime they hired a football coach who was the captain of the football team at Daniel Baker when I was at Daniel Baker. Okay. I teach typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping.

Jenkins: Now where had you learned those things?

Curry: Well, let's see. I had had one summer term at the University of Texas in there somewhere.

Jenkins: You had had courses in all of those things then?

Curry: The first year when I taught at Melvin and went to Texas that summer, and I took one semester of shorthand. So, you know how good I was at shorthand.

Jenkins: Why did you decide to take shorthand?

Curry: Because it was required for a business administration degree and a teacher's certificate.

Jenkins: You were focusing on something by then.

Curry: Yes, I was going on to business. Really, I had decided that I was going to be an accountant, but the curriculum called for shorthand, typewriting, just because Florence Stulking

was still on the faculty at Texas and she had enough weight to throw around that she wouldn't let them take it out of the required courses.

Jenkins: Well, let me ask you, how did you discover accounting? How did you decide that that's the way you wanted to go?

Curry: It seemed to me to be an entre into management of business. The best I could visualize in those days there were two things. One, if you could do accounting you were guaranteed a job, and a job was the prime thing for a country boy, you know. He had to have a job, and if you could do accounting you could get a job. And number two, I had noticed through reading and whatever that a good many top flight people in big corporations came up through the accounting avenue. So it just seemed like a pretty good way to go.

Jenkins: Now had you started grazing on this as the result of running the store and working for the oil company?

Curry: Partly, yeah. Okay.

Jenkins: I had asked you where you had learned these skills. You were saying you were teaching typing and shorthand.

Curry: Well, basically, I had very little skills.

Jenkins: You had exposure. You had had courses in all of those though?

Curry: I had had one semester of typing and one semester of shorthand. Now you can learn the touch system of typewriting in a semester, and you can get to be a pretty good typist if you are skilled and have dexterity. But shorthand, there is no

way. All I could do was read the book. And I have always been clumsy writing. So in terms of writing shorthand characters, a pig could do about as well as I could do. But I could teach it. When I was at Daniel Baker the second year, I had had a semester of bookkeeping. Well, I just as well not have had it. One of the old professors taught it, and he would meet class maybe once a week. And the textbook we had was about hardly suitable for high school. So when I got to Texas they said, "Well, you have had a year of bookkeeping, we will put you in the second year accounting." Well, I stayed in that second year accounting about two meetings and went back to, I guess, Aubrey Smith or Newlove or some of them and said, "Look, I don't belong in here. Let's just start from scratch." So I started in first semester bookkeeping, accounting. And I had had a year then when I went out to Eldorado.

Jenkins: Back at Daniel Baker was bookkeeping a part of the liberal arts curriculum? How did you get into that bookkeeping?

Curry: They just taught it. That's all. You know there were football players and basketball players and that sort of thing . . .

Jenkins: It was a convenient course then.

Curry: And it was a course that the athletes took. And as I say, the professor met the class once a week, and the students, those guys, they might meet it twice a semester.

Jenkins: So your first bookkeeping course was an accidental thing?

Curry: Oh yes. I was working picking turkeys and doing other things, mowing yards, and I needed a quick course. And that's where you get an A and go to class if you want to. We had an old s.o.b. teaching chemistry and that took a good deal of time. I was taking French and English, and it was a pretty heavy load. And working. So that one looked like a logical, smart move at the moment. Okay. Out at Eldorado I am principal of the high school, teaching these three or four courses. And Burns Lane, the football coach was married and expecting a baby in October. So he coached the team, I guess, the first two weeks and maybe through the first game. And then he went to Mullen or Zephyr or someplace where his wife was, to await the arrival of the baby. And so who was to coach the team? Well, you guessed it. And Burns didn't come back for nearly a month. I guess it was a month. And I had the team then through the heart of the football season including games with Del Rio and Brady and San Angelo. But we had a good team and went on to win, whatever they had in those days, the district championship. Well, the second year then . . . Mary and I got married at the end of my first year out at Eldorado, and I went to Texas that summer. By now this is the summer of 1930, and I get my bachelor's degree in business that summer.

Jenkins: Just as the axe was falling.

Curry: Yes. That was quite a summer, too. We married in May. Went

to San Antonio and around for a honeymoon. Came back through Austin and rented an apartment and back to Mary's home to get our stuff and go back to Austin for summer school.

Jenkins: Now her home was where?

Curry: Maysfield, which was ten miles east of Cameron between Hearne and Cameron.

Jenkins: Oh, okay.

Curry: As I say we . . . that was my senior summer, and among other things that you had to have was mathematics, and I was taking solid geometry that first summer term. Well, I despised the stuff to begin with. The professor, you couldn't understand what he was saying half the time, and it wouldn't have made any difference to me. I couldn't have understood it anyway. And I had other things to do, you know, besides try to study that dadgummed solid geometry.

Jenkins: You were married when and where?

Curry: In May at Mary's home.

Jenkins: In May of what year?

Curry: 1928. And went immediately to the University of Texas that summer. And here I was on my honeymoon studying solid geometry and accounting. Well, we had, as I recall it, three exams over the six weeks period before the final, and my highest grade was in the twenties. So comes final exams, and, you know, here it is you meet your last class around noon on Thursday and Friday and Saturday you've got your exams.

Well, I wasn't worried about the accounting. I took care of that. But this exam is Friday morning, and here it is Thursday noon. And the highest grade I've got is twenty something. So I say to Mary, "Look, find something to do and don't speak to me. I will take out thirty minutes to eat tonight, and that's it." So I got that dadgum geometry book down and started at page one, and I really boned on that stuff until one o'clock the next morning. I took about five hours sleep. Get up at six o'clock the next morning and start going through that damn stuff again. Meet the exam at seven or eight o'clock or nine o'clock or whatever it was, I guess nine until twelve, and take the exam. Well, it just so happened that he had on this exam one major problem, and it was almost identical to one I had spent hours on. And then the other was sort of periferal stuff that I had memorized. And I made ninety some-odd on that dadgummed exam. But there were only eight or ten people in the class, so he was grading the papers as they turned them in. And I was through, maybe, the second or third guy. So I think I'd done pretty good on this exam, so I think it might just be smart to wait until almost the last guy, and then I went up and turned my paper in. He looked up at me kind of smirking and started grading my paper. He couldn't believe it. "How did you do this?" "Well, I finally got around to studying." And I told him the situation that I married in May and

and registered for this course the first of June, and I hadn't been particularly interested in solid geometry. Well, he still thought there was something funny about the thing. I said, "Look, that's exactly what I put on the paper. There is no cheating involved. I just boned on it the last day or two." I didn't tell him the last few hours. "Well," he said, "you have done so poorly I am going to have to give you a D." "I don't believe that's fair. Look, I have got one of the highest grades on this examination, and you are going to give me a D?" "Well, let me think about it." I don't know. I think he finally gave me a C. Well, we go then out to Eldorado. Mary is teaching the fourth grade.

Jenkins: Oh, I didn't know that she had taught.

Curry: Yes, and I am high school principal. And we moved a few belongings and rent, I guess, a partly furnished apartment. Had a stove and ice box and bed, but no chairs. I think, maybe, there was a dresser or something of that sort. So I go down to the grocery store and get me a couple or three apple boxes and use those for chairs until we can do better. But we start to school, and she has, I think, forty-two students in the fourth grade class, thirty-eight of them boys. Every one of them wearing cowboy boots, and every one of them about as tough as a boot. They were a tough lot, I mean to tell you. Well, we lived through the year. We enjoyed it in a way. It was an interesting experience for both of us.

There are very interesting experiences involved in teaching grade and high school in small communities, you know. One of the experiences we had, there was a young man, a fine looking chap. I would say, I don't know whether he was mentally not all there quite, probably, but certainly he had all of what he needed in terms of goat ranching. That sort of thing. And there was a delightfully naive sixteen year old junior, I guess she was at the time, in high school. Brilliant, you know. So many of these young girls are a hundred and thirty or forty I.Q., and she was that kind. And this boy that I am thinking of was . . . we would describe him as just no good. He wasn't even much good playing football or basketball. He was too sluggish and slow mentally to react. His reflexes were slow. He never made more than a D in school, of course. We expelled him from school for I don't remember what now. He misbehaved in the classroom and on the playground. And we wake up one Monday morning and this little girl is not in school either. And she had run off and married this character. Well, of course, it broke the hearts of the parents, but there wasn't much they could do. They were already married. And one of the leading citizens of the community's daughter got pregnant and she married before the year was out. So times haven't changed all that much. No, no, it was just more of a disgrace in those days. Well, we finished that year in Melvin. In the meantime Mary is pregnant. And I get a letter from the superintendent of schools in Austin, Texas, offering me

a job as head of the business department in the only single high school that they had in Austin.

Jenkins: How did he find out about you?

Curry: Through the faculty at the University. He had called out there to know who they might recommend for this job, and they gave him my name. They knew I was teaching. So that led me to going to Austin that fall as head of the business department. We stayed there three years. This was in the early thirties. I went there primarily so I could work on my master's degree, and so we would be closer to Mary's home. And, I guess, it was Christmas or something, before Betty was born in February, we were driving home and Little River runs through that area, which is where the San Gabriel and the Lampasas and Leon, several rivers come together about thirty miles from Temple. Not that far. Yeah, from Temple to this side of Hearne, west of Hearne. These three or four rivers go into the Brazos. Well, these things were all out and we couldn't get home. So we spent the night in Cameron. Called Mary's Dad to meet us on the other side of the railroad trestle. Well, we get one of Mary's friends in Cameron to drive us the three miles out on the road to this railroad trestle. And she and I with our suitcases walked the trestle. The only way we could get across to her side of the river, and then her Dad picked us up. And in another day or two the water had gone down, and we could go back in and get our car. But

you take a seven and a half month pregnant woman walking a trestle with a suitcase. Well, this was in about 1932-'33, somewhere along there, and I got my bachelor's degree in 1930 I believe it was, '30-'32. At any rate, that spring there were three recruiters, as I remember, came to the campus to recruit people in business administration. General Electric was one of them, American Tel and one of the oil companies. And they selected me and three or four or five other guys to be interviewed. And I will never forget, I went in to the General Electric recruiter. He was very cordial, and after we said 'hello' he said, "I want to get this much straight. We are not hiring this year, but I am just making the rounds of a few universities to keep in touch with the faculty and kind of get a notion of what this year's graduating class might look like." So here I was with a wife and a child and another one soon, and I had a job teaching if I wanted it there in the high school. So that's really how I got diverted from a career in business to teaching. I had no notion of being a teacher when I started to college, when I went to the University of Texas. It was just one of these things that evolved.

Jenkins: Even while you were teaching you intended to get out of it?

Curry: Yes, until I got my master's degree I did, yes. In business administration in accounting at the University of Texas. While we were living in Austin, you see Betty was, I guess, a year old when I got my bachelor's degree, and then I was in Austin

primarily, so I could do work at night and weekends and in the summer, and I was working on my master's degree. In the meantime Peggy Marie came along, and this is one of those unforgettably sad experiences in human life. In the spring of '34, I guess it was, they had a scarlet fever outbreak. Well, I think I got scarlet fever at my younger brother's house because his daughter was ill during that Christmas period. Just lethargic, not very sick, but a little temperature and whatever, and I think she had scarlet fever because when we got back to Austin I took scarlet fever. And you know for an adult scarlet fever is a real, real serious illness. Every inch of skin on my body peeled off. You could just take strips off the bottom of your feet, off of your arms, off of your hands. Well, I was delirious for a couple of days. Really seriously ill. And, of course, quarantined and all that sort of thing. But, apparently, Peggy Marie, our fifteen month old daughter, took it and maybe we didn't know it. At any rate she developed the kidney infection and finally meningitis and died. So that's one of the real tragic experiences of our lives, of course. Well, I continued work on the master's degree, finished, I guess, in '34, and I knew then that I wanted to do a doctorate and get into university teaching. So I started studying German. I knew I would have to pass the German Exam. I had already had a couple or three years of French. So I felt that I could manage the reading requirement in French,

but German, nothing, absolutely nothing. So I got some German grammar.

Jenkins: This was before you ever got into a program? On your own?

Curry: Yes, while we were still in Austin, still working on my master's degree, still teaching in Austin High School. And I studied this dadgummed German grammar until I picked up most of the basics of the way the German language was put together. Then I started reading a little first grade reader of German fairy tales to once again see how they did this stuff and piled all the verbs up at the end and that sort of thing. And as I read I just kept me a big old note pad, and every time I would run into a new word I would put it down in English meaning. And then finally got to the point where I would go to the library and get these books where German is on one page and the English translation on the opposite page, and read in that way until I could read German economics pretty good. All the time adding another word to my notebook until I had, of course, several hundred, maybe a thousand, German words that I knew the English equivalent. So then I started writing letters to graduate schools. I first went to Jim Dolly, Dr. Dolly, for whom I had graded and so forth at Texas, and talked to him about doing a doctorate at Texas. "Oh, you don't want to do a doctorate here. After all you have got two degrees from here, or will have." "Well, how about Oklahoma?" "Well,

they are about like we are. They really don't have a doctoral program of quality any more than we have." He said, "Call Berkeley, Harvard, Michigan." What else did he name? "Minnesota, Southern Cal," I believe he said. "See if you can't get something there." So I write to these institutions. Tell them my situation that I want to do a doctorate in accounting and finance areas, and I had to have a fellowship. Well, I get responses from all of these schools. Some of them, well, I believe this was about 1935, the University of California said that they admitted nobody to their doctorate program that didn't have a straight A average. Well, hell, I had been working and 'A's didn't mean all that much to me anyway. But along comes the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and they offered me a seven hundred and fifty dollar research fellowship. And that's the best offer I got. Well, I talked to Dr. Dolly about it and several of the other faculty members, and decided that I would take it. Well, here Jack is due to be born in late August or September. So I couldn't take Mary with me to Ann Arbor. So we moved her in with her parents, and I take off for Ann Arbor, Michigan, to do a doctorate. Now Roy Cooper, Southwestern Publishing Company, he and Ethel lived in Chicago. So I took a train in Hearne and went to Chicago where I met Roy and Ethel and stayed two or three days with them. And in Chicago it was misting rain about like it is here today, and everybody was

carrying an umbrella. So I got me an umbrella. And then took the train on over to Ann Arbor. I get to Ann Arbor and except for one kooky English professor, I never saw anybody carry an umbrella. But in Chicago I spent most of my time, day time, looking at the city. This was the first time I had been that way. Okay, I get to Ann Arbor and find a room. And then go up to the University to meet the people and particularly the professor to whom I was assigned as a research fellow, and then if you want we will take up up from there.

Jenkins: We are continuing the O. J. Curry interview, March 30, 1979.

Curry: Well, I went up to the University. The College of Business Administration was located in one of the older buildings that was typical of that era, and I met Dean Griffin who was the marketing specialist. He was very cordial. And I met Bob Rodkey, Dr. Bob Rodkey, who was a specialist in money and banking and finance, and the man to whom I was to serve as a research assistant. And they took me up to the Bureau of Business Research and introduced me to the head of that operation, and he showed me my desk in the bureau where I would be doing research. And then I met Professor Paton, the great outstanding leader in accounting thought of his day. He already had my transcript, and he said, "Look, you have had thirty or forty hours of accounting down at the University of Texas. And I am going to assume that they have a good faculty and that you learned some accounting

down there, and I don't think you ought to take any more accounting. Now you can take my course in theory because everybody wants a course with Bill Paton. So the rest of it, I would recommend that you do in economics and two or three courses in finance that you haven't covered down at the University of Texas." So roughly we laid out thirty or forty-some semester hours of course work that they required for their doctoral program, but mostly in economics. Well, I get registered. One of the new experiences for me in registering, you go through the regular registration procedure but then there is a physical exam. And I mean it was a complete physical. The first one I had ever had in my life. I couldn't believe it. I mean, you talk about an army physical or the physical you get when you go to the doctors here, it was sort of haphazardly done compared to what they did up there.

Jenkins: Now was this just for graduate students or as far as you know, all students?

Curry: I don't know. As far as I know, all students, but certainly this was the procedure they took me through. All right, we get going. I had left Mary and Betty and Jack at her parents' and I had left when Jack was two weeks old. Well, this was a little bit of a problem, more for them than for me, I guess, because I never had a dull moment you might say. But I was driven, so to speak, to get this job done. And seven hundred and fifty dollars for nine months wasn't any big amount. Well,

you could kind of live on it, but barely. Somebody in the University there said, "We've had a call from the Ann Arbor public schools, and they have an evening course program and they want somebody to teach their introductory course in bookkeeping. Will you do it? Would you like to?" "Well, yeah. I would take it on." So I taught the evening high school bookkeeping class in the evening, and took a full course load, and did the research for Dr. Rodkey, and kept busy. I don't know the author, but the economics text was The Theory of the Business Enterprise. I could read that doggone book four times over, and I still didn't know what . . . Davenport, I believe, was the author. Howard Ellis was the professor in that course. He later went to Cal Berkeley, but a very distinguished economist, primarily in finance and money and banking field. And I said to him one day, ". . . This thing, I am lost. I can read this text, and I don't know what he is talking about. It doesn't seem to be going anyplace." He said, "Oh, well, don't waste your time on it." I wondered why is it the text book. But the interesting thing about that course, we would have an exam about once a month, and I would make in the high eighties. And he would just post a list, nobody's names, just the grades, top down to the bottom. And I would see that I was third or fourth or somewhere, and I kept wondering who in the world in here is making those high nineties? And there were about fifteen or sixteen guys in the class. And I would

look around the room, and I didn't know whether I could compete in that kind of company or not. And I was a little surprised that my grades were always second or third or fourth. Well, never better than third, but third or fourth. And then there would always be two grades six or eight or ten points better than mine. So I kept looking. I kept looking, and finally discovered two Chinese boys. That puzzled me for a little while. How could these boys in a foreign country with not too good a command of our language be making that kind of grades in that course in economics? And then I said, "Oh, yeah. Those cats are the top one-tenth of one percent in that society. No wonder they can beat me."

Jenkins: And maybe they weren't confused by the reality of what really happens.

Curry: No, I suppose not. Well, things were going along fine. Then, I guess, it was maybe the middle of November, and the Western Union boy walks in the research bureau where I am working and hands me a telegram. And I wonder what's up, and I open it, and it says, "Mary had an emergency appendectomy." And the thing was folded, and it said, "ruptured." "Oh, my God. What will I do now?" Here she is in Texas with two little children and an appendectomy that's ruptured." Oh, well, I go down and talk to Dr. Rodkey. Show the telegram to him, and he said, "Well, do what you

feel is necessary. I believe if I were you I would wait maybe another twenty-four hours and get word as to whether this is crucial or critical of just what it is." So I decided to do that, and went to my room for something or other, which was three or four blocks from the campus. Reread that telegram and finally opened it up and it said, "Not ruptured."

Jenkins: Be thorough in your research.

Curry: Yeah. Well, I went back to work. But that did prompt me to come back to Texas over the Christmas holidays. Even though I couldn't afford it, I did. And let's see, I guess I left for Ann Arbor about the thirtieth or thirty-first day of December, 1935, and it was shirt sleeve weather. Got to Ann Arbor, I guess it was eight or ten below.

Jenkins: How did you travel?

Curry: On the train. And walking from the railroad station to my place where I lived was just like walking down a tunnel. The snow had been shoveled out on each side, and it just kept building up, and it was up higher than your head, you know, and you just walked along the sidewalk with the snow up above your head. And the next morning when classes started, I walked in Professor Rodky's office, and he looked up at me and said, "Hey, where are your earmuffs?" "I don't have any earmuffs." "Well, get you some. Your ears are frost-bitten right now." Not enough to bother. But it was just as still as it could be, and you aren't

conscious of it being cold at all.

Jenkins: I have heard that. Freeze to death before you know it.

Curry: Yeah. Well, okay. We get along fine. I do about two years work in one. I was working from, oh, about six o'clock in the morning, five-thirty, until twelve, one or two in the morning. And I discovered that if I smoked a pipe along about eleven, eleven-thirty, at night, that darn thing would shock my system enough that I could work another hour or two. But I never knew. Well, at first, practically every time I smoked I would get sick, you know. It got to where maybe once a week I would up-chuck and finally it got to where maybe once a month. And I smoked a pipe then for ten or fifteen years, I guess. But I never knew when I smoked a pipe when it was going to make me sick. It got to where it wouldn't do it more than maybe once in six weeks. But I knew full well I better be where I could get to the outside when I smoked a pipe.

Jenkins: Otherwise it never bothered you?

Curry: No, no. It always shocked my system. And I was smoking a pipe when I was here. And in what was the old Lab School where we had that glassed-in office arrangement there. I went in there after a weekend, Monday morning, "Lord, it stinks in here. What in the world? Oh, yeah, that pipe is what does this." So I had four or five pipes in my desk drawer there, and I just reached in and got me a sack and dumped them all in the sack and threw them over in the

waste basket. And that's the last time I've had a pipe smoke.

Jenkins: You must not have smoked over the weekend.

Curry: Oh, yeah, I was . . . just not in the office.

Jenkins: Oh, not enclosed.

Curry: Not enclosed. Yeah, you know, I went in there and I think, "Gee, if it stinks like this to me, I wonder what it smells like when those students and faculty come in here?" So that was the end of my pipe smoking. I still have one or two old pipes out there that I didn't get thrown away. Well, then say in March or early April I am contacted by, I am sure, the University hierarchy. The National Bureau of Economic Research is looking for some young scholars to work in a productivity study. And a couple of us working there in the bureau were invited to join that research effort. And the pay was good, of course, working for the federal government on that research project. And it meant that I wouldn't get home through the summer. But I took on the job, among others, to do this research project. Well, we left Ann Arbor, the other young man from Michigan and me, and we were to have a week or ten-day training session in Chicago. So I guess there must have been thirty young men from all over the nation in that training session there in Chicago. And after that was over, we were sent out as teams, to various designations to do this research. The wind was blowing off that lake, and it was cold, and most of us hadn't

brought any winter clothes, and we were miserable. But our first assignment was Terre Haute, Indiana. And we got on the train in Chicago, off to Terre Haute. Well, we weren't more than two hours out of Chicago until we ran into a heat wave. And you talk about steamy and hot, and there was no air conditioning on the train in those days. So we have the windows up, and this is a coal burning locomotive, and the cinders blowing back in there and the doggone heat, and we got to Terre Haute and it was a hundred and ten at ten o'clock that night. And we found a room in a motel or rooming house, or whatever it was, and went to bed and couldn't sleep. It was just stifling. And on through the night you could hear an explosion, it sounded like. Well, what was happening was the sidewalks blowing up. They were over sewer lines or whatever, you know, and that moisture and steam or whatever, and the doggone sidewalk just exploded. So there were holes all over that city. This was an interesting experience. We travelled all through Indiana and Ohio trying to find out why certain cities became decadent, even ghost towns, some of them there in Indiana, primarily where brick manufacturing had been the leading industry. When that tended to dry up due to, I think, the industry moving nearer into Chicago for transportation purposes. In this smaller town, way out here a hundred or two hundred miles away, it simply collapsed. There was almost nothing there any more. And one or two experiences I don't forget

easily. I believe it was Brazil, Indiana, we were to do a study and get the old records out of the dungeon in the brick plant. And the man's name was Claymier and he still was running that plant on a half-legged basis. And we went in, and I introduced myself and the young man who was with me. We were both about the same age. And I will never forget, I said, "Mr. Brickmier, . . ."

Jenkins: Pretty close.

Curry: Yeah, it was close. And there was another place, I have forgotten where we were, doing another one of these brick plants. It had long since collapsed. But the interesting thing, they kept the records. And they were musty and generally in the basement of the old plant, but the records were there and you could do a pretty good audit on them. The two of us had gone into a little drugstore where they served drinks and were getting a drink. And there was a thunder storm out there. It was just a little old shirrtailed cloud. But it was thundering around, and across the street there was a lodge hall, Masonic or whatever, and I noticed the emblem up there. I was looking at it, and about that time a jagged streak of lightening came out of that cloud way up yonder, and it was just like you cracked a whip right at the corner of that building, and it just took the corner of that building off just like you'd . . . and went right back up. That's all there was to it, but it knocked brick and stuff all over

the front of the store we were in.

Jenkins: And you were looking at it at the time.

Curry: Yeah, just staring at it when it came out of there. Well, let's see, I guess I was in Evansville, Indiana, and it was getting along toward the end of August. And in the meantime Dean Claire Griffin had elected to take a year's leave and spend it in Europe at one of the universities, and Professor Rodkey was going to be acting dean in Dean Griffin's absence. And that created a vacancy in the overall faculty. And Professor Rodkey and Dean Griffin asked me then if I would like to have an Instructorship. Well, of course, I would. This paid more than I had ever made any place as an instructor.

Jenkins: Now you were still working on a degree?

Curry: Yes, I was still working on it. In fact I had just completed the one year. I had completed the French exam and was still confident that I could do the German, but I was getting close, I thought. And so I took the Instructorship and that made it possible for Mary and the children to join me in Ann Arbor. So I was anxious to get home for that reason, to get things arranged so we could move. And number two, I hadn't seen Jack since Christmas. In other words, this was now eight months since I had seen my family. And the train from Evansville to Hearne, Texas, got into Hearne about midnight. One of Mary's cousins and Mary met me at the train, and that's fifteen miles out to the farm home. And

I guess it was one-thirty or so by the time we got in that night to go to bed. And Mary caught me by the hand and went into the bedroom and said, "I want to show you something." Well, here was that little baby that I had left Christmas. Man alive, sprawled out there on the bed his arms and legs stretched out, he looked big as a moose, you know. I just couldn't believe that he had grown that much in eight months. Well, we loaded up the car with all the baby food and whatever, and took off for Ann Arbor, Michigan. Well, Mary's parents, you know, just couldn't believe that somebody would do something like this to their little girl. But Mary didn't want to stay at home, of course, and if we were going to have a career we had to stick together. There wasn't anything wrong of going two thousand miles or fifteen or eighteen hundred miles to the University of Michigan. And I had, in the meantime, rented the downstairs of a two story house. Nearly all of them were two story houses, you know, with a basement. And we had the downstairs of this home. And no particular problem of moving in those days. There weren't motels. Well, occasionally you could find a place where there was a motel, but usually you just had rooming houses, which were nice. We got to Ann Arbor. Got things established. And started the fall semester in good shape. I enjoyed my teaching except for . . . well, I enjoyed this, but it was a unique experience at the

University of Michigan at the time. The first course in accounting was a junior level course, because they admitted nobody to their undergraduate program except at the junior level. And among my other teaching assignments I was to teach a section of the principles of accounting. And Bill Paton was writing his principles book at the time and we were using that in mimeograph form, or lithograph, or whatever it was. It wasn't mimeograph. And Bob Briggs was in charge of the principles course. And the way that course operated you had to, I don't know, five hundred people. However many total there were taking the course, would meet once a week in a big lecture hall. And Professor Briggs or Paton or some of the other big shots would do the lecture. And then two days a week we broke out into groups of twenty-five or thirty for what they called quiz sections. What it amounted to was to teach them what they didn't pay any attention to in the lecture. And then lo and behold Professor Briggs would write the exams, and he never did it before maybe five o'clock in the afternoon when the exam was to be given at nine in the morning. And he would bring that exam by my place maybe six or seven o'clock in the evening and want me to prepare a solution and make sure that everything was in order. And he would pick it up at seven in the morning and get it duplicated and ready for the nine o'clock

exam. Well, the first time he did that, here it was supposed to be an hour exam. It took me two and a half hours to work that doggone thing. And I told him, I said, "You don't expect anybody to finish this, do you?" "Why, sure." "Oh, no, there is no way." I said, "Look, I spent two and a half hours on this exam, and I am not positive that I have it a hundred percent correct yet." "Oh, well, don't let that bother you." Sure enough we give that doggone exam and I bet you there were fifteen percent of them not only finished it but they had it in the nineties, you know. And that was an eye opener to me. And we taught in the two semesters what they taught at the University of Texas in two years. We taught principles and intermediate in one year. But you had junior level students, and they were from all over the University. And you had a pretty high selective process to get them in there anyhow. And there wasn't anybody in there that didn't want to take it. It wasn't required, except for the relatively small number who were in the School of Business. The School of Business at Michigan at the time was relatively small, when you think of collegiate schools of business today. Well, by early that fall I decided to try to get the German reading requirement out of the way. Made arrangements for it. I walked into this professor's office who was in charge of the doctoral exams. Told him that I was a doctoral candidate in economics and finance

and accounting. He looked up at me and said, "Texas or Oklahoma?" You know, those guys can tell what part of the world you are from or what state you are from just by hearing four words, or just about. Well, okay, I sat for the exam, and I go in this room. I guess there were sixty or seventy-five people taking the German reading exam or German exam for doctorates and all disciplines in the University. And this young fellow in charge said, "Let's see, you are economics, business administration. Go over there to the shelf. There is a bunch of magazines." And he said, "Oh, well, I will just hand you this." And he handed me a magazine, and he opened the doggone book and said, "Translate this page." So I went over and sat down and started looking at that dadgum German and, "Oh, I have never seen anything like this." Occasionally I would see a word, but it was in script or something or other, and I fuddled with it for I guess it was an hour or an hour and a half exam, and I didn't have thirty words that made any sense. And I wrote them on my paper, I deciphered that the title of it was Martin Luther's Concept of Ethics and I said, "This appears to me to be medieval German. Whatever it is I can't read it, and I just wonder if you contemplated a candidate being required to read this kind of material?" Well, a month goes by and I haven't heard anything. And one day I get a telephone call and it

is the head of the German Department apologizing saying, "No, this was sheer accident that you got ahold of this kind of material. I am sure that the instructor who handed it to you didn't even look at it. And at your convenience if you will come over, I will give you another exam." I did go over and he just turned to a page in a German Text in Economics similar to one of these books that I had been reading that had the English on one side and the German on the other, and I pretty well remembered this kind of stuff and had no trouble with the German exam. Then I wanted to take the comprehensives, and I went over, and Leonard Watkins was the professor in economics that made the decisions about when anybody was going to be permitted to take the doctoral comprehensive in economics. And I asked him, I just said, "Would it seem to you unreasonable for me to sit for the comprehensive in economics this spring?" And there was another professor in there. I guess Professor Ellis was in his office at the time. And Professor Ellis said, "Well, nobody is permitted to take any of these exams until he has finished his course work, and you don't finish your course work until the end of this spring semester." And I will never forget, Dr. Watkins, who actually is a native Texan, turned to Dr. Ellis and said, "That wasn't his question. He asked if it would be unreasonable for him to take the comprehensive this spring, and I don't think

it would be unreasonable if he wants to take a crack at it. Now the odds are that he can't do it, but he asked if it would be unreasonable. I don't think it's unreasonable if you want to risk it." Well, I took them and got through them all. Well, nobody had done that in two years. And I discovered that, well, I am the third Ph.D. from the School of Business at the University of Michigan.

Jenkins: So you got into a new program.

Curry: Yes. Oh, Dean Spriegle was number one, who got a doctorate. Ken somebody was number two, and I was number three. Well, Ken was still there while I was at Michigan, but Dr. Spriegle had already gone. He was in industry at the time, and spent a good many years as a vice-president of some company, and then went on down to the University of Texas as their Dean and stayed down there for many years. Well, things were just moving along great. I had gotten through my comprehensives. There were two that were questionable. One of them I shouldn't have passed. That was statistics. Because the quantitative stuff just bugs me. I don't believe you can make decisions quantitatively, and most of the world's problems are human problems not "thing" problems. But at any rate I had to do this statistics quantitative barrier. And once again happily, Professor Blackett, who retired and has a beautiful place down at Rockport, of all places. How he ever got

down here, I don't know, but that is where he chose to retire. He simply said, "Well, I don't think you will ever be a statistician, but I think you comprehend well enough, that there is no point in requiring you to take more courses in this area." And the other one was in marketing, of all things. So I didn't take a marketing course at Michigan, but I did sit in on Maynard Phelps' course in marketing, his graduate course. And mostly what I got out of that, is to count the number of times he could spin his watch chain around his finger in an hour lecture, and the number of times he could say, "Uh huh, uh huh." So I was a little contemptuous of the marketing area to start with. I had had a course in marketing at Texas that, compared to economics courses and finance and accounting courses, didn't seem to me to be very full of anything. And Maynard Phelps, a leader in the field of marketing in university circles, and a few years later president of the American Marketing Association and that kind of thing, he said I was short on some of the purely marketing aspects of the comprehensive, but I seemed to have enough, well, I guess he put it this way. He said, "You really passed the exam barely on the strength of your economic analysis of these questions." Well, everything is fine except in that climate Jack and Betty were beginning to have problems, ear and throat. Cloudy and rainy, not much rain, just snow and sleet.

Jenkins: I remember that.

Curry: Yeah. But we came back to Texas that summer and stayed out on the farm. The youngsters seemed to be healthy as they could be. So we go back for my, hopefully, last year to finish up the doctorate at Michigan. And I was already at work on my dissertation. I worked some through the summer, but not very much because I had to have a calculator to do very much with it. And that winter in Michigan, Jack came down with flu or whatever, I don't really know. And they took him to the hospital. And he was critical, and we now know that the sulfa drug had just been discovered, so to speak, and at the University Hospital they undoubtedly gave Jack some of this sulfa drug, because at eight o'clock at night he was just barely there. The next morning he was, for all practical purposes, well. They never told us what had happened. They just said we tried a new drug and it worked. But I was pretty well along with the dissertation by early spring, and the doctor said, "If you want this boy to live, you better get him out of this climate." In my classes at Michigan, I would say one out of five had had this mastoid operation. Well, in the meantime I had had, oh, inquiries, not in the sense of firm offers, to join other faculties. Mary and I had gone to Antioch College. They had invited us there for a visit to see about joining their faculty. And to Kent State. Then I had letters I think with a good possibility

of, oh, yes, we had gone to the University of Kentucky, too. The University of Washington in Seattle were interested, Cal-Berkeley had--their dean had visited with me, Dartmouth had visited with me there at Michigan. They were looking. And the University of Arkansas. Well, this was getting back to God's country, closer home, and it looked promising. We drove through Fayetteville on the way to Texas, and it was beautiful through there. So to make a long story short, at the end of my third year up there, Mary's and the children's second year, we moved to Fayetteville. And this was delightful. The climate was great. The children healthy as pigs. I was teaching mostly finance. I think I had one section of accounting. Just doing fine, and we were close enough to Mary's parents and sister and brother-in-law, and everybody could come to see us. My parents and so forth could visit, and we came down here to their place.

Jenkins: Now about what year are you talking about?

Curry: This was the fall of 1938.

Jenkins: Had you finished your degree yet?

Curry: Not yet. I still had some work to do on it, mostly just rewrites and polishing it off. Well, let's see. I guess it was the fall of '40 maybe before I really finished it up. Well, I finished it, but the degree was conferred in '40. Well, as I say, the children were fine. I was enjoying the university work with a compatible group. It was small,

about a dozen or fourteen faculty members. But we fit in beautifully. I guess nearly anybody would have. And I bought a little farm out there, eighty or ninety acres. It was rocky, but some of it was tillable land.

Jenkins: Do you remember what you paid per acre for it?

Curry: Oh, no, twenty dollars or so.

Jenkins: Did it have any improvements on it?

Curry: It had a little house on it and a little barn.

Jenkins: Somebody had been working it?

Curry: Oh, yes, somebody had been living there. There was a winding, rough, dirt road up to it, and when you had a rain you would have erosion, and you might have to do a little spade work before you could drive a car up there. Up on the mountain.

Jenkins: Were you raising anything or just kind of living there?

Curry: Oh, no. It was just a weekend hideout for us. And the Fourth of July, the second year, I guess, we had bought a home and we bought this little place out in the country. There was a little stream out there. It was just another world. And we decided that we would spend our Fourth of July holiday out there. We went out early in the morning. Wild berries, you just wouldn't believe it, you know. Just everywhere. So we had lunch pails, and in everything we had we just started picking berries.

Jenkins: What kind?

Curry: Blackberries and some wild dewberries. And we had our lunch at noon. And then Mary, being very fair skinned, started

itching and scratching. And we started looking, and both of us were just a complete chigger bite. There wasn't a place as big as a pin that you could have touched that we didn't have chigger bites. Oh, what a miserable weekend that was, then, two or three days following trying to get over those chigger bites. And then another thing that I don't forget easily, out there that morning we kept hearing a noise. It sounded almost like a bell ringing somewhere. Clang, clang, clang. And it kept getting closer and closer and louder. And we were puzzled. What in the world could this be? Well, in due time here comes a donkey and a guy and a gal on this donkey. And this is a skillet, a pot and pan hanging on the side of that donkey, and as he would take a step they would bump together. That was that clang, clang, clang stuff. And they stopped and wanted to know how do you get from here to someplace on that other mountain over yonder, and I didn't know any more than they did. I said, "What are you young people doing out here?" "Oh, we just married, and we are going to our home over there if we can find it." And all in God's world they possessed was on that donkey.

Jenkins: Going to start life.

Curry: Starting from scratch, I guess, you would say. Well, then I guess early fall of the second year we were up at Fayetteville, my father got killed in a hunting accident right there on the farm. So that created problems. What would we do with

Mother? And I have a nephew, and we put him on the farm. He had just been married a year, I guess, and let him operate the farm, and Mama came to Fayetteville to live with us.

Jenkins: How old was your dad, do you know?

Curry: About sixty, I guess, at the time. Well, Mama got along fine for about two or three weeks, and then she wanted to go home. And there wasn't anything to do but to take her home. And off and on she would live with me, and my younger brother, and the nephew there at the farm home, just shifted around from one to the other. There wasn't anything much we could do about it. She would stay with you a while and get along just beautifully, and there wasn't any way you could keep her when she decided that she wanted to go to the next stop.

Jenkins: Your dad was killed on his family farm?

Curry: Yeah, on his place, yes. Something, rabbits or crows or dogs or something had been bothering his vegetable garden, and he had gone down to . . . He had his shotgun with him. That's all we know. It looked like he was climbing through a barbed wire fence trying to get over that and shot himself. Well, then come about October, November, President Futrell, the then president of the University of Arkansas, was driving home as I recall it from Ft. Smith to Fayetteville. It was early evening and I guess he was driving into the sun. It was early evening and a truck had stopped on that two lane highway coming from Ft. Smith to Fayetteville. President

Futrell ran his automobile under that truck. It had a high bed on it, and it may have been a log truck, I don't know what it was, but it took the top of his car and everything with it right off. All right. Mrs. Fullbright, Roberta Fullbright, was a wealthy widow, and one of her boys, Bill, was an assistant professor in the School of Law, a former quarterback on the Razorback football team and a Rhodes scholar. How much of it was manipulated by Roberta, I don't know. But at any rate the governor of Arkansas at that time was a Mr. Bailey, and Mrs. Fullbright had been a staunch supporter and a heavy backer financially of his campaign. So, who became president of the University except J. William Fullbright? And this, we will say about mid-semester, I reckon, when they appointed him president. But there was a new campaign. Among others, of course, a campaign for governor. And a man by the name of Adkins was running against brother Bailey, and in the May primary Adkins was elected. And one of his campaign pledges was he was going to take the University out of politics. Well, at the spring commencement Ben Wooten was president of the Little Rock Federal Bank.

Jenkins: The Ben Wooten we know?

Curry: Yes. And he was the commencement speaker, and he was also a member of the board of trustees of the University of Arkansas. So at that commencement in May, late May, early June or whenever it was, the Board of Regents met, and this was the

first time they had met with Bill Fullbright since he had been made president. In the meantime they had ousted Governor Bailey and had elected Adkins as governor. So the only action that the Board of Regents ever took with Bill sitting as president was to fire him.

Jenkins: So he was president how long?

Curry: About six months, I guess, five or six months. But he was a likeable person. I guess a month before the governor fired him, he invited the Business Administration faculty out to his country home, Rabbit Ranch. Oh, beautiful, beautiful, you know how those hills are at that time of year, and a beautiful home out there. A magnificent thing. And that was an eye opener. I knew very little about the Fullbrights and didn't suspect at the time the kind of wealth they had and the power that the name could exert in the state. So Bill Fullbright was dismissed from the presidency. And in the meantime I have to back up and say that when Futrell was killed in an automobile wreck, they appointed an acting or temporary president, who was then the agricultural extension agent that worked out of the university at the time. And he was a, well, to put it mildly, Harding, this agricultural extension man, and Dean Fitchner in business administration didn't think too much of each other. In fact, they hated each other's guts. Why, I don't know. So immediately Dean Fitchner had the urgent call to go to Washington as head of the Small Business Administration. And how they

were going to do it I don't know, somehow I wasn't in on it. I knew of course that Dean Fitchner was going to leave, and I knew that he would take a leave of absence if he could get one from Harding. I didn't know if he could or not, and I figured it didn't make any difference, he wasn't going to stay there. But sometime at nine or ten one night the telephone rang, and it was Dean Fitchner and he said, "The faculty has just elected you to be acting Dean in my absence."

Jenkins: You had been there how long?

Curry: Well, two years, two and a half about, I guess. I said, "Well, this is gratifying, of course, that they have that kind of confidence or something or other, but why not Walter Cole or George Hunytsberger or some of these fellows that I know have the great respect of the faculty. They have been here much longer than I have." "Don't ask me why. I am just telling you what they have done." Well, this troubled me because I knew the political environment there, and the odds were nine to one that this bunch was going to bring in a complete new administrative staff. Now at that time we didn't know that they would fire Bill Fullbright, but even if Bill stayed as president I figured that he would want a turnover anyhow. So as I told the faculty when they met the next morning, I appreciated what they had done, but thanks and goodbye. Sure enough Harding was appointed president at

the beginning of that summer term. We got along fine except maybe about two weeks after he was made president he called and said that he would like to talk to me. I went over there to his office, and he said, "You know perfectly well that it was a political move to dismiss Bill Fullbright as president, and it stands to reason that I am the political appointee to succeed him. And it is true we are going to try to get this university out of politics, but I am obligated to the people who named me to be president. And they want a guy by the name of Scott to be dean, and I don't like it, but I can't help it."

Jenkins: Was Scott there?

Curry: No, Scott was an unknown. Nobody knew who Scott was. "And I'll see that you get a full professorship and top salary if you will stay." In the meantime I had had letters and telephone calls, and I knew the head of the accounting department at the Wharton School, and they had just sent me a telegram offering me the associate professorship in accounting at the Wharton School. So I said, "Don't worry about it, Professor Harding. I am going to the University of Pennsylvania, the Wharton School. I don't think any self respecting person could stay here under the circumstances that you are stating, and I understand why you are, because you have been here for forty years and an old man, but I am not going to." Well, I have a letter there in the file where he said he was sorry and all this stuff, but understood what a great opportunity I would have at the Wharton School. All right, this

was a traumatic experience. We loved Fayetteville. We had many good friends there on the faculty and in town. It's a small town. But here is a great professional opportunity. After all, one of the leading universities in the nation, certainly one of the outstanding schools of business, the oldest one in the nation. So, obviously, we were happy to be moving to the University of Pennsylvania. The salary was a great deal better than the salary structure at Fayetteville.

Jenkins: Now you have been at Fayetteville for how long?

Curry: Three full years.

Jenkins: And you were acting dean for how long?

Curry: About six months, I would say.

Jenkins: Until the politics.

Curry: Yes. We sold our home. We sold the little farm. We bought a one wheel trailer to hook on the back of our car to carry some of our stuff. And start the trek to Philadelphia. Everything goes fine. We had a couple of big cats, canaries, and all this kind of stuff, you know. Late in the evening, almost sundown, we were on the Pennsylvania turnpike and going through a tunnel, one of those long tunnels, and the tire on that one wheel trailer blew. And did it ever sound like two shotguns or two cannons in that tunnel. But I pulled it on out to the end of the tunnel, and they have a fire station, you know, at each end of the tunnel and a pull-out and camping facilities or whatever just in case something like that

happens. Well, this was Saturday afternoon, nearly sun-down.

Jenkins: It always happens on Saturday.

Curry: Yes. And what can we do? Where can I get a tire? There was no place that I could go that time of the evening. At night everything was closed. So all we could do was stay in the car and fortunately we always had some snacks and made it all right until after sunup the next day. They were nice to us there at the tunnel. They appreciated the plight we were in, and took all the care of us they could. But one of the first things that happened, Betty's cat got loose. Well, you can imagine the uneasiness. Here the cat had been traveling for two days all cooped up in an automobile, and just outside of this long tunnel and that cat had gone off in there. But, fortunately, we did manage to retrieve her cat. The next day, Sunday morning, people there at the tunnel told me they would call Harrisburg, which was twenty or thirty miles on down the road, and they knew somebody who had a tire shop, and they believed he would open up for me and get me a tire so we could go on to Philadelphia. By golly, he did. I took the wheel in, and they put it on and aired it, and I brought it back and put it on that doggone one-wheel trailer and drove on in to a suburb of Philadelphia and got us a motel where we could stay for several days. Then on Monday I called the head of the accounting department, George McFarland, and told him where

I was, at this motel, and that we would be looking for a place to live. Well, he generously volunteered to show us around and help us in every way he could to find a place, and wanted to know whether we wanted to buy a place or rent or whatever. I told him that coming into a large city and not knowing the environment or whatever, I thought it would be better to rent a place at least for a while. And he showed us a number of places in the suburbs, never anywhere near the university. Some of them magnificent places. At that time, this was early September, '41. And through the depression years many of those huge estates in the suburbs of Philadelphia had become unmanageable for the owners. I guess they were mortgaged anyway, and insurance companies owned hundreds of them, and you could buy one of those places with maybe two or three or four acres of land, a mansion of a thing, for eight or ten thousand dollars. I was sorely tempted, I tell you. Oh, they were beautiful.

Jenkins: Then you've got to keep them up.

Curry: Yes. Well, yes, how do you finance the gardner and the yard man and the cooks and the housekeeper and all that kind of thing? Well, one of the history professors, I think it was, was taking a leave of absence and going to South America for a year, and his house was available. And he wanted some faculty member working at the university to live in his house while he was gone. So Professor McFarland knew about

this, and we went to the place, and the professor and his family were there and they showed us everything, and we just made arrangements. He was moving within a day so we just moved right into his home, and that took care of the first year's living accommodations.

Jenkins: Before we get started on this new venture let's go back and have some of your observations of the depression of the thirties.

Curry: All right. Let me get the time frame and where I was. We had just moved from Eldorado, Texas, to Austin in the early thirties when the depression was really in its early stages. We paid twenty-five dollars a month rent in a new house, south Austin, when we moved there in 1930, maybe. My job, I think, paid a hundred and fifty or sixty dollars a month. Well, with a wife and two children, your rent twenty-five dollars a month, utilities, maybe gas and electricity combined about six dollars at the most, bread a dime or seven cents if you got it at the super market. Food maybe cost us five dollars a week, six or seven dollars a week even with babies. So, yes, I was vividly aware that there was a depression going on, for two reasons. My family, father, mother, aunts, uncles, brothers, sister, everybody were farmers. So were my wife's people, on the farm. And my wife's people lived seventy-five miles from Austin, and on frequent weekends we were down there. Well, they were plowing up cotton, killing their livestock. So were my parents,

my grandparents, everybody. This was unheard of, of course. And it was depressing to visit my kinfolks and my close friends in the community where I grew up as a boy on the farm and see what they had to do. And then I was taking course work at the university, and I had Clarence Ayers in an economics course through that time span, and he was saying, teaching, surmising, philosophizing on what had caused it, what actions should be taken. And I remember that when President Roosevelt took office, Clarence Ayers was saying, "Now, if you want to get in the stock market this is the time to do it because all of the things that the government is now saying are going to be stimulated." But nobody believed it much. They just couldn't quite see that the catastrophe was going to get much better. Then it took a while, but it did get better. It might have gotten better sooner if they had left it alone, but it did get better.

Jenkins: Back to plowing under the crops and killing the animals, give us a little bit more of why that was being done and what the farmer got out of it.

Curry: Well, let's put it this way. World War I, late 1918-1920, that time span, cotton was selling at forty cents a pound or forty-one, that territory; wheat, I don't remember, three or four dollars a bushel; farm land three or four times what it had been as late as 1915. Comes, say, the end of World War I. Prices collapsed. Here we were getting forty, forty-one cents a pound for cotton in 1919, in 1920-21 we got eight

cents a pound, and a year or two later a nickel a pound if you could sell it, and wheat fifty cents a bushel. So the farm industry did not participate in the recovery and the boom of the 1920's. Largely, say, for several reasons. One, he had bought land at World War I prices. Now he was getting post-war prices, and he couldn't pay the interest, much less the principle, on the land he had bought, if he bought land. Now many farmers, all my kinfolks, already owned their farms, and they didn't buy any additional land. But there was some improvement in technology of farming. No longer were you using a one-row cultivator and a team of mules or horses or whatever. You now had gone to two-row and three-row with a tractor, and you were able to produce much more than the market was clearing. So you had surpluses of everything that the farmer could produce, wheat, corn, cotton. You name it, and there was a surplus. At the same time there was a surplus of oil out there in east Texas, too, and you couldn't give it away. So the farmer was in a depression. While industry, the gay twenties, the exorbitant, wonderful twenties, with the stock market booming, and the farmer just starving, really. Well, he wasn't starving he just . . . if he owed anything he couldn't pay it. That was the simple truth of it.

Jenkins: Had plenty of eat, but no cash flow.

Curry: Yes. Here was my father, none of us at home anymore, just he and Mom. A good farm, but he didn't have any cash. And

what he got out of the cotton and maize, whatever he sold, didn't recover his cost.

Jenkins: Kind of like they are feeling today.

Curry: Yes. So he has to go in to the bank and borrow some money to make another crop. Well, this crop doesn't pay the cost either, and he has to get the loan extended. Well, finally, loses his teams because he mortgaged the teams. Yes, I was vividly aware that there was a depression. But for me and my family, we never had it so good, except for one or two months when the state didn't have any money to pay the teachers. But fortunately the banks in Austin where we were said, "Don't worry about it. Just bring in your warrants and we will cash them for you, and then we will hold them until the state gets the money to make them good."

Jenkins: Now when the farmers were plowing under and killing animals, was the government paying them to do some of this?

Curry: The first government program . . . the agricultural economists and so forth looked at the problem and said, "Look, industry controls their supply. The farmer doesn't. So what we have got to do to get him on an equal basis is to wipe out some of this over supply. So the way we are going to do it, this year instead of having a fifteen million bale cotton crop, let's cut it to eight." "Well, how are we going to do that?" "We are going to plow up much of the crop that is already planted." And some of it in south Texas was already just about ready to pick by the time they

got to that. And on my father-in-law's place, his cotton had quit blooming and was in the boll stage when we plowed up a bunch of that.

Jenkins: And they were being subsidized?

Curry: I don't remember the details. Yes, I think they got enough per acre to plow it up to cover their cost of doing it. That's about what it amounted to.

Jenkins: I recall talking to a man about White's Auto Stores, and he said that was a tremendous boon to them. All of a sudden one morning farmers were coming in and buying stuff, and they discovered it was because they were getting subsidies.

Curry: Yes. On the cattle that they killed, I don't remember. I think they got a few dollars a head for each one they slaughtered. I don't remember how much it was because I didn't have any.

But it was a shocking kind of thought that you were going to go out tomorrow and kill a third of your cows, half of your hogs, whatever. And it just didn't look right. You had worked all year, all spring, to grow a crop of cotton, and here it is laid by, as we said, and now you were going to plow it under.

Jenkins: Do you have a recollection of what they did with the dead animals?

Curry: Burned them.

Jenkins: They wouldn't even let them send them to let people eat them?

Curry: Oh, no.

Jenkins: Glut the market.

Curry: This was to get the supply in balance with demand. And then the next spring you had to set aside acres. You didn't plant so many acres this time to keep the supply better balanced with the demand.

Jenkins: You had been in some economics courses by this time. How did this set with you personally after studying economics and looking out there as a farm boy and seeing all this stuff destroyed?

Curry: Well, I was, shall we say, torn. Here were the professors and they think it was great stuff. This was the way to handle that problem. And here I am sitting there in the classroom and, as you say, I had been out there on that farm, the hoeing and all that, and I can't see how . . . I look at it and I say, "What does a human being want?" He wants a great abundance. That's his inner nature. Somehow it's built into him through the divine purpose if there is one. At any rate why he wants a great abundance I don't know and I don't care. I just know he does. And it is a rare individual who doesn't want it. So I said, "How do you satisfy man's yearning for a great abundance and destroy or simply refuse to produce what he is capable of producing." Now I understand perfectly well that there is something out of balance, and that if you are going to

keep the farmer in business somehow you have got to get him so that he can share in the abundance also. But this looks like kind of an odd way to go about doing it. Why don't we try to pull everybody up in abundance instead of dampening down this segment of your economy and keep them from producing? So I had difficulty reconciling that, and I still do if you want to know.

Jenkins: You were teaching in public schools for some part of the depression. Did you see or feel much of it through the students that you saw in class?

Curry: Not very much. As I say, I taught in Austin High School through 1930-35, about that time period. These were not farmers. They worked for the state of Texas, a good many of the students who were in my classes in the high school there, or they were sons and daughters of the business community or professional people. So, no, you didn't see any immediate impact, except maybe if they were some of the Mexican community. Austin has always had a sizeable Mexican population, and a few of those people were in the high school, and you could see, maybe, occasionally some evidence of that. But even there most of the Mexicans who came to high school were from families that were among the more affluent of the Mexican community.

Jenkins: How about out at Eldorado and at Melvin? Smaller towns.

Curry: That was in the 1920s so things were not at all that bad in the 1920s. Through the 1920s Mary and I had lived

frugally and we had saved some money. And I had conservatively put it in savings and loan associations. And while I was in Eldorado I put some money in a savings and loan association out in El Paso, and then when we moved to Austin I put it in a savings and loan association in Austin. Well, comes 1931-32, and I look at the quotes in the stock market and Chrysler is down to, I think, seven-eighths. "My Lord, I am going to get my money out of the savings and loan in El Paso and put every dollar of it into Chrysler stock as long as I can get it for a dollar or in and around a dollar a share." So I write to the El Paso savings and loan, whatever the name of it was, and asked for my money. And the contract said, you know, notify them and within thirty days you would have your money. Well, in thirty days I don't get my money, but I get a letter. And it says in substance, "We would love to send you your money except we don't have it."

Jenkins: So you were feeling the depression there.

Curry: Yes, I was beginning to feel the depression. And they said, "Now a good many of our depositors have done just what you have done. They asked for their money, and we are going to have to ration it, prorate it as we are able to get it. And we will get it to you as soon as we can, as much as we can, but it may be two or three years before we are able to return all of your money." Well, the savings and loan at Austin wasn't in quite that bad a shape. They said they

believed they could get it to me in six months. Okay, I want my money in six months. Well, six months later Chrysler was selling for two dollars a share. Oh, no, thanks, but no. I will just leave my money in the savings and loan. So that's one experience that I . . . If I could have gotten my money right then from the El Paso Savings and Loan and bought Chrysler for a dollar or less, I guess I had five or six hundred dollars in the savings and loan. So say I had had five hundred shares of Chrysler in early 1932, I probably wouldn't have worked much longer. Chrysler went up to what? Sixty or seventy dollars a share?

Jenkins: After you refused to buy it at two did you then agonize over what was happening to Chrysler very much?

Curry: Not really. No, no, I have never been one to . . . When I make a decision, it's made, and there is no point in looking back. That's not going to get you any place. You are aware that your decision was right or wrong or in between, and hopefully you learn a little something from the mistakes you make. But there is no point to agonizing over what would have been if I had done this or that or the other.

Jenkins: Well, did Chrysler continue to go up from that two or . . .?

Curry: Oh, yes. Yes, within another six months it was four or five or six and another six months twenty.

Jenkins: You learned from that experience.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: But you didn't agonize over it.

Curry: Well, I learned that oftentimes it is better to buy something when the picture has clarified itself, even though the price has doubled or tripled compared to what it was when you couldn't see what the situation was. That's one reason I bought that hundred shares of Avco yesterday when the guy called. I had been reading about it. There was an article in Forbes Magazine and other places. And here is a conglomerate that got in trouble acquiring companies that they didn't know anything about how to operate, and they have gotten rid of a good many of them. Well, the stock is now selling at two and a half times last year's earnings and about one and a half times the projected earnings for this year. Pays about a five per cent yield on the present price. So what the guy called me about was some municipal bonds out of Houston that were going to yield seven percent, about. Well, what sense does it make to buy municipal bonds? Sure, you don't have any income tax, but it pays you seven percent and inflation is nine or ten or twelve. So I just gambled on the now unknown. If it works, fine, I will enjoy it. If it doesn't work, I think it will, otherwise I wouldn't have bought it. I think it is twenty-two or three hundred dollars for a hundred shares of that stock. Well, okay, I think it's a good bet. I just can't quite see why. Here

is a perfectly good solid industry and company. Why would it be selling for two times last years earnings? The cash in the bank is more than the twenty dollars a share that I paid for it. Of course, that cash in the bank's not going to do any good because they are not going to liquidate the company. Now it may be that somebody will try a takeover to get that potential that they have and the assets they have. That would be just fine because if you get a takeover going they will go to forty or fifty a share probably. I like that, too, I will let them have mine.

Jenkins: I want to ask you about conglomerates and things later on, and get your idea about what is happening and so on. But any other things concerning the depression?

Curry: You were aware of the depression in another way in a city like Austin. Jobs. A lot of people didn't have any work, and they stood in bread lines or whatever Salvation Army or any other charitable group could make available to them. And people, men, women, children, anybody, if there was any work to be had, they wanted it. They didn't ask you how much it was going to pay. They just wanted to work, and by golly, they worked, they didn't lean around and mess around. They were so happy to have a job of any kind it didn't make any difference how manual or how menial or whatever, if you would pay them to do some kind of work that was all they asked. And they didn't look to any

kind of a handout or pay from anybody if they could help it. They wanted to work, and they did work. You contrast that with what you have today, and it is just unbelievable the attitude of the people toward jobs and work, and how much they were going to get paid for it. They figured, I guess, that if you paid them something that was better than they were doing at the moment, so they would go ahead and do it. And nine times out of ten they wouldn't even ask you what they were going to pay them.

Jenkins: Survival was what was important.

Curry: Yes, that's right.

Jenkins: Let's go back now and pick up where you moved into the house and starting the new career in Philadelphia.

Curry: Yes. This house is two blocks off the high speed electric rail line. It is in the Aronamick section of Philadelphia, and you take the high speed electric train, just a single car, two cars, to Thirtieth Street, west Philadelphia, and then you take the subway which is elevated a good piece of the way, and then the subway to Thirtieth Street and get off at Thirtieth Street and walk up a block to the University of Pennsylvania campus. So on Monday morning I go in to see the University for the first time, and I want to try the public transportation because Mary could have the car when she needed it, and I could go in on the public transportation. So I go to Thirtieth Street and get on the elevated, the el, and subway after about

from maybe where we got on the elevated was a Hundred and Fortieth Street or something like that and you go, maybe, to Fiftieth or Seventy-Fifth or something where it goes underground. I get off at Thirtieth Street and it is just a dingy, sooty subway station. And I asked somebody which direction to the University of Pennsylvania campus, and they point that way. I walk that way a couple of blocks and here it is. Well, it is kind of setting in a three way corner and street cars on two sides of it, and it is kind of hemmed in that way and the cars going across it and through it. Some very nice buildings, attractive, and I find somebody . . . it is early morning before classes start.

Jenkins: You had never visited there.

Curry: No. I asked, "Where is the Wharton School?" "Well, you go down this street a block and a half, and it will be right there facing the street." So I walked down the street a time or two, and I didn't see anything but an old, dingy looking building. But somebody else walks along and I say, "Is the Wharton School along here somewhere?" "Yeah, that's it right there." "Well, gee." So I go in the front door. Nobody around, except I walk down the corridor a ways and here is a door that is open and a young woman sitting in there. Not young, she was middle aged. I walked in and I told her who I am, and she said, "Oh, yes,

we are expecting you." And then she called Dean Balderson, who was a guy, baldhead, sitting next door in his office. She introduced us, the Dean, Dean Canby Balderson. We visited a little while, and he walked me down to show me where the accounting department was located and where my office would be and that was that. I did walk down to Franklin Field, it was a beautiful fall day. I got on the subway and came back home. Classes started a couple of days later. As I remember it we didn't have anything to do with registering. I don't know how they did it, but I didn't have anything to do with it, let's put it that way. Well, I go in and here is my class schedule handed to me. This class and that class, and what I had was a lecture section to the non-Wharton School students. They didn't mix the university students with the Wharton students. They were in separate sections, and I was assigned a lecture section of, maybe, a couple of hundred people. And then I had two sections of the Wharton I, which was the beginning course in accounting and the senior seminar.

Jenkins:

Of Wharton?

Curry:

Of Wharton, undergraduates at the senior level, had to do a thesis with it, so I was in charge of that. I was to meet classes, then, the next day. My first class was a Wharton School elementary accounting, and they had about fifty students in each section of this, fifty or sixty. They went on the philosophy that it was a bunch of foolishness

to think about small classes. The student is not going to learn anything with his mouth open. That if you have the kind of quality instructor, the student is going to learn by what the instructor has him do, and you just as well have a roomful as one guy at the end of the log. So the room was full. And it was a warm morning, mid-September, and it gets hot in Philadelphia like everywhere else. And I had in Fayetteville, I guess, maybe the suit was six months or a year old, but a beautiful white wool summer suit. It was a pretty thing. The material was beautiful. And I decided that I would wear that for my first morning. And I went in and met this class, had a lectern. Three or four times during that class street cars came buzzing by and made so much noise that all I could do was just stop. You couldn't hear yourself much less anybody in the room could hear you. And I finished that hour of class, got along beautifully. Went back and sat down at my desk, and happened to glance at my arms. They were almost as black as anything could get. Soot, smudge. Jiminy Christmas. "Well, all I can do with this suit is try to get home and send it to the cleaners and then hang it in the closet. I can see right quick that you can't wear this kind of clothes in this environment." I would get up in the mornings, look out at our home out there in the suburbs, just a beautiful, bright, sunny morning. By the time I would get out to the University you would swear

that there wasn't a sun in the sky. Just smoke, smog, dirt, dust.

Jenkins: This was about what year?

Curry: The fall of 1941, just before the war broke out. Well, I had some interesting learning experiences that first year at Wharton School. The professors shared offices, and fortunately for me I was in an office with Dr. Adolph Matz, who did his undergraduate work at the University of Cologne, I think, and for whatever reason came to the States, and he had done his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. Well, he was just a fine human individual, and he married a U. S. girl and so on. But Adolph and I had a desk in the same office. Well, Adolph was cordial and just as fine as you would want to be. George McFarland, the head of the department, did everything that he could to make me feel at home and comfortable. Everything was delightful for Mary and the children and so on. But pretty soon I became aware of the fact as I walked up and down the halls, particularly in the accounting suite, nobody bothered to speak to me or say, "Go to Hell," or anything.

Jenkins: Acknowledge your existence.

Curry: The silent treatment. "Well, I wonder if those pecker-woods think I care." And in a big city, a big university, I ran into an environment that I had never thought about. You know, at the University of Arkansas, at the University

of Michigan and here at North Texas State, you know the families of a great many of the people in your department, all of them in your department, and a great many of them throughout the School of Business. Well, here is Art Maxwell, he lives forty miles from where I live. Here is George McFarland, he lives in Jenkintown, which is thirty miles from where I live. You see the men in the building, but that is the extent of your association. You have no idea what their families are like or anything about it. Occasionally, well, I think McFarland invited us to have dinner with him and his wife and daughter within a couple of months from the time we moved there. Maxwell, another one of the accounting professors, invited me to join his bowling league, and about once a week we would bowl in the afternoon, a league they had. But that was the extent of any contact with any faculty, except when you met them in the hall. And they didn't say "hello." Well, I guess, maybe, I had been there two or three months. Mary was pretty well tied down at the house, and she hadn't been downtown except once or twice. So we made arrangements with somebody, a baby sitter, and at three o'clock or four o'clock whatever time I was free from the university, I would meet her downtown. What's the name of that big department store where everybody said you would meet at the eagle in such-and-such department store. Well, I was going to meet her there, and this was all set

up. Well, we were going to do this. Say this was Monday, and Friday we were going to do that, we were going to be down there and we are going to go shopping and we are going to go to the show. They were showing Tobacco Road and I wanted to see that. And afterward, I believe, we are going to have dinner and go to the show. Well, the next day one of the old time professors, Dr. Moxcy, came to me and said, "I've got an exam Friday at so-and-so o'clock, and I want you to proctor it for me." Well, I said, "Dr. Moxcy, I would be glad to, but I just can't, and here is the reason why, and I am just not going to break that appointment and engagement to be with my wife Friday afternoon and evening." Well, he goes straight to George McFarland, the head of the department, and said, "Jack Curry won't proctor an exam for me." I didn't know anything about it. I didn't know that you were supposed to proctor a full professors exam, and that an associate professor is subordinate to anybody around the place.

Jenkins: Not the way we do it in Texas.

Curry: Particularly a newcomer. So I just said, "No, I am sorry. I would love to do it for you. Any other time I would, but this one time I'm not, I can't. I won't proctor the exam." Well, he went to McFarland and protested about me being uncooperative and wouldn't proctor his exam, and whatever. Well, this was Friday and I go back up to the

university Monday, and Dr. McFarland had left a note in my faculty box that he would like to see me. So I went in. He grinned and said, "You know what happened?" "Look, don't run me riddles. I'm not very good at it. What are you talking about?" "You know you told Dr. Moxcy that you wouldn't proctor his exam. He came to me all upset about it." Well, I told him why I didn't proctor his exam. He said, "I am glad you didn't. There is just no reason why you should proctor his exam." Then he went on, he said, "I don't know how much you've noticed it. They have been giving you the silent treatment." I said, "Yes, I have kind of noticed it, but I don't care, but I just wondered why." He said, "Because you are the highest paid faculty member in the accounting department with the exception of--whatever the other fellow's name was--and they know it and they resent it, and that's why you got this kind of treatment. Just don't worry about it." I said, "Well, I haven't worried up until now, so I don't suppose I will start worrying now." Well, in due time this tended to break down, but some of them never did. They just resented the fact that I was brought in from the outside and paid a salary more than they got after they had been there ten or twenty years. Well, we are doing fine. Comes early December, and one of my former students from the University of Arkansas was in Washington working for some government agency department, and they had been to

Philadelphia and visited with us and had invited us to come over and spend a long weekend with them, which we did on . . . I guess we left Philadelphia about mid-afternoon on, we'll say December 4th and get to Washington and spend the night with Harold and his wife. The next couple of days we see Washington. We had never been there before. The two children, Jack and Betty,—Jack was just three years old, I guess, four—Betty was old enough to enjoy everything she saw, and on Sunday we had set aside to go to Mt. Vernon. So early morning we take off for Mt. Vernon, Harold and his wife and Mary and me and the two children. And we see George Washington's home and the grounds, the whole bit. Take a little boat ride on the Potomac. Here is the place where George Washington threw the dollar across the Potomac.

Jenkins: The Potomac probably wasn't polluted then.

Curry: Well, it was a heck of a lot wider than George Washington could throw a dollar I can tell you that. Not at that place anyway.

Jenkins: I just remember when we saw the Potomac there were signs on it saying, "Polluted Water."

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Was it that way?

Curry: No, no, I didn't see anything. But it may have been like the Schuylkill there in Philadelphia. You didn't have to have a sign that said, "Polluted." You could smell it four

hundred yards. No, the Potomac where we were on it at Mt. Vernon, as I remember, was a pretty clear, pleasant looking stream. Well, we went back in. This was Sunday afternoon by now, two o'clock or three, and we were to drive back to Philadelphia that evening late or that night. And we get back to the apartment where Harold and his wife lived and getting lunch ready at two or three o'clock that afternoon and somebody knocked on the door. And they said, "Harold, have you had your radio on?" "No, we have been out to Mt. Vernon and so on and so on." He said, "Well, you probably should turn it on. The Japs have just attacked Pearl Harbor." "Yeah. Well." We turned it on, and I guess we stayed at their house until nine o'clock that evening. The two or three previous nights we had admired the beauty of the city and the lights. Everything, when we left that evening at nine o'clock, there wasn't a light to be seen. And the radio had said, "If you must drive, put your lights on dim, only." So we didn't know too much about Washington to begin with, but we did know how to get from that apartment building to the highway. And, I don't know, it seemed to me every fifteen miles the police and the highway patrols stopped you. It took us, I guess, it took us an hour and fifteen minutes to drive from Philadelphia to Washington when we came over there, and it took us nearly three hours to drive home because of the traffic control and everything that was taking place. We get back

to Philadelphia Sunday night or Monday morning. Now we are at war. The Wharton School had men only, it did at that time. So immediately many of the men were already in reserve units of some kind or other, and those that weren't looked forward to fairly early drafting. All of them were registered. Even I was registered when I was at the University of Arkansas. So, sure, we met classes as per usual, but daily there was one or two fewer. And we knew--this was early December--and with the end of the fall semester coming in January, that probably the spring semester the Wharton School, for all practical purposes, would just close down. And in the meantime the Army and the Navy and whatever were out at the university recruiting and setting up staff. There was a big naval yard there at Philadelphia, and they wanted people to come out there and teach physics and chemistry and engineering and all of this with the new recruits, and whatever. And the head of the physics department got in touch with me to want me to teach physics there in the Wharton School building. Well, if there is anything I don't know something about, which there is lots of them, physics is bound to be one of them. But what can you do, you know? So I told him, "Look, I have no resources to teach physics. That is just not one of my fortes." "Well, you can teach accounting. You surely can teach physics."

Jenkins: They both have numbers in them.

Curry: Yeah. "Well, okay." And I got a physics book. He gave me the textbook and whatever, and I started boning up on it, and the farther I went the less I knew. But fortunately a man by the name of John Gill called me in the office there at the Wharton School and said that Canby Balderson, the dean, . . . Canby went on from there to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve. He was already gone when I left the Wharton School. That Canby had given him my name, and he wanted to talk to me, and that he was head of the Economics Department of Atlantic Refining Company, and he had some work he thought that I would be qualified to do, I might like to do, as part of the war effort. So he came out and talked to me, and the essence of it was this. When the war broke out, obviously one of the big projects if this war was to be won, we have got to have oil. And the medium to coordinate that is the American Petroleum Institute. So immediately the secretary of the Army, Navy, Marines, the whole military forces, called the members of the American Petroleum Institute to Washington to see how we were going to organize the petroleum industry to provide the fuel for the various battle zones where they were going to need it. Well, the American Petroleum Institute being an industry trade association, felt that they would run into all kinds of antitrust litigation if they acted as an industry trade association,

is what it amounts to. So they set up the Petroleum Industry War Council, still industry financed but having the tacit understanding with the Justice Department that this was a war effort and whatever they did was with the sanction of the Department of the Interior, the Justice Department, and all the military services. And what they wanted me to do, already the service stations across the nation were limited in the amount of gasoline they could get. It was already ready for the rationing coupons, to get gasoline at all. And heating oil, fuel oil particularly for the Atlantic coast and the middle west. How were you going to allocate that? How were you going to price it? How were you going to keep service station operators in business? Or did you want to keep them in business? And to make a long story short, what they asked if I would do was be the liaison between the cost and price adjustment to the committee of which this guy was chairman for the Petroleum Industry War Council, and would I be the liaison and the researcher to tell them what to do in terms of pricing gasoline at the filling station, home heating oil, all this kind of stuff. Well, that sounded a lot better than teaching physics, and it paid pretty good. So, yes, beginning that spring of 1942, then, the spring semester which was about January, '42, I took a leave from the Wharton School faculty and went to work for the

petroleum industry. And I still lived in Philadelphia. My office was on the thirtieth floor of the . . . well, in the executive suite of the Atlantic Refining Company building on Broad Street right in the downtown heart of Philadelphia. And by that time I did drive my automobile to the Wharton School a good deal of the time when Mary wouldn't need it during the day. And this was also an interesting kind of thing. The Wharton School had a great big area, a block square where they were going to build a new building when they got the money. And this was reserved for Wharton School faculty parking. Well, this was a badge of distinction around the University of Pennsylvania, because we were the only faculty that had reserved parking, and if you wanted to try to find a parking space in that area, well, Jiminy Christmas, all you could do was buy a, two or three dollars a day at that time, a space to park. Well, that is beside the point. One of my first assignments with the petroleum industry was to go to Washington and meet Orville Judd who was the OPA chief, and get acquainted with him, let him know what my role was to be so we could discuss the problem. Okay, we set up a meeting with Orville Judd, the head of the Office of Price Administration, and four or five of his chief lieutenants. And they sent me over there. I didn't know I was a lamb walking into a lion's den, because the people who had tried to work with OPA were middle management people in the

petroleum industry. So I walk in this meeting room in the Department of the Interior building and introduce myself to Mr. Judd and he in turn introduced me to the other members that he had brought from the Office of Price Administration. And all of a sudden I discovered that the industry people who had met with that group were able to come in the room and with some degree of cordiality say "hello," but after that it was a shouting match. They were just at daggers' point, and Judd told me so, and he said in substance, "I am glad they have sent you here." Well, I said, "Okay, let's back up and see if we can get started on some kind of a friendly basis with some understanding that I am a Texas boy, I have worked in the oil field, Amerada Petroleum. I am, true, a university professor, but I look around the room and you have some ex-university professors here in the Office of Price Administration, too. I know a little about these petroleum industries. You folks know some, I don't know how much, about petroleum industry, but we are fighting a war, and we have some problems, several problems. One, how are we going to keep the civilian population supplied with essential gasoline to carry on here in the States? How is the service station operator going to survive with the limited allocation that you are now giving him? How much markup are you going to permit him

to have to compensate for his reduction in volume?
How are we going to provide heating oil and the reduced volume that you are going to have for that? What kind of price are you going to allow for aviation fuel for the military? You have been saying "no increases" to the industry. Well, stop and think a minute. That just can't be. Why can't it be? What's happening across the New England coastline, particularly around the Carolinas and New Jersey as they are trying to bring crude from the Texas fields into the refineries along the Atlantic seaboard? You are getting those tankers sunk every day by U-boats. Now we are bringing crude all the way from Texas in tank cars on the railroad. Well, how much difference do you think there is in transportation costs to get the crude oil to the refineries here on the Atlantic coast compared to what it cost to bring them up by tanker?"
And we talked for most of the morning back and forth. And they said, "Okay, we begin to see what the problems are. We, too, have been rather uncooperative, and we can sort of understand how the industry representatives have been so upset with us. So now, yeah, let's try to work together. You select industry people to come here and meet with us."
So I go back to Philadelphia and report to my boss in this operation and tell him that we can work with them. They will work with the petroleum industry. And since he knew the personnel in the industry and the availability of

these people to select maybe six or eight to go with me to the Office of Price Administration whenever we needed to go and work out solutions to the problems. And in the meantime he said, "Okay, you go in the research department there. You have x, y, z assistants in there," most of them were women, but they were real sharp cookies, "and figure out how much, what the price ought to be to keep maybe two-thirds of the service stations or half of the service stations in operation during the duration of the war. What kind of price were they going to have to get?" And so we started the wheels in motion to figuring out the pricing structure for gasoline and heating oil and aviation fuel, and how much adjustment had to be made for the increase in transportation costs and reduced volume and so on. So I had a staff there in the Atlantic Refining building that worked on the cost and price structure throughout the war. Each month the representatives, which were made up of the chairman of the board or the president of each oil company, independent, majors, the whole bit, with the president of each, I would say the independent producers, the marketers, the regional trade associations and representatives of my group and several others, engineering group or whatever, would go to Washington once a month and meet with Secretary Ickes and the brass of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines sitting around long tables ironing out what the military requirements would be

for each component; aviation fuel, heavy burning fuel for the navy ships, all kinds of petroleum products, where they would need to be and when they would need to be there. And then the oil companies, it was their responsibility to get it to the military and the military procurement offices to get it to the battlefronts where it was needed. That's the way it would work then throughout the war. As the war reached its peak and the work of the . . . that I did directly working out costs and price relationships with the Office of Price Administration, that had been pretty well ironed out. It was working smoothly, reasonably so. True, a lot of service stations closed. Some went broke. Many of them were in the military service, operators, and they went into other businesses working in an aircraft factory or riveting battleplate in a shipyard or whatever they may have been doing, but it really didn't hurt the service operator that had to go out, or did go out of business.

Jenkins: But during this time you were working with the government but not for the . . .

Curry: Not for the government. That's right. My paycheck came from the petroleum institute, from the A.P.I., American Petroleum institute, through the quasi-organization which they called the Petroleum Industry War Council. And so they needed, quote "me", in Washington as Assistant

Secretary-Treasurer of the Petroleum Industry War Council. Well, this posed a problem. My family was in Philadelphia and my work then was constantly in Washington. Before this time I shuffled back and forth. I would be in Philadelphia maybe two or three days and then in New York for a day or two and then in Washington for a couple of days and back to Philadelphia. Just commuting, really. But now I am in Washington five days a week, six days a week a lot of the time. But I would try to get home at least once a week. And I took a room in a boarding house there in Washington out on Northwest Street and served as secretary-treasurer. The job was primarily running the office in Washington, which was a big office, and part of my role was to see that a lot of the industry publications got in print, because it was kind of hard to get stuff published with the government preempting every darn thing you saw. And virtually everything that came over my desk had a big stamp on it, "Restricted, Confidential, Nobody is to see this." What the heck for, I often wondered. A lot of it was just malarky. Well, some of it maybe, I don't know there was some reason for it being confidential because here would come across my desk, "Train number so-and-so loaded with crude oil had left Houston on a certain date and should arrive at such-and-such refinery on another date." Nobody ever blew up a train. They blew up a lot of tankers; but

not any trains. Shortly after I started work there in the Atlantic Refinery building a U-boat sank an Atlantic Refinery tanker there off the coast of New Jersey. And, of course, the top management was all shook up about losing this tanker, and they sent their engineers and people out to where the thing was sunk, and they came back and reported that they believed that they could salvage that tanker and not very much of the oil had spilled. So they sent their divers out and, to make that story a little shorter, they did get that tanker in to dry dock and pumped the oil out and finally had nearly a half million dollar . . . the insurance company had already paid the loss of the tanker and its cargo. Well, they knew I was an accounting professor out at the Wharton School. So the chief accountant came to me and said, "We just can't figure out how to record this insurance we have collected, and then the money we have gotten from the cargo in this tanker. Do you have any idea?" And then he said, "Of course, we have written off the tanker and now we have got to bring it back on the books." Gee, and then a bright idea hit me and I said, "Why don't you just put it down in your accounts as capital gain on involuntary conversion?" That seemed to suit them fine.

Jenkins: And that was it.

Curry: Yeah. Well, here we are now in the summer of 1944. I

have pretty well had my fill of working in Washington. A lot of it is now trivia. I am shuffling back and forth between New York and Philadelphia and Washington and Baltimore now, because there is a big publishing house over there where we were getting a good many of the publications done in this Baltimore publishing company. And it appears through what the Army and Navy and Air Force people are saying at these monthly meetings that the war is winding down, that we have got it under control, that it can't last more than another six months. And I am ready to get back to a university environment. We had stood in line in Philadelphia for two and a half years. Everything. Here in Texas you probably never experienced it, but in Philadelphia we had a ration of three gallons of gasoline a week, and, of course, doctors and essential people got more, I got three gallons a week. Maybe I would come in on the interurban, and you would see a line of cars a mile long.

Jenkins: No, I don't remember any of that.

Curry: From over the hill. I don't know how long the line was. And the first time I saw it I went by a service station as I walked to my home, and, "What's going on?" "Well, we've got an allocation of gasoline, and everybody is trying his best to get their three gallons." Well, in the meantime, and this is another long story, the second year, I guess, I was at the University of Michigan I get

a letter from W. J. McConnell, president of North Texas State Teachers College, saying that "You have friends in Texas who say that you just might be the person we ought to have to try to build us a school of business here. Are you interested?" Well, I would write back and say, "Thanks a heap, but I am working on my doctorate at the University of Michigan. I don't want to leave until I get that completed. Thanks, but no." Well, about the next April I get this same letter, same message, "Are you interested?" "Thanks, but no, I am not interested." Well, I moved to Arkansas. Early in the spring I get a letter from W. J. McConnell, "Are you interested?" "No, I appreciate it, but I am not interested." I get to Philadelphia and comes the first of April or thereabouts I get this letter, "Are you interested?"

Jenkins: Who had sicced him on you, do you know?

Curry: I imagine some of the publishing company people. Roy Cooper was head of the business department when I went to the high school in Austin, and he was leaving and that's how come . . . No, he was there a year before I became the head of the department, and then he went to work for Southwestern Publishing Company. And I am sure he called on the group here in Denton. And then at the University of Arkansas I knew all of the publishing company representatives, of course. And I am sure that they must have passed the word to McConnell. Well, in the meantime Mary's dad had

developed a cancer in his jaw, and Mary just couldn't . . . She and her dad were very close. She was the 'boy' in the family, and she just couldn't tolerate the idea of being in Philadelphia and her dad dying down here. So we were coming to Texas in early spring, while I was still working for the petroleum industry, and I just said to Mary, "You know this character keeps writing about North Texas State Teachers College starting a school of business down there. Why don't we just stop by there and see what the heck he is like and what they have." So coming through from Philadelphia to Cameron we stopped in Denton. Spent the night. Holy cow, it was the worst run down at the heels place anybody ever saw. Between World War I and World War II they had built the old library, because the government provided matching funds, and the legislature couldn't see that money go to waste so they had provided that matching fifty percent, and they built the library. Nothing else had been built, and virtually nothing had even been maintained. So I said, "Ye gods." But I talked with Dr. McConnell, and the essence of our conversation was this: "Look, if I should come here will you provide whatever resources I ask for within the limits that can be made available to build a school of business?" "You have my solemn pledge." So, we visit her parents, we go back to Philadelphia. Now mid-summer, I guess.

Jenkins: This was '40 . . . ?

Curry: '44. Mary is fit to be tied about her daddy. About this time I get a telephone call from Bob Briggs who was the head of the accounting group at Michigan saying, "Texaco wants to talk to you about being assistant treasurer, and I told them you are the guy they ought to talk to. And they are going to contact you. I have given them your name and your address in Philadelphia, and they will be getting in touch with you and inviting you to come to New York to interview their management team, and are you interested in doing it?" "Well, sure, I will talk to them." Within a day or two I get this telephone call from a guy by the name of E. C. Breeding, comptroller and treasurer. He sets up an appointment for a day and hour to meet with him and his group in New York. So I go to New York on the train, of course. Go to the office up umpteen floors to the management executive suite and meet Mr. Breeding. Well, he begins to tell me what they are looking for, and that they would start me in the comptrollers office which was located in Houston. 'Oh, yeah, that sounds pretty good," you know. But he talks on a little bit and says, "Now-whatever his name was who was comptroller in Houston-he was going to retire in about two years, and when he retires we are going to bring the comptroller's office here to New York and have all of the corporate functions, management, here in New York." And he went on and talked awhile and said, "Well, on the basis of what we have in your dossier and what Briggs and the

people at the Wharton School and in the petroleum industry tell me, you could start as assistant comptroller at twelve thousand a year in Houston, and we think you can cut the mustard. And when we then move the comptroller's office here to New York, if you are what we think you are you'll be the assistant comptroller and assistant treasurer, and you will move up to twenty thousand-plus salary range." How in the hell can I go to North Texas State Teachers College at four hundred dollars a month when I've got this kind of offer staring me in the face? Well, I leave the Texaco office in mid-afternoon. I walk the streets of New York, I guess, three or four or five hours torn between what will Mary think, how can Jack and Betty adjust to life in New York. And by the time I got to the Pennsylvania Station to go back to Philadelphia, I had reached a conclusion. There is no way me and my family could live in that environment no matter if I became chairman of the board. So that was the decision that we come to North Texas.

Jenkins: It was a great relief to be able to make that decision, off the hook.

Curry: Yeah. It was a traumatic experience. And we had the moving van at our place in Philadelphia, and the head of the accounting department drove up to beg me to stay. They were going to give me a full professorship, top salary for the Wharton School. You see, the Wharton School is a University of

Pennsylvania private school. They do get state money for their medical school and some of their research, but Wharton School and the engineering school, everybody except the medical school, raises it's own money, it stands on its own. So, there were maybe in the Wharton School three big name professors that got fancy salaries, Raymond Bye in economics, Jerry, oh, what's his name in accounting, and the head of the finance department had a text book and a big name. Half a dozen got fancy salaries. The rest of them were peons, really. The way they survived was to teach in the evening program and in the extension. You got much higher pay for teaching in Harrisburg and Reading and so forth than you got regular Wharton School salary. Sure, you got six or eight or nine thousand a year, but you taught three nights a week in addition to your regular faculty salary. How the Wharton School ever stayed in the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business, they reported a nine hour load. What you had was eighteen or twenty-one. Well, I guess that's enough for today.

Jenkins: Next time we will pick up with the move to Denton.

Jenkins: Resuming the O. J. Curry interview, May 16, 1979.

Curry: I told you about our health problems in Philadelphia. Betty had had pneumonia a couple of times, Mary's daddy was ill here in Texas, and we had signed a contract to come down here. I was working for the petroleum industry in Washington, New York, shuffling back and forth, and I took a couple of weeks

vacation from the petroleum industry and drove to Texas, to Denton, Mary has a sister living in Fort Worth.

Jenkins: Let's get a date in here again.

Curry: Well, say early August, 1944. I knew from what the military people were saying around the conference table and the Department of the Interior once a month that the war was winding down to a close, that it couldn't last, maybe, more than a year. So I think, well, all right, in one more year I can come down here and get set, ready for the G.I.'s as they left the service. Well, we get to Texas, to Denton. The war is still going on. What's this base up at Gainesville?

Jenkins: I can never think of the name of it.

Curry: Well, and as you would imagine there just simply was no housing in Denton, period. So I went back to Washington and New York. Left Mary and our two little kids with her sister in Fort Worth and her parents down in Milam County, and Mary was to try to find a place to live. Well, I don't know, within a couple of weeks after I got back to Washington she called me one night and said a professor in the school of music, Professor Hall, you know, that started the jazz band, he had his house up for sale right off the campus there. And here was the price, and I said, "Buy it." So she bought it. Well, a week goes by, and she and, I believe it was old Mr. Orr, got on the telephone together and called and said Mr. Hall had decided that he didn't want to

sell it. Well, we had already bought it. The papers were signed and everything. Well, I said, "For heaven sakes, how do you say you just don't want to sell it like that when the deal has already been closed and the down payment made, and whatever?" Well, the old fellow Orr said, "We just don't do it that way. If he doesn't want to sell it, we let him have it back." Well, gee, now what do we do? Well, it developed that Dr. Hoole, the librarian, had accepted a head librarian job at the University of Alabama, and his house was for sale. So they told me about that one, and it sounded pretty good. I thought the price was a little high, but, well, if that is all there is I guess you better buy it. So they bought the place, Mary did. In the meantime we had moved our furniture from Philadelphia because it was wartime and you couldn't buy a refrigerator or a stove or a lot of things. So we moved a lot of household furniture that we normally wouldn't move that long a distance. But here it was, and when they got to Denton in early August, what are you going to do with this, no place to put it. And Dr. McConnell, the president, said, "Well, I'll tell you. We've got an old dormitory," or something or other, "that is not occupied this summer. So we will just put it in there." So some of the university grounds people and I think James Gray, who was the custodian of the building where the business department operated, helped them put the furniture in the dormitory. Well, at any rate, when we bought the Hoole place . . .

Jenkins: Where was that Hoole place?

Curry: It's our home on Avenue D, at the end of Avenue D. By the golf course and the lake.

Jenkins: So that was the first place you moved in, then?

Curry: Yeah. We still own the place, but, well, this is another story. Well, Mary's brother-in-law and her sister and Mary and Jack and his cousin, Kelso Land, and James Gray and one or two of the other college people moved the furniture from the dormitory out to the Highland Park house over a weekend. And as I get the story, Jack was seven or eight years old, and he started pulling drawers out of the furniture and there would be little nests of mice and rats. They ran all day carrying little mice in their hands having a ball. So they got moved in.

Jenkins: Now you bought that place in . . .

Curry: '44.

Jenkins: Would you mind saying what you paid for it?

Curry: I believe eight thousand dollars.

Jenkins: Now that had how much land with it?

Curry: Two and a quarter acres.

Jenkins: You haven't had that appraised lately, have you?

Curry: Yeah, I had it roughly appraised a year ago. They said not less than seventy-five thousand.

Jenkins: I thought that would be interesting to get in. Ten times over.

Curry: Yeah. So they moved in and were getting straightened out.

And in the meantime when we were down here in August, Mr. Larimer had been head of the department, and so I went over and had a visit with him. You know, I figured that if you didn't have good relations with Mr. Larimer, you had trouble to begin with. He had been head of the department for many years. He was a specialist in hand writing and shorthand.

Jenkins: I believe Mrs. Larimer is still around. Do you have any idea how old she might be?

Curry: Gosh no, I really don't. She must be well into the nineties.

Jenkins: She was very spry the last time I talked with her as I met her as we both walked along the street.

Curry: Well, I went over to Mr. Larimer's house and knocked on his door and told him who I was.

Jenkins: Is that on Fulton?

Curry: Yes, there on Fulton. He had a porch swing so we sat down on the porch swing. And I simply said, "I'm a little sensitive. I know you have been here a long time. You have done a good job with the department of business, but I have been selected to come here and try to build a school of business administration." And he said in substance, "This is what we need. I realize that I can't do it. We've got to have somebody like you to come in here and try to do what the institution wants done."

Jenkins: Do you have any idea how old he was at that time?

Curry: He was in the sixties. Well, he was gracious, a prince of a

gentleman to start with, and he assured me that he would cooperate in every way.

Jenkins: How long had he been here, do you have any idea?

Curry: Oh, I don't know. I would guess twenty-five years. A long time.

Jenkins: He was head of the department of business?

Curry: That's right. Business Education department.

Jenkins: That's all it was?

Curry: That's right. Because it was a teachers college, and, except for Tom Rose, the whole department, all seven of them, taught shorthand, typewriting, business methods, teaching, shorthand, bookkeeping and so on, and that was it. Except they did have a master's degree in business education. And aside from the courses, two or three, in advanced methods of teaching shorthand, typewriting, bookkeeping, general business, whatever, they had one graduate course in business, and guess what it was. Salesmanship.

Jenkins: I remember teaching that, or meeting class anyway.

Curry: Okay. When we were here in July, I guess it was - I may have said this before - I met Tom Rose, and I said to him, "Look, we are going to build a school of business. And you are the only one that teaches anything outside the field of business education." Now he did teach methods of teaching bookkeeping, but he did teach some accounting courses, one or two, and, "We need to write a bulletin and have it off the press as soon as we can but certainly no later than this fall." Well,

he said, "Okay, you write it, and I will get it published."

So I sat down that night in the hotel room, I guess the old Southern, and wrote a bulletin, School of Business. And outlined the core curriculum, filled it out course by course, the majors in accounting. . .

Jenkins: So you created one right there.

Curry: I created a School of Business in one night. Put it in catalog form and took it over to Tom the next day and said, "Get it published." I said, "There may be errors or corrections. I'll be in Washington," and gave him my address. "If anything comes up call me collect, and we will try to straighten it out over the telephone."

Jenkins: Now this was in what month?

Curry: Well, maybe June of 1944.

Jenkins: You were writing a bulletin for the fall?

Curry: Yes, right. Well, Tom went over, I guess, with J. D. Hall, head of the printing department, and by golly, you know, they had that in beautiful shape. And here we were with no authorization from anybody, not even President McConnell knew.

Jenkins: Now the new courses that you put in, and I assume you did, were you planning to teach those?

Curry: Well, I wasn't planning to teach them that fall, I will tell you for sure. But this was just announcing to the world that here we are at North Texas State Teachers College, and we now have a School of Business Administration.

Jenkins: You weren't writing up a schedule, just a bulletin.

Curry: Just a bulletin.

Jenkins: I see.

Curry: The regents didn't know anything about it, the president didn't know anything about it. Well, he found out about it, of course, because Tom had to get authorization, Tom and J. D., to print that bulletin. But he didn't raise any questions. I don't know whether he even looked at it or not. They just said we need to print this bulletin for the Department of Business, and he said, "Go ahead." And they printed it. Well, I got down here, and we had two rooms, two classrooms, one in the basement of what was then the Manual Arts building and one up on the second floor and one office for eight people. Of course they didn't stay there. They just shuffled in and out, kind of a place to lay their books, I guess, when they came in to meet class. And so I went over to President McConnell and said, "Look, I can't operate without an office." Well, they cleaned somebody out of the room down there in the basement. I think it had been a storeroom or an office or something, and I set me up an office. I got a typewriter in there, and Johnnie Tate I believe her name was, she was a student but could type and said she could take shorthand.

Jenkins: That's a familiar name. Did she stay around?

Curry: I don't know. I think maybe she is. A little sandy haired girl. She was a lot of help. But the classrooms, both of

them, had these desks with the - I called them antlers up here, you know, with the inkwell and the place for your pens - that's the two classrooms we had. And we had Tom Rose and A. Square Miller. Mr. Miller taught the law and bookkeeping and Tom taught accounting and I don't know what else, if anything. And then we had the people teaching shorthand, typewriting, business education methods.

Jenkins: Who were some of those folks?

Curry: Well, we had Opal Wright teaching shorthand, primarily; Kathleen Flood teaching typewriting, shorthand; Caroline Curry - incidently she is in town right now.

Jenkins: Is she?

Curry: Who else? Professor Larimer, who was a methods man as well as teaching penmanship and shorthand and typewriting; Tom Rose teaching the accounting, bookkeeping, bookkeeping methods for teachers; Mr. A. A. Miller . . . and Hilton Shepherd who was in the Air Force. And that was the faculty. And Hilton never returned. He, I guess, went to T.C.U. after he got out of the service, and was on the faculty over there for a while and set up a consulting firm over there. But that was the faculty as we started our fall of 1944. And as I said, I finally got an office set up and started taking a good look at how we were going to operate in the fall of 1945.

Jenkins: Let me check something here now. Of those people, now, you had a Ph.D.?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Did most of them have masters degrees?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: All of them had masters?

Curry: I believe so.

Jenkins: No other doctoral degrees?

Curry: No. In fact I looked at the North Texas catalog of 1943, and I think there were four doctorates on the entire university campus. B. B. Harris, Dr. McConnell, and maybe two or three others. I don't remember who, but they didn't have doctorates.

Jenkins: Was Carl Matthews there at that time?

Curry: I don't know whether Carl was here or not. If so, he was in the Demonstration School. He may have been one who had a doctorate, I am not sure. Well, I taught four or five classes, I have forgotten which, and spent my spare time . . .

Jenkins: Deaning.

Curry: Yeah. Except I came as simply head of the Business Education Department. That was the only official structure there was.

Jenkins: Oh, it had not been declared yet.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: I see.

Curry: And the Dean came a year later when the Board of Regents and whatever authority there is in Austin at that time, that approved the creation of the School of Business, and at that time they did officially create a Dean's job. And then, of course, the first step was to recruit faculty. There was

no faculty available. Every warm blooded man that had any credentials at all was either in the service or well established wherever he was, and with the salary schedule of, oh, two hundred, two twenty-five a month, wasn't any point for looking for faculty, really. Well, I started. You know, the department had nothing in the way of equipment or supplies, you just wouldn't believe, there was nothing. So I started writing requisitions and sending them through the business office. And a couple of months, three months had gone by, and I said, "Where is what I have been ordering?" So I go over to the business office, and I tell the girls I want to see Mr. Boyd, Dixie Boyd, the business manager. And I went in and I said, "Mr. Boyd, is the state this slow in making deliveries?" I started reciting various and sundry things that I had ordered or requisitioned, and we had got virtually nothing. And he reaches over in the back part of his desk, pulls out a whole sheaf of requisitions, and he said, "I just haven't ordered them." "Well, for heavens sake why not?" "Well, we've got along a long time without having to have this kind of stuff." And I said, "Yeah, maybe you have, but you have got the worst rundown at the heels total institution, much less the Department of Business, that it is a shame." "Well," he said, "let me tell you something. Over the past" . . . I don't know what he said, five years or ten years or whatever . . . "I have never failed to return to the State Treasury some of the money that

was appropriated to run this institution." And I said, "Well, I can see you are proud of that, but from my point of view, an outsider coming in here, I think it is little short of criminal. Here the state appropriated a meager, measly fund for you to run this institution and you didn't even spend that. Look what you have cheated the students out of." "Well, I just never thought of it that way."

Jenkins: You mean he actually did consider that point.

Curry: I don't know whether he did or not.

Jenkins: But he acted like he did.

Curry: He just thought it would be wasteful. So I went straight from Mr. Boyd's office to Dr. McConnell's office and said, "Look, when I came down here, and before in our correspondence and in our visits together, we were going to try to build a School of Business. Right?" "Yes, we are." "Now how can I build a School of Business with all my requisitions in there on Mr. Boyd's desk, refusing to order what we must have?" "Well, I tell you what you do. You rewrite all the requisitions that you have done that you need, and just bring them to my desk. And from here on don't take them to Mr. Boyd. Bring them in here." So that took care of the supplies and equipment problem, within the limited means.

Jenkins: What kinds of things were you buying, trying to get at that time?

Curry: I was trying to get some letterheads, some typewriter ribbons

for our operations. They had a business machines department with hand-cranked calculators and I guess the tapes had not been changed in five years, I don't know. You couldn't see what they printed. And they were worn out, and I was ordering replacements for some of this equipment. The typewriters were old, and I was trying to get typewriters. Nobody had an office desk, just old oak tables without any drawers in them, and that sort of thing. I was trying to equip the department. Well, let's see, we got through that first year. And then by the fall of 1945 the early dismissals from the military service had begun to come in.

Jenkins: The teaching load then was fifteen hours?

Curry: Fifteen hours, right. Fifteen hours for everybody, but eighteen hours was not uncommon as post-war students arrived. Well, to implement the new degree programs, our schedule for the fall of '45: a course in the principles of management, principles of marketing, I guess principles of finance. They had a finance course in economics, but I wanted to get our course in the School of Business. The relationship with eco wasn't what it could have been, and they were afraid, I guess, that we were going to build a school of business.

Jenkins: That was probably one of the doctors degrees. Was Jack Johnson here?

Curry: Yeah, that's right, it was one of them. Well, I introduced the basic junior year level principles course in finance, marketing, management, and accounting, I guess. I think

they just had twelve hours of accounting up until then. And since we had recruited virtually no new faculty, Tom Rose and I scheduled ourselves to teach the accounting courses. And, it seems to me, maybe Eli Cox got out of the Navy about that time, and we gave him five preparations in different fields, to start off.

Jenkins: Had Eli been around before?

Curry: He was a native of Denton. I think he had not been on the faculty at all.

Jenkins: Had gone to school here?

Curry: But he had gone to school here. And I don't know where he got his master's degree, but I believe he did have a master's already. So we started that fall semester, and, fortunately, Elgin Phillips came in and he had, I think, one semester left on his bachelor's degree, maybe, when he went into service. So he came in my office one morning, and I was dictating to Tate, and after I got through he said, "Dean, I believe I could help you." I said, "Help me what?" "Help your office work." "Well, I sure could stand some help. Can you take dictation?" "No, but I can type as fast as you were dictating to that young lady a while ago." I said, "You think you can, huh?" "Yeah." I said, "Be my guest. Sit down." So I started dictating a couple of letters, and I never slowed down. And, you know, in dictating you need to pause once in a while to see exactly where you are going to go from here, and he would just be typing away, and when

I would get ready to start again he would be up with me. Man, he just turned those letters out. He didn't have to make a correction or anything.

Jenkins: You mean he typed the letter as you . . .

Curry: As I dictated.

Jenkins: He didn't even re-type it?

Curry: No. Well, from then on my office help problem was solved. And then he left, I guess, after about a year. He took a few courses on his master's and went to work someplace. I don't remember where. But during the school year 1945-46, of course, the enrollment just doubled overnight. But fortunately the G.I.'s being released from service, some of them coming back were completing master's degrees and were very able people.

Jenkins: Masters degrees in what?

Curry: Business education.

Jenkins: Oh, I see. Okay. Had they been offering a master's degree before you got here?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: In business education.

Curry: So I would look at their transcripts and have a visit with them and see what they had been doing in the service, what career direction they were headed now that they were out of the service, and give them a class or two to teach. That's the way we met our classes. And then as we got through the '45-'46 year, I scoured the country to find fulltime faculty

members. And we got one or two or three maybe. Mostly young men who had married girls from this area while they were at Camp House at Gainesville, and the girls wanted to come back home. One of them was John Shoher. Sullivan had come back home.

Jenkins: N. G. Sullivan?

Curry: Yes. And Shoher was Elaine's brother. So he came in as a graduate student, but he had had math and a quantitative background and was wanting to go into marketing, but he had all the resources to teach statistics. And we gave him a principles of marketing class so he could learn marketing, of course.

Jenkins: Yes, yes, I know that bit.

Curry: And I don't know how many . . . Sullivan and one or two fellows whose names I don't recall anymore, then Ruth Long, a native of Denton, and she had a master's degree.

Jenkins: How about John Brooks? When did he come along?

Curry: John came in, yes. Let me see. I forget what we had John teaching, salesmanship, I guess. But most of our faculty, as I say, were people who had prior connections with North Texas and whose homes were in and around this area.

Jenkins: Now Byron Newton . . .

Curry: Byron Newton, yes.

Jenkins: He came, it couldn't have been much longer than that.

Curry: Yes, that's right. I am glad you mentioned that. Byron's

home was Gainesville.

Jenkins: He came . . . He must have about '45-'46.

Curry: '46 or '47. Well, we are now operating in the immediate post-war years, and from the fall of this year to the fall of next year enrollment would double.

Jenkins: Do you have any idea the enrollment in the College and the Business School?

Curry: Well, say in the fall of '44 there were maybe twenty-six or seven hundred students in total, maybe two thousand mostly women, of course. And in the fall of '45 it probably went to three thousand, thirty-two hundred or something like that. Next year-I don't know what it was University-wise. Probably five or six. We went like, say, from three hundred students taking courses in business in the fall of '44, to a thousand in the fall of '45, to two thousand in '46. Now they weren't all majors they were just students taking one or more courses. And then as we began identifying students who were actually business administration majors, oh, we went from like three hundred, to six hundred, to a thousand, to fifteen, to eighteen, to two thousand, just boom boom.

Jenkins: Every semester?

Curry: Yeah. And the staffing problem was difficult, in a way. It wasn't difficult to get people in the classroom because you had these unusually capable men and women

coming out of the service, and they were mature people in the late twenties most of them, middle to late twenties. They had had responsible positions in the service, all of them officers in the service. Many of them had specialties in the service, and you could just move them right in the classroom and feel pretty comfortable.

Jenkins: What size classes were you running then, do you know?

Curry: Whatever the room would hold. And we didn't hesitate for the first week if there were forty-five seats and fifteen people lined up around the walls, that's all right because the class would shake down. Students would change, shift from here to there, and if they didn't we would either transfer them to another section or find a place down the aisle to put some more chairs. But all the while we are looking for permanent, qualified faculty. And the only possible way that I could see that we could do it was to take people like you and Pickrell and Sullivan and Cox and on and on and on, and help them get connections with fellowships or teaching appointments or whatever at a good institution and hope that when they got their doctor's degree that we would have a chance to get them back. And as you know until about 1960 something that's about the only faculty we could recruit. Fortunately our guesses as to what these young men could and would do was pretty good. Some of the top people we've had and still

have are you fellows who came through and then went on to get your doctorates. One of our early recruits of which I was very proud was Clete Littlefield. At the time he came, I believe he made the second doctorate with mine in the school of business.

Jenkins: That was forty-six or seven.

Curry: Yeah. And he was an experienced teacher. We got him from the University of Oklahoma, I believe.

Jenkins: Now he got his degree after he came, I believe.

Curry: He was all but through. Yeah, he was all but.

Jenkins: I remember when he came to class and told us.

Curry: It was a struggle because of the limited resources and salary schedule that we had here at North Texas compared to what U.T. Austin could do or even what the Methodists could do or Rice or the University of Houston. Of course, Rice wasn't paying much attention to business administration, so that didn't bother us, but the University of Houston did.

Jenkins: What were you able to offer in those days?

Curry: Oh, maybe forty-two hundred, something like that. With a doctorate. And other places were almost double that.

Jenkins: My recollection is that for a long time there was very little turnover, too. Is that your recollection?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: How do you account for that?

Curry: Well, two or three reasons. I think the major one was

that you fellows who got your doctorates had done undergraduate work here and maybe even got your masters here, this was where you wanted to be. And you got here and you found a working environment where you knew basically, I hope, what we were trying to do in the School of Business, that we had our eyes on a goal up there. We were going to build a quality program in business administration, and you had a responsibility in the work that was cut out for you, but you had a pretty good hand in cutting out the role that you were going to play. And then we figured that you had sense enough and integrity enough to go and do it. So you had virtually no supervision from the top.

Jenkins: That's right.

Curry: We knew, I think we did, what was going on, but it was my feeling having been a university professor and never really wanted to be a dean, that I thought I knew when I left the University of Arkansas, certainly, that the good jobs around a university were the full professorships. Hopefully with virtually no committee work. That left you free to really do what you are capable of doing, to pursue your own interests. That doesn't mean that you are free to goof off, but you are free to maximize the contribution that you can make without having to be told or having somebody tell you what your contribution is to be. And it was my feeling that while you could run an

institution telling people what to do, that you never could achieve greatness without each individual feeling free to pursue his own goal. Just try to make sure he had a goal, and hopefully to get rid of those whose major goal was to meet his classes and play golf or bridge or whatever else he wanted to do without really contributing. And we could get rid of them until, oh, about the last five or six years I was in that dean's office. Then, you know, you had begun to set up structures that made it awkward, if not nearly impossible, to dismiss an incompetent or a trouble maker or whatever he might be, but up until that time if we had somebody on the faculty that in my judgement was a detriment or had the potential to becoming a detriment, I'd just call him in and say, "You know, I think you ought start looking for another job." And that was all there was to it. I think you cripple an institution when you can't do that.

Jenkins: Do you think that was pretty much the pattern throughout the state?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: And that grew into a structure that makes it difficult.

Curry: I suppose. Well, you can abuse that kind of situation, I grant you that. But I never suggested to a faculty member that he ought to find another job without visiting with people on our faculty that knew the guy better than I did. And I'd just ask, you know, "How is so-and-so doing?"

Is he somebody we ought to try to keep here?" And if he reacted the same way that I had already decided he needed looking into, then I would check that with two or three people, and if they had the same reaction, that was it.

Jenkins: Did you have much of that?

Curry: Not much. I can think of three or four.

Jenkins: Over the whole period?

Curry: Yes. If we had things that began to show, I would usually ask Clete or whoever, Eli or somebody who had been in the department a long time and that was sort of a senior member, to suggest why don't you have a talk with him, and maybe he is just not conscious of things that he is doing that we don't think is appropriate for our institution. If he shapes up, fine. Some of them did.

Jenkins: Let's go back and get into the record of some of those earlier years. Especially you had Clete and Jess Pickrell, you had some department heads who were department heads for a long, long time.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: And I always thought were the prime builders. Would you want to speak to them, special, at all?

Curry: Yes. We brought Clete Littlefield in here to guide us in the management program. Certainly it was beyond my field of competence. We had nobody else who was competent, and Clete had the responsibility of finding and being able

to recruit faculty members, a good many of which he developed, such as yourself. He is the reason that you are here.

Jenkins: I know that, and I appreciate it mightily.

Curry: And he is the reason that several others, in fact, most of the others up there are here. Then we had a problem in finance. Martin Rooney, I guess, he came about 1946. He had a masters degree from New York University, I guess, experience in Wall Street, and in research for Poor and Moody's, and a thoroughly able and knowledgeable man. And I gave him considerable responsibility in developing the finance department, but he didn't have a doctorate. And it was in that time frame that Dr. Matthews just was not going to have anybody as head of the department that didn't have a doctor's degree, including athletic director. So, Martin Rooney in my judgement was the logical person to become head of the finance department when we restructured and had designated department heads. But I knew without asking that there was no way Matthews was going to approve Martin Rooney as department head. And this created some friction there. I think, well, it disappointed Martin, but there just wasn't any other solution to it. And I think I never adequately explained it to Martin. That was just an oversight, I guess. Well, it wasn't necessarily an oversight. I just hated to see

him hurt, and I couldn't go to him and tell him the way I should have done it.

Jenkins: You took the brunt instead of the President.

Curry: Yes, that's what, I guess, you might say. Well, Pickrell was a very promising student. Did good in his parttime teaching while he was doing his masters.

Jenkins: Had he got his Bachelors degree there, or do you remember?

Curry: Yes, I believe he did.

Jenkins: And his masters?

Curry: Yes, and then we helped him get a Hybner Foundation Fellowship and he went to Wharton. Yeah, he was a foundation fellowship. Well, now Paul Green, the dean at Ohio State, had invited Jesse to Ohio State for an interview. Jesse was completing his course work and had started work on his doctorate, and Paul wanted him very much. And Paul was telling me that in the day or two days that Jesse spent on the campus that he would be talking with Jesse or other faculty members on the staff at Ohio State and Dean Green said, "Virtually everything I said to Pickrell, when he made any response at all he would say, 'Well, at North Texas we do it this way.'" And he said, "I knew then that we would never get him away from North Texas." Well, let's see, who else?

Jenkins: Well, you had management, you had marketing.

Curry: When Eli went to Michigan State we had a problem with a department head. And, I guess, Al Cox had come in, and,

oh, what's the other youngster from Arkansas we have, well, the bearded one.

Jenkins: Ray McAlister.

Curry: Yes, Ray and Al Cox, Clete Littlefield, a number of them urged me to get the McWhorters from Texas Tech, in '57 or '58. Now let's see, who else? Horace Brock came in. You see Tom Rose was head of the accounting department for many years, and Tom was a good influence, easy to get along with, would do anything in the world to help the school of business, the accounting department in particular.

Jenkins: Now Tom passed on just this year, I believe.

Curry: Yes. Tom died, what was it, six or eight weeks ago? Very recently. And there came the time when Tom's energy and health and resources just were not what the accounting department needed. And we got Horace Brock to take over as head of the accounting department. My feeling from the beginning in building a school of business is that in our situation with limited resources and very limited prestige, you built to your strength, if you had them. And one of the areas where we could build was in accounting, and we were fortunate to get some very capable people in the accounting department. Horace and then Hershel Anderson, another one of our undergraduates who was near genius or genius quality who had gone to Illinois at our, well, we had something to do with him getting his scholarship

or fellowship at Illinois, and he came back and joined the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin. And I was quite surprised when he came up and said that he was not satisfied in Austin and would like to join our faculty. Well, we were, I was just delighted, but I had to check out why he wanted to leave Austin and come to North Texas. And, I think, in a nutshell the reason would be the same reason you wouldn't like to be on the faculty at the University of Texas. He wasn't free to do what he was capable of doing. They were telling him, "You, you know, have got to fit in this group." And Hershel can't fit in that kind of group.

Jenkins: Yeah, I know him well. You are right.

Curry: Well, so here we get Horace, we get Hershel, Tom is with us, Nelson Sullivan. Sully had an unfortunate experience in his doctorate, but that didn't detract from the contribution he can make. He is no worse off without the degree in his contribution to us. At the moment he might have been, but now it just doesn't make any difference. He is a great contributor. Sully has resources in a good many directions. When we were getting ready to think about a new business administration building, that's an area that my resources are definitely nonexistent or limited to say the least, and Sully was interested, and he and I just really sat down and he did the drawing and

laid the building out. And did a beautiful job of it. And then the two of us went over to Dr. Matthews and explained to him what we had in the drawing and why we wanted it that way, and he checked it and turned it over to his architects. Well, in two or three months when they got through with it and showed us the plans for the building, we didn't even recognize it. And I hit the ceiling. "That's not the building. We can't use that kind of a structure." They had changed the size of all the rooms. The offices were little bitty things. You know, some architect sitting over there in Dallas or Ft. Worth, wherever he was, didn't know anything about what he was doing except he was designing a building. So we went back over and told Dr. Matthews, "Look, this is just not it." So he said, "Well, we are going to have a meeting with the architects in two or three days. I will call you when they get here, and you come over." So, I go over when he calls me, and here is the architect sitting with him. The president had the plans that Sully had prepared, and the ones the architect had prepared. And Dr. Matthews in his deliberate manner rolled up the plans that the architect had submitted and put a rubber band around them and handed them over to him. And then he took the ones he had spread out on the table that Sully had done and handed it over to them and said, "I imagine they know

more about what they want in the business building than you do. Throw that one away and develop these plans. You do it." Well, they then developed the plans that we had submitted. And then the city or somebody comes along and says, "You can't do that." That the building has to set X number of feet back from the street. And this is four feet, got to be cut back four feet. Well, the architects just took four feet out of the building. Oh, well. Now, you know, that just fouls everything up. So Sully and I got to work then, and we lengthened the building and redesigned some of the things we had set up in the building, but we get more floor space by redoing it and lengthening it than we had to begin with. And they finally built the building on that specification with one exception. I begged and practically got on my knees to get them to construct the building in such a way that we could put a fourth floor up there. No, it was too expensive, and besides that . . . Well, I will never forget what Dr. Matthews finally said to me in saying no. He said, "Look, you have more floor space, more classrooms, more offices in that building now, the way it's designed, than was on this campus when you came here." I said, "That may very well be, but we are going to need more space within ten at the outside, and probably within five years, and if you will just build where we can put another floor up there. Then we won't have to be scrambling around for

space over the campus and eventually another building." I couldn't budge him. "That's the biggest building I ever saw anyhow."

Jenkins: Even he couldn't believe the growth was coming.

Curry: No. Well, we employed Ardath Steadman, I guess, late forties, maybe '49 or something like that. After she had been here a year she came in to my office in tears. "What in the world is wrong with you?" "Well, I have just been over talking to Dr. McConnell and he told me not to buy a house or anything. I just might not have a job, that the enrollment might not justify me staying here, just might not have the students." I said, "Well, for heaven's sakes, if it is students he is worried about or you are crying about, three years from now there will be twice as many students on this campus as there are now. There is never going to be a time again when there will be three thousand students at North Texas. I just don't see how anybody could believe that we could ever have that kind of enrollment again. Those days are gone." I think there were five thousand at this time or six. "Dry your tears, and go buy you a house if you want to. We are not going to have any decrease in enrollment of the proportion that he may contemplate." My guess is if you had been here before the war you would wonder if you would ever go back to that.

- Jenkins: We got off on the building because I wanted to speak of Sullivan, but you were talking about some of the builders of the school. We talked about the marketing department.
- Curry: Yes.
- Jenkins: Now, let's see. Elf came back and headed that . . .
- Curry: Yes.
- Jenkins: But while he was gone, I don't recall. Do you?
- Curry: In the beginning say 1944-'45 on to mid-fifties, business education was still one of the strong departments. Naturally, it was in the setting of the teacher's college. Over the years it had been one of the strong departments of teachers colleges in the state, and it had had Hilton Shepherd who had had a doctorate, you see. He was heading that up before the war. And then after I came here's another North Texas State Teachers College man, Millard Collins. Able, personable, sort of a driving, energetic individual, and we made him head of the business education department.
- Jenkins: Now this was about what . . .
- Curry: I would say '48.
- Jenkins: Yeah, that's my best recollection.
- Curry: And he had the people I mentioned when I came here, and in the meantime we added Ardath Steadman and Earle Veatch and that was about it, I guess.

Jenkins: The other Shepherd, when did he come along?

Curry: Haggard Shepherd. He came in in about the late forties or early fifty, maybe. Primarily to teach the business communication course. But he, too, taught some handwriting. Well, Millard was an individual who could meet people across the state, relate with other teachers of business education, the school people in the public schools. He was a promoter, so to speak. But with his aggressive sort of character, he wanted to get things done, he wanted to get things done in a hurry, and he wanted people to do things the way he wanted them done. So he got on some people's nerves, and as time went on, I guess he irritated enough people that his usefulness was questionable. No matter how capable you are or how good a job you are doing, if you have got people taking pot shots at you all the time your usefulness tends to diminish to a point where you probably ought to look for something else. But we had brought Ruth Anderson . . .

Jenkins: Millard went with IBM as I recall.

Curry: Yes. Millard had an opportunity that he couldn't turn down, really, to go with IBM in their electric typewriter division, which they called their Education Department, and he immediately within a year or two moved to a head position in charge, and spent up until, I think, this year in New York as head of their Education Department. Now I understand, I haven't seen him, but they tell me he is

back in Dallas in real estate just for something to do. Got a broker's license, and he'd be good at it. He is a salesman. Well, I had met Ruth at these meetings, and she is head and shoulders above anybody else, I guess, in the nation in her area of shorthand methods and teaching of shorthand. And then we needed a department head to replace Millard, and I had met Vernon and Arlene Payne at meetings of one kind or another through the years, and he was doing an outstanding job at New Mexico Highlands. And I thought this would be a promotion for him, and I think it was. He came in as head of the department, and he and Ruth then really put North Texas on the map in terms of a Business Education program.

Jenkins: This was about when?

Curry: Oh, in the late fifties and in to the early sixties.

Jenkins: Probably after we got into that building.

Curry: Yes, after we got in.

Jenkins: In '60 or later.

Curry: Yes. Now, let's see, we have mentioned accounting and marketing.

Jenkins: Management.

Curry: Management, Cleve Littlefield and then, I guess, Cleve remained the head of the department . . .

Jenkins: Until, we were guessing, until Hutton came.

Curry: Yes, about 1970 I would guess. From there on I can't be

sure of the departmental structure because it's to be expected when a new dean comes in he reorganizes or reshuffles. He has got to do something, you know. The finance program, Jesse Pickrell primarily statistics, but the man in the early days or earlier days was the only one who had a doctorate in that program. Glen Taylor did get his doctorate from the Wharton School in insurance, and he was instrumental in promoting our insurance program. Had a tremendous enrollment in the introductory course, as you may recall. And then, while we had no insurance degree as such, combined it with the finance program, and in essence you could major in insurance, and in due time we did put it in the catalog. But Jesse was the head of the department, and we knew we were hurting. We just didn't have a top quality finance man with a doctorate. Now nobody questioned Martin Rooney's abilities in investments and in financial management in the graduate area, but we needed people with doctoral credentials to teach finance. And fortunately we found David Fitch over at Texas A&M.

Jenkins: And this was about when?

Curry: My time frame is none too good. Late fifties, early sixties probably.

Jenkins: Well, it was after we got into that new building.

Curry: Oh, yes.

Jenkins: After '60. That is the one date I remember.

Curry: I am glad you remember.

Jenkins: 1960 was when we moved into that building.

Curry: David came over as head of the finance department, and then he helped us to get George Christy, who was a tremendous addition. And then George and David were instrumental in bringing in Nabil Aboulfadl, whom George had known at the University of Oregon. So that built some real strength into the finance department. That then pretty well covers the key people who built the School of Business.

While we are talking about the Accounting Department and the outstanding faculty, mention should be made of Paul Breckenridge who did a BBA with us, then a Master of Public Accounting at the University of Texas and then spent a few years with, I think, Arthur Anderson in public accounting work. In a state supported public university, it is my belief that whatever else a faculty member should be, good classroom teaching comes first. Paul Breckenridge is a master teacher. Don Jones, BBA and MBA with us, worked for an oil company as an accountant for several years then joined our accounting faculty, is another gifted teacher. Joe Hopson, who was in business in Fayetteville when we were at the University of Arkansas and a CPA joined our faculty in the mid-fifties and was a strong addition. Porter Henderson, BBA and MBA

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with us, was another gifted teacher and researcher. You mentioned that several department chairmen were chairmen for many years. Tom Rose was the earliest surviving member of our faculty when I arrived in 1944; by that I mean he was among the first persons to teach a course in business at North Texas State and was still here. He headed the accounting department for many years, and this leads me to relate the kinds of traumatic decisions a Dean is all too often forced to make. Twice Tom worked toward the doctorate at New York University and each time his health failed in the process. For most of the years as head of the accounting department he did not have the CPA certificate. How could you bring people to NTSU like Horace Brock, Barney Coda, Hershel Anderson, Ben Copeland, Bill Giese, Paden Neely and so on, without paying them substantially more than Tom was being paid? As each appointment was made, I would go to Tom and tell him what we needed to do to strengthen the department and what salary we would have to pay to get one of these men to join our faculty. It never seemed to bother Tom that many of the younger men on the accounting faculty had higher salary and rank than he had--he put NTSU and the department ahead of any personal feelings. Then in due time Tom's resources in accounting and limits to his energy, in my view, made it

necessary to name a new department head, replace him, if you will, after so many years of devoted service. How do you go to your first and oldest friend on the faculty, one who went with you on vacations, took you with him to visit with his brother in Galveston where we used his brother's boat and fishing guide; how do you say, "it is time to have Horace Brock take over as Chairman of the Accounting Department." In reality, it was not difficult, because he understood and approved.

There were many similar situations, not so personal, but involving some of the same ingredients. Low pay for several of the older faculty members with masters degrees who had worked commendably well in developing the School of Business Administration. We had limited, very limited, financial resources. The goal was to build an outstanding School of Business Administration, and it is done with outstanding faculty. Friendships, personal feelings, apparent injustices, these become secondary considerations if the objective is to be attained. Some of the people involved complained about their salary relative to others, but I could always truthfully say, "We are paying you more here than you can get anyplace else." I learned a long time ago that one of the easiest ways to be miserable is to fret and wonder why someone else is making more money than you are.

Jenkins: Let's go back now and move from the old manual arts building into the old education building and then finally get your new building in 1960.

Curry: We started in 1944 in two rooms of the old manual arts building.

Jenkins: Which also housed Home Economics . . .

Curry: Home economics, the print shop: it was an interesting experience to be teaching in a classroom on the basement floor where they had the tin shop in the west end of the building, and all of a sudden they start bradding or something down there in that print shop and, man alive, you couldn't hear yourself think. Well, the second year I was here--as I say, the war was winding down and people were coming out of service--we simply had to have more room. And I needed more space to try to operate. By now

we were calling myself a Dean, you know, they had already approved what we had already done. So we had a ladies' restroom on the second floor of that manual arts building, and somebody came up with the idea that we could convert this into the Dean's office. And it made a pretty good office. You take the facilities out and you've got quite a bit of room in there. That's where I operated, I guess, for the next two years, in the converted women's restroom. The enrollment was doubling from one fall to the next, a tremendous increase. We had people scattered all over the campus. One of the interesting experiences I had, I think it was the fall of '46, I made the fall schedule. I had made the schedules from the beginning. I didn't know any better.

Jenkins: You thought you were supposed to.

Curry: Yeah, I thought I was supposed to, and I hadn't noticed any changes. Once in a while there would be something changed, but I just supposed that the room wasn't available or something. And lo and behold, oh, once again I can't call his name at the moment, but an English professor came over. He prepared the schedules for the entire institution, and he was mad as he could be. Came in my office and just chewed me out. Who did I think I was making a schedule with the business department? And I said, "Well, I hadn't thought about who I am particularly, but who else would

make a schedule for Business?" "Well, I will." And I said, "Well, how could you know who has the resources to teach this course or that course? How could you know what days these courses ought to be scheduled to mesh with those courses?" "Well, I have done this for umpteen years and I am going to keep on doing it." I said, "Well, maybe you will, but here is the schedule. I have made it out. See to it that it goes to the printer that way." And then I just picked my little self up and go over to the administration building to Dean Harris and President McConnell and say, "Look, Professor--and I will get his name one of these days--has been over and made it abundantly clear to me that I don't have anything to do with making the schedules, and I want to let you know that I do have something to do with making the schedules, and I made it and that's the way I want it put in the catalog in the fall schedule." "Oh, don't worry about it." I said, "Well, all right I won't worry about it, but you had better worry about it because I want it in there. Nobody else can make a schedule for a program as big as ours is now. Why would anybody even dream of such a thing or want to do it, I can't imagine." Well, that's the end of that story.

Jenkins:

B. B. Harris was Dean of what?

Curry:

Dean of the College. The whole institution.

Jenkins: The whole thing.

Curry: The business department had a head, music had a department head, Dr. Bain.

Jenkins: Everything else was under this Dean.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Okay.

Curry: Everything was under this Dean.

Jenkins: He was the Dean.

Curry: He was the only Dean.

Jenkins: That was before you had Deans of different schools.

Curry: Yes, right. And why music hadn't already pulled out from under I don't know. I guess Wilfred Bain was too busy building a school of music to bother about the structure of the institution. But I came from the outside and it just seemed to me impossible to build anything until you had some autonomy for your structure to operate.

Jenkins: Now your best recollection of Wilfred Bain was Dean of . . .

Curry: He later became Dean of the School of Music, yes.

Jenkins: But he wasn't at that time.

Curry: No, everything was under the one Dean. I think when Tom Rose and I printed this bulletin and called it a School of Business and put me in there as Dean, immediately Wilfred got the School of Music as a separate structure. But as you can see in a teachers college environment it was kind of slow to break the idea that anybody else had any authority except Dean Harris and the President. And

whatever they had been doing in the past was just the way they were going to keep on doing it.

Jenkins: Wasn't there a vice-president?

Curry: No.

Jenkins: The President and the Dean of the College.

Curry: The President and the Dean and that was it. Now I believe before Dr. McConnell died . . . No, I don't believe he ever had a vice-president now that I think of. Well, we are back about 1945-46 and we are having growing pains, and they moved, I believe, the Speech Department into the manual arts building and they built a new Education building and we moved to the old Education building. And this was a highlight, you know, because it gave us a building all to ourself.

Jenkins: Do you remember the physical move?

Curry: Yes, I remember it very well.

Jenkins: Tell us about that.

Curry: Well, you had very limited grounds staff or custodial service or whatever you might call it. The personnel simply was limited, and we were ready, had set a date to move from the manual arts basement and second floor to the renovated old Laboratory School is what it was. And the question was how do we get over there? Well, the personnel, buildings, grounds, custodial service could move us maybe over a week's time after hours and over the weekend. Well, I simply said to our faculty, "At ten

o'clock on Wednesday morning we are going to move from the manual arts building to the laboratory building, the business administration building, if you please." So the way we were going to do it, everybody who had a class simply walk in your classroom, say to your students, "We are moving this room to room so-and-so in the building right across the way. Just follow me. Pick up your chair and follow me." So that's the way we moved.

Jenkins:

I remember that.

Curry:

And, you know, in thirty minutes or less we were moved.

Jenkins:

No way you could do that today.

Curry:

No, I don't think so.

Jenkins:

They wouldn't allow that.

Curry:

No. I don't suppose they would. And, of course, I don't recall any room that didn't have a class in it at that hour. So all the classroom furniture was just moved. And then, I don't remember exactly how we moved the office furniture, except as best I remember the faculty members would say after they got all the classroom chairs in there, "Would a couple or three of you guys come go with me. We've got some other stuff to move." And they were only too glad to pick up an office and office furniture and bookcases and whatever and file cabinets rather than sit in class for another twenty minutes. So the students and the faculty just moved it. And some of the file cabinets I think they had left on the floor, and the faculty member

himself or two or three of the guys would just get together and move whatever else they hadn't moved already. But within, well, I would say by afternoon, everything was moved. And this was a great, great experience in that new building. We could spread out. Oh, I don't think there were more than three in an office. And as time went on before we got our new building there were four in most of the offices, but when we moved over at the time, two in many of the offices.

Jenkins: Do you recall what year that was when you moved from the old manual arts building?

Curry: About 1949 or '50 I would imagine. And in the interim between '44 and 1950 we will say, Helen Wright had been art teacher in public schools in Denton. And she came to me with a sales pitch that we ought to have in the marketing department an advertising art, and that she was the person who ought to be teaching it. And display. You know, if you are going to have marketing you have got to have display and advertising and layouts and so on. So it sounded like a pretty good idea, and it was something in a teachers' college environment, how do you get any sort of visual attraction. This was one of the frustrating experiences to me. I joined every professional group that I could worm into in Dallas and in Ft. Worth in the early stages and simply was meeting with professional people. But here was Helen, we had

put her on our faculty to do this merchandising art and display and layouts and advertising, getting into the marketing program. So she was instrumental in redoing or designing, particularly the dean's office, over in that new building. And, of course, I don't know anything about it. My visual conception of what something will be when it is built is pretty limited. So you remember the curved glass, brick dean's office over in that new building, which was rather attractive and unusual to say the least.

Jenkins: And walls, I believe, outside. The hall walls were glass brick, I think. Weren't they?

Curry: Yes, part of the way. Maybe for one room this way and one room that way, as I remember it. Well, everybody was happy with the new building. It just gave us tremendously greater facilities.

Jenkins: Let's see the growing out of that building into the present building, growing out of the old Education building.

Curry: Well, we had more students than we could really handle adequately. Always we were doing probably a fourth to a third of our classes with graduate help, and while, hopefully, most of these graduate students were capable and sincere and did a good job, you just can't build a strong program on that much parttime people. And we were still handicapped in recruiting faculty. A faculty

member that was of high quality business administration potential coming into a teachers' college just doesn't make sense. And our salary schedule was below competitive wages, and the only chance we still had was people who had done their masters degree with us and liked us well enough and wanted to live in this area and particularly wanted to live in Denton. And they came back in spite of the handicaps and, I hope, share in the dream we had of eventually having a real fine School of Business. And when was it we got the name Teachers' College dropped from the institution?

Jenkins: I don't remember.

Curry: I do remember well a general faculty meeting which met in the main auditorium for the purpose of encouraging the faculty to get alumni and friends to write to legislators requesting that "Teachers" be dropped from the name of the institution. Dr. Brenholtz, a long time excellent and devoted faculty member of the Education Department, made an impassioned plea to the assembled faculty not to drop the "Teachers" from the name of NTSU. He concluded by saying that North Texas State Teachers College is the largest teachers' college in the United States and we would lose that distinction with the proposed name change. I then rose to be heard, and said in substance, "of course it is the largest teachers' college in the U.S.,

because we are no longer a teachers' college. We have over two thousand students in business administration who have no intention of being teachers, in the School of Music many of the students are here to become professional musicians, in Industrial Arts many of the students plan to work in industry, home economics students plan to be dieticians and to follow careers other than teaching, journalism students do not plan to teach. Let us remove the handicap of being labeled a teachers' college when we are no longer a teachers' college only. We can continue to have the best teacher training program in the state; and give the most rapidly growing departments in our institution an opportunity to develop without the handicap of being in a teachers' college."

But when it became North Texas State College, that removed one of the handicaps; and later when it became North Texas State University, that removed the last of the handicaps with one exception. You talk to anybody sixty years old that has lived in Denton all of his life, he will still refer to the Teachers' College and to the CIA. It never changes.

Jenkins: Now when you moved into that building, were you occupying the whole building?

Curry: Not quite. I think government still had some classes. I believe that was the only . . . Government, I think, had

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the basement floor, and all of it, as I remember, now
that I think of it. And we had these two upper floors.
Yeah, we had the two upper floors, and one of the things

that just surprised me a little bit after, I guess, when we started our first summer session in that building, some faculty member came in and, well, was unhappy. She had a class--he or she--on the east side of the building, and the sun, she said, was hot in that building in the morning. Well, I went up and sure enough it was kind of hot, particularly in that top floor.

Jenkins: Lots of glass in there.

Curry: Lots of glass. It was all glass, you know, east and west. On the south side of the building, it was south and east, and on the north side of the building it was north and east. And in the afternoons while we didn't have a great many classes in the afternoon, we had enough that the west side of the building was kind of hot in the afternoon, too.

Jenkins: We weren't even dreaming of air conditioning then.

Curry: Oh, no. In fact the state of Texas had a law that no appropriated money could be used to air condition a building. Even a window cooler. That was against the law of the state of Texas.

Jenkins: I remember some hassles on campus where some people wanted to bring their own, and they wouldn't even allow them to do that because they wouldn't pay the electric bill.

Curry: Yes. Well, we have come a long way maybe, haven't we. Well, we were in that building five or six or eight years,

I guess.

- Jenkins: Until 1960. So you did eventually fill up that building?
- Curry: Oh, yes. Yes. We filled that building and started overflowing into wherever there was a room, all over the campus. We even went back and met some classes in the old manual arts building. Well, as I say, wherever there was a room we met a class in it. And in the old Ad building, when they built the new Administration building, we met classes in there.
- Jenkins: They were scattered everywhere.
- Curry: Everywhere. In the Journalism Building. Wherever there was a room we found it and put a class in it.
- Jenkins: Repeat here what you had said earlier, and I have heard for years that when that business administration building was completed, and my recollection was 1960, and we moved into it, I believe at that time wasn't it claimed that that doubled the classroom size on the campus.
- Curry: Yes.
- Jenkins: All right we are into the building built specifically for the School of Business. Let's talk about the growth of equipment over those years, changes in typewriters and calculators and such.
- Curry: All right. When I came here in 1944 they had a course that they called business machines, and it was the old Friedan calculators and Marchants, touch adding machines, you know. What were they--little ten key things.

Jenkins: Yeah, I was assigned to teach that.

Curry: And the old big crank machines. And I suppose that served a useful purpose in those days, because whether you went out to teach in the public schools, that's what they were there for initially, to train teachers to teach in the public schools. And then if you weren't going into teaching at all, as it soon developed. Very few or relatively few people did go into teaching, they went into business of some form or another and you had another resource if you could operate a calculator or an adding machine or were skilled on a ten-key or whatever. That's just one thing that made the difference some time in the quality of performance that you could give to your employer. Well, as time went on, though, and you began to look at what is a collegiate school of business supposed to do in the four years that you have an undergraduate, and you began to get critical of the vocational, purely vocational, aspects of your program for collegiate students. And just a mechanical ability to operate an adding machine or calculator is something that begins to raise some questions. But in teaching statistics, we did feel that it was worthwhile to have calculators, at any rate, because if you are going to do very much in the mathematical area in statistics you don't want to do it by hand. And not being engineers, not a whole lot of our students could skillfully and accurately use slide rules. So we kept

the machines course, used largely for a laboratory for statistics, but business education did still teach a course on machines. Now as I told you, shortly after I came here, at the University of Arkansas IBM had provided us an IBM calculator for instructional purposes. And I went to Dallas and explored with them to see if they would make one available to us. And, yeah, they did make one available to us. It was a huge piece of equipment, and when they brought it up here none of our people at North Texas had any idea how in the world they would ever get it into the building. Somebody finally got it in our building. In the lab school building. And now here is the machine. Who knows anything about what we are going to do with it. It seems to me Caroline Currie somehow decided that she could figure out something about the machine. And she taught it awhile, until we got somebody that had a little more exposure to punch-card type machines, and tied it in then with the statistics course.

Jenkins: Oh, yeah, now I remember. We had some sessions, I believe, it was in that building. Someone trying to tell the faculty how we might use it.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: We were back in that building.

Curry: We were beginning to move in that direction.

Well, let me approach it this way in terms of computers. There were two ideas developed within the collegiate schools of business across the nation. Two philosophies, I guess, or two points of view about what the education of the business student ought to be. And one approach was quantitative. Everything could be solved with a computer and quantitative approaches. And Northwestern University and two or three of the other prestige institutions said, "No, the world's problems are not quantitative. They are people problems. And what you ought to emphasize, particularly at the masters degree level, is communications." So you had these programs a la California and Harvard and others that were computer programs; quantitative, case study, all kinds of data to solve a problem. And the others, "No, you do it with communications and writing." Well, here we are, not a prestige institution but solid by this time, and I look at it and say, "Well, I think we are overdoing this quantitative thing." I was teaching financial management the last five years I was here, and before that teaching a course in business problems and trends, and I say to myself, "There is no way you can quantify most business problems. You can quantify them all right, but the way you make a decision about where your business is going to go, where the School of Business is going to go, what kind of programs are going to be

meaningful ten years from now, what does a student need to learn today that will be of benefit to him as he enters the business world. The best way to figure that out is, oh, some night about ten o'clock walk out in the yard and look up at the stars and listen at the whippoorwills and wonder what, by gosh, the country is going to be like ten years from now. And whatever your gut feeling is, put the program into operation. And making every student pass a course in calculus to get a degree in business is a bunch of damn foolishness, and that's the way I reacted. It's the same thing on the other side of the coin, requiring every student who gets a degree, particularly a masters degree, in business to be an expert in fortran or some other computer language and be able to program umpteen different kinds of programs is ridiculous. And by the same token it is just as ridiculous to require every student who is going to get a bachelors or a masters degree to be a, well, what the communications people would call "proficient" in the use of language. I am convinced that many very able people have a plateau that is reached fairly early in the command of the English language, and the diminishing returns are so great that the cost benefit of taking more and more courses in the use of language is futile, or very nearly so. And I have the same feeling about the individual with an intellect way above average. Many of those individuals have a fairly

low plateau level in the quantitative area, and the cost benefit of pushing for everybody to reach this level in either the communication skill or the quantitative skill is almost self defeating. You simply are handicapping this gifted individual in developing what he can do, by stealing his time and his resources and making him butt his head against a brick wall trying to become proficient in an area where his resources just do not exist. So what we are looking at here is a restructuring of your core curriculum and a restructuring of your professional field courses. And many institutions just more or less blindly, I think Georgia State and Dear George Manners went all quantitative down there. And others took their communications angle, and you wouldn't believe the number of courses they required in quantitative work, mathematics, operating the computer, the computer languages. And I guess I am a country boy in the middle. I grant you that with the environment of the world that these students today are going to live in, they need to know what the computer can do and how the computer behaves, and they need to at least have a conceptual understanding of the computer's language. Say we graduate three hundred B.B.A.'s and fifty M.B.A.'s a year, how many of those are ever going to have the need to go beyond the conceptual understanding of what the computer does, how many of them are going to have the slightest need for calculus, how many of them

are going to have anything other than a conceptual understanding of all of the statistical measures that you can use to measure whatever it is you want to measure in the whole life environment that they will be living? Do you require everybody to go through all of this? Do you require everybody to take six three-hour courses in communications? Well, to me it was ridiculous and still is.

Jenkins: Some people are afraid that with too many people taking too much of the data processing, mathematical thing, that they may take too much of a mathematical approach to solving problems, and some people think that is not particularly good. Do you have a view of that?

Curry: Well, yes, I have a view of that. For example, after I retired from the Dean's office my resources were equally poor in teaching accounting or finance. We had a strong accounting faculty and we needed help in finance, so I opted to teach finance and financial management or managerial finance. And I was appalled when I took the most practical text that seemed to be on the market, the amount of quantitative work that was in those chapters in determining the future value of a share of stock. I looked at that, and I couldn't believe it at first. Here is a whole chapter with a section in the appendix on determining the future market price of a share of stock by computerized mathematical techniques. Well, that's ridiculous. Holy cow. You can run a computer from now

until doomsday and have no more knowledge of what that stock is going to be selling for ten years from now than when you started. The way to figure that out is to take a look at who is running this company and what's his background and what are the mores of the society today compared to what they are going to be ten years from now, if you want to know what the stock is going to be worth ten years from now. Are the people still going to be having carpets on the floors or are they going to go to wood floors or some kind of fabric? Who in the hell knows what kind of automobile we are going to be driving ten years from now? Is it going to be a big car or a little car?

Jenkins: How about in terms of the use of this for long range planning?

Curry: As I talk to managerial finance classes I simply came to this point of view: If you have somebody in your organization, and everybody does, that is a mathematical whiz, a computer model expert, have him do all this and then take a look at it. It just might give you another string in your bow. At any rate it will cause you to take another approach, another look, at the decision that you are thinking about, your long range planning. This is just one more resource to making decisions, but it is only one, and you would be short sighted indeed to take your model from the computer printout as to where you

are going to be three years from now, five years from, ten years from now and take that as the gospel and start allocating your resources to get to where the computer said you were going to be. You better darn well walk off from that printout and model that you have spent so many dollars developing and just use some . . . let your antenna swing out there in front of you and do some reading about what is going on in the world around you. You may have fed some factor into the computer model, but just nothing is going to take the place of your gut feeling about what you ought to try to do with this company. And one of the first things you ought to look at is what can your middle management people do? Do they have the resources, do they have the motivation to try to carry you to where this model says you are going to go? And you better sit down with some brainstorming sessions with your middle management and first line management as well as your upper level management and get their ideas and get a feeling of what these people can and will do.

Jenkins: Let me try another one on you. Some people also fear that we may become so dependent upon modeling and mathematics that it may make it easy for us to ignore human values. Do you have any fears of that?

Curry: Well, I think this is almost obvious. The individual who get^s his education in the quantitative mathematical

computer language area is blinded to everything else. He is one of the most narrow minded individuals that you can pick up. If he sees six white horses it would be difficult to convince him that horses come in any color except white. Why should there be any color except white? He thinks that way. Here are the quantitative, the mathematics that he can put it in a formula and whatever comes out, that is proof, the gospel. Don't question it. Now whether he is insensitive to human values I don't know. He is not insensitive to his own human value, what affects him individually, but in terms of any sort of policy that his company or the governmental unit or whatever he might be concerned with. One of the things that has always bothered me and irritated me about our liberals, they think in terms of the macro. What they see is a total society. Well, a total society is made with you and me, and they forget that what they are looking at for a total society may be completely incompatible with the welfare and wishes of us little citizens. And I think the quantitative computer model type mind is completely oblivious to what the decisions he might be recommending have upon the millions of us as individuals. And what is good for the society is amalgam of what is good for each individual in that society. And for heaven's sakes let's not try to put all of them in

the same mold. I think that's what this kind of mind set will tend to do. Well, what I recommended then in our degree program is that we make the computer and the quantitative area available, that we have an option that those whose mind is turned in that direction, who have resources, who enjoy doing it, then let him do it and substitute it for something else in the curriculum. So sort of have a two track approach to this. Well, then technology comes along and has a small calculator, almost a computer some of them. They do all kinds of mathematical work.

Jenkins: Carry in his hand.

Curry: Yeah, that you carry in your hand. The first ones were a little bigger than that. You could just simply carry them in your two hands or one hand wrapped around it, and then they go to vest pocket size. And the question comes along in the finance course that I am teaching, "Can we use our calculators on the exam?" Well, what is fair on an exam? Here is an individual who doesn't have a calculator. Here is an individual who does have one. Here is an individual who is skilled in the use of a slide rule, and here is a guy who just does it by hand. He takes a sheet of paper and starts calculating. What do you permit a student to have as a resource other than his two hands when he comes to an exam? Well, it seemed to me in the technology that had developed that the student ought to

have an option. If he wants to use his hand calculator, so be it. If he wants to use a slide rule . . . we never had objected to anyone using a slide rule on an exam, that I know of. Well, what is the difference in using his little hand calculator than a slide rule? So I asked in my courses . . . I never brought it to University policy or School of Business policy, I just said to my students, "Here's some options. You can say that nobody on an exam can have a calculator or a slide rule or anything else except a pencil and a scratch pad. Is that what you want to do? Well, show your hands." Ninety percent of them didn't think that was the way we ought to do. "Okay, how many opt for hand calculators and slide rules?" Well, the vast majority said yes. But you had some objectors. "Okay, why do you object?" "Because I don't have money to have a calculator." "Well, all right. The finance department has three or four. How would it be that when we come to an exam I bring the departmental, two of them, and set them on the desk here, and we will ask that if these two are in use, and I see one in the room where you are not using it that I simply say, "Would you be free of your calculator for a little while and let Joe Blow use it?" "Yeah, that's great."

Jenkins:

But this changed the amount of work you might give on an exam.

Curry:

Oh, yes. Of course.

Jenkins: You could give them a lot more work then.

Curry: Yes. Where you needed to have quite a bit of computation done, if you didn't permit them to use the technology that was available you simply couldn't put that kind of a problem or case on the exam. You had to go to something else. So, yes, it made it possible to put on an exam a much more meaningful test of what the student had really mastered or learned in that course.

Jenkins: In terms of what you put on it and the length of the problem.

Curry: That's right. I had mentioned a while ago in some discussion about cost benefits. I am a little concerned in looking at what goes in our universities across the nation today about the kinds of things faculties are demanding in terms of equipment. Every faculty member wants at his desk an electric typewriter. This was happening before I left the dean's office in 1970.

Jenkins: Now it's a correcting typewriter.

Curry: That faculty member would probably use an electric typewriter at his desk fifteen minutes a day, at the outside. Well, how do you justify that kind of an investment in an electric typewriter? And if you give it to one faculty member who maybe really needs an electric typewriter and uses it several hours a day, how do you tell that faculty member that it is all right and the next guy who is going to use it, maybe, ten minutes a day that he can't have one? Well, the answer is simple. Just tell him. But

then he goes up and down the hall and begins to recruit a bunch of sore heads that I am being unfair to the faculty because I have got favorites. The favorites got one and the other guys don't have one. So you have got this thing to contend with. Well, how do you deal with that at the administrative level. You've got an electric typewriter, now you want the university to furnish you a calculator, a printout terminal. They want you to pay for or to provide them with the use at the computer center. And so it goes. I think the tax payer in the state is going to rebel one of these days. In fact I think he may be already rebelling at what the faculty member is demanding, not only in his compensation but in the facilities that are made available to him. In this same area I am appalled and concerned about the universities getting the state to pay part of the Social Security tax. This is going to backfire. This was not intended, that the employer pay the whole cost of Social Security, and I am amazed that somebody hasn't blown the whistle on it already.

Jenkins: Especially when you have a nice State retirement system.

Curry: Yeah, that's right. Well, I have said all I want to say about that, but looking at the welfare of the university professor, he has come so very far from the environment that existed thirty years ago that I think he is pushing now to where he is getting himself in trouble.

Jenkins: Let's get into the growth and the building of the graduate program in business.

Curry: Well, we go back to 1944. In the fall of 1944 when I came here, they had a masters degree in business education. I guess, in terms of what existed throughout the state it was a moderately good program. As I look at it today and as I recalled it then, I thought it was pathetically weak because it was made up of added courses over in the School of Education, making more courses on how to teach this and how to do that in the classroom. And more courses on advanced methods of teaching typewriting, advanced course in methods of teaching shorthand, advance course in methods of teaching whatever is taught in the public schools, in the high schools or the state business area. And my own feeling about it is that you need maybe one, two, I wouldn't even object to three, courses in psychology of learning, and then one three-semester-hour course on the peculiarities and the resources of teaching a particular subject--typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping, general business. Yeah, you need to know the literature that is available to you when you go out there in the high school and start teaching this. You need to know what others have found productive in the way of teaching this particular subject, but I don't think you can take four courses in that thing and have anything except just an accidental contribution to what you could do when you get out there in

the classroom. Because the classroom in this high school and the environment in that classroom in that high school is going to be considerably different to what it is in another one some place and you don't know which room you are going to be in and which area you are going to be in, and trying to get you ready just to walk out there and all you need to know you already know is, once again, of diminishing returns of the greatest proportion. So I looked at what we had and as I say it was probably what everybody else was doing, but I began fairly early to say, "Look, we need to have these people take a course in two semesters of principles of economics. It wouldn't hurt them to take Bullock Hyder's course in the political system of the state." I guess that's what he taught. That's what he knew. "It wouldn't hurt, instead of having another course in the advanced or third course in the methods of teaching typewriting, to substitute for that a course in city government. It wouldn't hurt to drop this added course over in the School of Education and take our course in personnel administration." And so it went. We began to restructure what we had as a masters degree in business education. Now if we hadn't already had a masters degree, I would have simply concentrated on our undergraduate degree in business administration strengthening that all the time, rather than diverting resources to a masters degree. But it was already in

effect, and I didn't want to eliminate it. But we didn't have the faculty resources to do a quality program at the masters degree level. We simply couldn't steal resources from our bachelors degree program and put it over in the masters degree program until, oh, the early sixties we began to get to the point where we could then look at a quality program at the masters degree level. Now our program wasn't bad. The course structure looked good on paper, but our faculty resources were just too thin to handle a quality program at the masters degree level. Now as we became competitive in recruiting faculty and the state made available to us the funds for faculty, it wasn't long then until we did have a real quality program at the masters degree level, but it was weak from the fifties until the mid sixties.

Jenkins: And then your doctoral program started getting together when?

Curry: Well, here again, we really weren't ready for a doctoral program, but how do you do these things? This is where I parted company with President Matthews about how you build something. His conviction was that you just quietly built it, and after you have it built then announce that you have it. Well, as desirable as that approach is, it takes forever to do it, if you ever do do it. And in the environment in which we were operating at the time, I took the position that what you do is say you

have a doctoral program and then, by golly, you start to work to have one, but you announce that you have it to start with, when you don't have anything. But until you say you have it and start to work on it you never are going to get it, or if you do it will be millennium before you ever accomplish the fact that you have actually attained a doctoral program.

Jenkins: Did you find it easier to attract faculty members once you had announced a doctoral program?

Curry: I think so. Well, there were so many factors that became attractive, that came together almost at the same time.

Jenkins: Like?

Curry: The institution had dropped the name "College" and became North Texas State University. You had changed the management at the Regents' level and President's level.

Jenkins: How did that affect it? The Regents and the President?

Curry: In this way. Ben Wooten was the Board of Regents, period. Nothing could be done without Ben Wooten said so, and Ben didn't want this institution to do anything more than it had been doing. He wanted it to stay a teachers college. Why? Because he was a member of the board at Baylor and he was a big shot in Dallas and he wanted SMU to do everything in the area of university development. Now there were some things he just couldn't stop. He couldn't stop the School of Music and he couldn't stop the School of

Business, and I guess he couldn't stop the School of Education. It grew in spite of Ben Wooten and Carl Matthews. So when they were out of the picture then, I think, prospective faculty members didn't sense it, but they sensed an enthusiasm on the campus that "this institution is going to go places." And that was one thing that made it possible for us to do things that we had never been able to do before.

Jenkins: Now about what time period.

Curry: Oh, about somewhere '65 or '68 it had begun to move. For example: About 1960 I wrote up a proposal to establish a center in Dallas that we either build or lease a building. SMU was phasing out their downtown program, and it seemed to me a just perfect time to go into Dallas and have a tremendous North Texas Business Administration or even North Texas University-wide center in Dallas. SMU was phasing out their downtown center, and I think we could have just moved right in. Dr. Matthews took the proposal and studied it. I went over a time or two and, no, he hadn't made a decision yet. I think, really, he hadn't gotten Ben Wooten's final answer. And then he just said, "We can't do that." "Would you mind telling me why?" "We can't do it. Well, we just can't do it." Well, if you had made that proposal, maybe, to Jitter Nolen I wonder what would have happened. "Oh, boy, yeah, go." Well, it was just a recurrence of this kind of thing.

The only answer you could ever get was, "No, we just can't do that."

Jenkins: I have a whole section on dealing with regents and administrators.

Curry: Well, that is easy to answer, because in the days that I was Dean up until John Kamerick you didn't deal with anybody except Carl Matthews, period.

Jenkins: Building a graduate program.

Curry: All right. When we began to be able to recruit faculty, then my role, it seemed to me as Dean, was simply to say to you fellows on the faculty through your department head, "Take a look at what you are doing in the masters program and I have a notion that there are a great many things that you are going to want to strengthen. Take a look at the course structure and see if that is still germane, if that is what ought to be in there, and then let's start making changes. Whatever needs to be done to have a top quality MBA program," and that's what you did. A Dean ought, it seems to me, to have some input and some control over what exactly what is done in the various degree programs, but he ought to be sensible enough to know that he doesn't know as much as his faculty knows, for darn sure, about how a program ought to be run and what ought to be in it. So that's why you go and get the input and then get it laid out on paper and get some reaction from your faculty. Now it always seemed to me a tragic mistake to have the accounting faculty, and the

management faculty, and finance and marketing faculty, and so on design a program they themselves laid out and then take it to the total faculty to get it approved. What the hell does the accounting faculty know about what ought to be done in the management program? And what does the marketing faculty have any business trying to tell the accounting faculty what they ought to have in a MBA program? This just never made sense to me, but early on we had to clear everything through the total faculty. And so what we got and what I told them we would get is three or four people coming to those faculty meetings, had not studied the program, and if they did they didn't know what they were talking about and take up the time in sounding off about what ought to be done with it. And I think it was a tremendous handicap in trying to develop the strengths of our various departments. But in spite of that I think we generally prevailed without much modification in the various programs, both undergraduate and graduate, that had been proposed. But it is just a terrible waste of time and energy.

Jenkins: What is your view of what an undergraduate program is supposed to be, do, and what a masters program is supposed to do and what a doctoral program is supposed to do in a college of business?

Curry: Well, you can't answer that in two or three words, you know. I'm not sure I can answer it at all. Well, here

again, I have different feelings in two different directions. One, you have the philosophy, I guess you would call it, that an undergraduate degree ought to equip the individual as a person to finding himself, to--it's a worn out phrase I hear so much today--find out who I am. Whatever in the hell that means I don't know, but how much of this undergraduate four years, or whatever, ought to be directed toward mastering tools and concepts that a person can function effectively as a citizen and to find himself enjoying the environment in which he lives. Well, that involves literature, it involves astronomy, geology, chemistry, physics. How do you relate to the ground out there if you don't know something about what is up there in the stars, in the sky? How do you enjoy what's down there in my garden unless you know something about agriculture? How do you know what is going on in the health area in Brother Kennedy's proposal for universal health care unless you know something about the structure of the human body? How do you enjoy the television shows unless you know a little something about music and maybe at least enough to appreciate music? Well, we can go on and on about what do you put in and what do you leave out.

Jenkins: So even as a dean of a college of business you don't look at the undergraduate as principally a vocational thing.

Curry: No, definitely not. You take the freshman coming in as a great, humane source. What can we do in the contact hours that we have with that student. When he goes out of here we have given him the resources to start a professional career. Now in the business school, I think that is the number one educational requirement. Otherwise it has no reason for existing. It must equip that individual with the ability to hit the ground running in employment situations. If you don't do that you just as well have him over there in the College of Arts and Sciences or the School of Music or Education or studying whatever. He must have a head start. He must be superior with his resources for advancement and assuming responsibility in the field of business. Otherwise you don't justify your existence as a school of business. Now exactly what that takes is one of these push and pull problems of how do you best use that individual's time? How much of it can you devote to an understanding of the economic and business system, and how much of it can you devote to gaining an elementary initial degree of proficiency in the area in which he is likely to seek employment? Now I think that is the thing where faculty members in the various disciplines have become overly zealous, that if he is majoring in management, what kind of management? Personnel or administrative or this or that kind of management? That to me is overdoing, that is overcooking the broth.

- Jenkins: Now you mentioned a while ago, and I want to try to relate. You talked about in teacher education trying to teach them all that they need to know and you know that can't be done. Does that similar thing apply . . .
- Curry: Even more so. At least, just as much.
- Jenkins: As Bob Newhart would say, "Go with that."
- Curry: Yeah. The one area where you can teach more about what you are going to be doing in an employment situation is in accounting, because you can in a classroom teach to some considerable level skills and proficiency and understanding of exactly what he is going to do whether he goes to work for General Motors or the corner grocery store or a public accounting firm. He can do immediately many of the things that the pros do that have been in there twenty years. But in the marketing, for example, we have had schools give a degree in specialties in marketing.
- Jenkins: And many others.
- Curry: And personnel and finance. Do you try to teach a guy to be a finance manager of a credit union, or this kind of institution, or a savings and loan? Of course not. Give him an idea that, yeah, he knows already that those institutions are out there, and you might, then, in some basic course say these are some of the special kinds of problems that the credit union encounters. In accounting you might say that your common sense will tell you that the

accounting for a savings and loan is going to be considerably different to what it is from a manufacturing concern, but try to teach him what the difference is, is futile. Why? You don't know where he is going to be, and he doesn't know where he is going to be, and if you did, how many years is it going to be before he needs to know what you are going to try to teach him now in that classroom.

Jenkins: As you sat mulling over a lot of these things in the Dean's chair, did you ever get caught between being a dean and being a tax payer?

Curry: Not really, because most of the years that I was in the Dean's chair the state of Texas didn't worry too much about putting taxes into North Texas State University. Whatever we got was minimal from the burdens of the tax payer, but in a broader frame of reference, yes. Yes, of course. You look at the courses we are putting in, and in a growing program it just seemed like almost every week somebody is coming in with a proposal for a new course. Well, a new course takes resources. So you have to raise a question. But my heart wasn't bleeding for the tax payer, as I say, in the days I was in the dean's office. What was troubling me is our own budget and can we justify taking a portion of our budget to put into this or that or the other. It was the allocation of funds, and you may have another time that you want to talk about this,

but one of the most painful, soul searching decisions that I made as Dean over the years was in the salary to pay the fellows who had been with me from the early days and helped to get us to where we were at that point in time, and bring somebody in at a compensation level substantially above what this guy is going to get.

Jenkins: I do have a section that I ask about joys and sorrows.

Curry: That's traumatic.

Jenkins: And traumas.

Curry: Yeah. As you know our number one goal from the day I got here until we gained accreditation and membership in the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business, and that was to build an undergraduate program that had the strength and qualities that justified accrediting. You see, we had two goals of our undergraduate program. One a philosophical goal: what should we do for this individual who comes here and spends this time with us as an undergraduate? And part of that had been answered by the standards set by the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business. So right or wrong the attainable objective, the measurable one, that you could see and feel and attain was the membership in the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business and have our undergraduate program accredited, which, when you had only fifty institutions in the United States that were accredited, being the fifty-first was quite an

accomplishment. And we kept that goal in mind in structuring our program, but to back off a bit and say today what should you do in a collegiate school of business, well, you answer it the way I did a while ago. You equip that student through your course work in the school of business with resources that make him more valuable as an initial employee and you give him resources that will move him to responsible management positions in a much shorter time than somebody who does not have the education that this individual has had. Now when you come to the masters degree program, this has been a baffling one for faculty members, deans and educators at all levels from the very beginning. The prestige institutions, Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, Chicago, Northwestern, Michigan, all patterned, in the early days, their programs, the Wharton School among them, they were patterned after what Wharton School did, which was a pure masters degree level program. And since they were the oldest and first school of business, Harvard came along in due time, Chicago wasn't far behind, Cal-Berkely was one of the older collegiate schools of business . . .

Jenkins: What kind of time span are we talking about?

Curry: Oh, nineteen hundred to nineteen ten, fifteen when nobody had business administration as a degree program. The Wharton School started about 1895 or so, I guess. And in the early 1900's, as I say, the few schools I mentioned did

start a school of business at the masters degree level.

Jenkins: Well, now, they didn't start at the undergraduate.

Curry: No.

Jenkins: They started at the graduate.

Curry: Yes, they assumed that . . . well, I guess, I don't know there may have been a multitude of reasons why. Now I do think California was among the early ones to start at both levels. And the Wharton School soon went to an undergraduate degree. I think for financial reasons as much as anything else. A private college has got to have bodies and high tuition financed the programs, that with private contributions. Well, in developing our masters degree program we were buffeted between what the faculty thought was best in their fairly narrow field of expertise and what I could see both from what masters degree programs were in the good schools across the nation and what I personally felt an MBA degree should be. For example, here is our bachelors degree student, and he has had eighteen hours in management if he is a management major and sometimes he has had more than that. Well, what are we going to do with him at the masters degree level? Give him more accounting courses and more management courses if he is that, or if he is a marketing major what are you going to do? Set up some more marketing courses so he can take some more marketing? I don't think so. I think if he is going to be a master of business administration he

needs more depth. If he is an accounting major he needs a graduate course in financial management, not another course in accounting. He needs a graduate course in administrative management or something or other in the management level. If he has a career objective and knows anything about what his career objective is and probably whether he knows or not, he ought to have a course in production. By golly, all business eventually falls back on the production and marketing of goods and services. So if he has gotten through his undergraduate program and then had a good, strong course in production, that's the place to get it at the masters degree level because he hasn't had it. Even if it is the same course that the undergraduate takes in that discipline. He needs a course in marketing management, at the masters degree level. Financial management, and if he is a finance major, of course, he has already had it. He goes and gets something he hasn't had that ties the total of a business operation together. It seems to me at the masters degree level, and to a lesser degree at the doctoral degree level, it depends upon what the doctoral candidate's career objective is, you are looking at about the same thing that you are looking at when you get to be a vice-president. Here is the vice-president of finance of marketing, of production, of personnel, employment relations, labor relations or

whatever, and the top president and chief executive officer. Well, how can the vice-president of production make a decision separate and apart from all the other guys that are involved? How can the vice-president for marketing make a decision when he doesn't know what production and finance and personnel and all the others are going to do? So this is . . . you are making decisions around the table. You are not making decisions sitting there at your desk and telling the others that this is the way it is. Well, I think at the masters degree level that is what you are doing. You are taking the specialty that the guy had as an undergraduate and building around it so when he gets to the table you will have provided him with insights into the way he has got to work with these other people, the way the whole scheme of things fits together. And I hope we have continued to do that. Now I am a little concerned that the accounting faculty has gone to this masters degree in accounting. I opposed it as long as I was in the dean's office. Now I hope they structured it. I haven't looked at it to see what they are going to do, but my guessing is that knowing accounting they put more and more accounting courses in there. And I don't care how many accounting courses you put in there, you immediately get to this diminishing return factor, and you cannot, even in accounting, make an accountant in a classroom. I don't care how many courses

you give him. And to a lesser degree can you make anything else in the classroom. You can take him so far but only up to a point, and then you begin to spin your wheels. And, I think you not only spin your wheels, but you do a great disservice to your bright students because he gets bored with the whole thing. "Hell, I have done this before."

Jenkins: How about the doctoral program now.

Curry: Okay. Now the doctoral program. They got approval for the doctoral program in education first at North Texas. And we were looking at ourselves, and about this time, I guess, we were making application for accrediting our MBA program, and the doctoral programs didn't have accreditation.

Jenkins: AACSB accreditation?

Curry: That's right. AACSB accreditation. And we attained that, and there was . . . well, I looked around and said to myself, I got the catalog of East Texas State and West Texas and all of the colleges and universities in the old teachers' college system, along with SMU, TCU, Baylor, private colleges. And you would be amazed at the lack of doctorates on the faculty at these institutions. SMU was in better shape than Baylor or TCU but nothing to brag about. So my thinking in the early days, in thinking about a doctoral program, is we could be of real service. And I knew from having been in meetings and dinners and walking alongside Jack Spriggle, a dean at the University of Texas,

and having been on their campus as an undergraduate and an MBA candidate long years ago, that if they had got a man to their doctoral program, the last place they were going to try to see him go was another one of the colleges in Texas, certainly not East Texas or West Texas or North Texas or Baylor or TCU. They might say, "Oh, well, yes, you can go to SMU," but they wanted him to go out of state, and that's where they went. So I was looking to try to be of some help to "the second tier" colleges and universities in the state with a doctoral program in business administration. I think of the state schools we were probably in the strongest position to do it, to offer a doctor's degree in business administration. And my primary objective was to provide qualified faculty members for the second tier institutions in the state of Texas.

Jenkins: At that time was the University of Texas in Austin the only one granting a Ph.D. in business?

Curry: There were two or three that came on stream pretty close to the same time, and I am not sure whether they were the only one or not. I think Texas Tech started a doctoral program, maybe, right before we did. Does SMU have a doctoral in business? Economics? I don't know.

Jenkins: But up until actually that era, they were the only ones? It was a matter of just two or three years difference?

Curry: That's right. Yes, there was nobody servicing this need.

And our faculty, I felt, was strong enough even with our bachelor's and master's program. And by that time the formula had gotten wise to provide extra money for semester hours at the doctoral level, so it meant that we would get resources, money, to the degree that we had the students in our doctoral program over and above what the resources money would be in the undergraduate MBA program. So we embarked on the degree program at the doctoral level, building our curriculum with the idea that most of these doctoral people would go to places like San Marcos and Commerce and Canyon and TCU and so on. Well, we screened applicants not too rigidly, but many of the people were late twenties, early thirties. Most of them had had some teaching experience. Some of them hadn't. Some of them were fresh out of the MBA program. But we started six or eight, I don't know how many there were, in the initial program. More than we expected, really. And amazingly, much better quality than I had anticipated. And we put our best people in the program, even though it may have weakened the MBA a little bit in the initial stages. Then in two or three years we had our first graduates, and lo and behold instead of being aggressively recruited by the second tier colleges--and I don't know if that is an appropriate description, but to keep from naming all of them--the second tier institutions in the state were not the ones up here recruiting. It was the University

of Nebraska and Oklahoma and Colorado and top quality institutions that were up here looking for our graduates. Well, this amazed me. I never expected that. But I think back over it now and I shouldn't have been too surprised, because as early as 1955, certainly as early as 1960, I go to the deans' meetings and deans from adjoining states, even as far away as Ohio and Indiana and Wisconsin and California and so forth would just come up to me and say, "Jack, we think you got the best school of business in the state of Texas." Well, nobody in Texas had thought it. There was nobody in any of the other institutions in Texas would have come up to me and said that. But out of state they did. Now how they got the impression or why we were getting that kind of favorable recognition, I don't know.

Jenkins: Do you happen to remember the first candidate out? I should, but I don't remember.

Curry: No, I think Dick Johanson was one of those first ones, who went to the University of Arkansas. I don't know. If we had the names we would know who they were and where they went.

Jenkins: We had some very strong candidates as I recall.

Curry: You bet, and it was very gratifying that they were able to go to top flight institutions with no struggle at all. Well, as I look at it today, we do have, and I think did

then have, one or two who were industry bound and oriented, but most of the doctoral candidates are headed for university careers and I guess, still are.

Jenkins: That was your major intention, was for university teaching careers.

Curry: Yes, not ruling out the probability that some of them would go into industry, for either personality reasons, they just might not be adapted to the university environment, or their resources would be such that the compensation financially would be so much greater in industry than it would be in the university environment that they would go that direction, and I am sure some of them have. But that was the basis on which we established the doctoral degree at North Texas in the School of Business. That was the data I put together to submit to our President and Board of Regents and in turn to the Commission of Higher Education justifying a doctoral degree in business administration at North Texas, and I simply gave them the number of doctorates on the faculty at these institutions other than the University of Texas at Austin. I just laid it out there. Anybody could look at it and see, Jiminy Christmas. If a doctorate is some measure of strengthening the faculty of a college or university, we darn sure need some strengthening.

Jenkins: In that doctoral program were you faced with the computer question again?

- Curry: Only to the degree that you guys faced it. How much in your management program were you going to insist that a doctoral student could cut in the quantitative computer area? How much from finance, accounting, in the disciplines in the school of business? It was your concern more than it was mine as Dean, because you had to answer the question, "How much" of this quantitative computer material do you insist on a doctoral candidate from this institution having?"
- Jenkins: Well, even though you let the faculty run with it, did you have personal feelings concerning this?
- Curry: Yes. Yes, once again, how can you live in the environment today and particularly in the future unless you have a basic understanding of the computer, its language, and how it can contribute to the flow of information? I am not personally too much concerned with the computer trying to make a decision, but it does facilitate information upon which the decision maker should rely, or should have it whether he relies on it or not. There may be some spider spinning a web out there that gives him ideas that makes him reject what the computer model has told him, but he jolly well better have that information. And that was the extent of my feeling about what the doctoral candidate ought to have in this area. And being illiterate in the area myself naturally I said, "Tell me."
- Jenkins: What about the foreign language requirement? Every school

fights this battle at least emotionally.

Curry:

Yes. Well, all of us who have gone through that foreign language requirement for a doctorate, I guess, have different opinions. We don't want anything else. My feeling from the time I was passing my French and German as a doctoral candidate, well, even before I started trying to learn enough foreign language to pass the language requirement, was "Isn't there something else I could do with this time that would be more rewarding, more meaningful, worth more than spending these countless hours trying to learn to read French and German?" Well, fortunately, I had had two years of French my freshman and sophomore years so that posed no particular problem, but the German was another matter entirely. When I decided I was going to go for a doctorate I got a German fourth or fifth grade grammar, I guess, and started studying word structure and grammar, fifth, sixth grade level in a German text, and then started reading fairy stories from the basis of this much grammar. And every time I would come to a word I would write it down building vocabulary. And when I got to the University of Michigan they had a course for doctoral candidates in German and French and so forth. So I signed up for that and met it twice, and I threw up my hands. My word, it will take ten years to learn to read attending these classes. So I took it from there on my own. Well, now to answer your question.

Yes, I believe that a doctoral candidate, if he has had undergraduate work, accidentally or on purpose, in any language other than English, it will be a fine thing for him to do a barrier examination in that language. But to insist that it be French or German to me is assinine. Now there probably was a time a hundred years ago, maybe even fifty years ago when one seeking the distinction of a Ph.D. should have had a reading knowledge of French and German on the assumption that all that had ever been written that was worth reading had been translated into French and German. But that certainly has no validity in today's society. Anything that has ever been written that the doctoral candidate ought to read is in English, and if it isn't he can jolly well get it taped and put in English at a much lower cost in time and energy than it would take him to learn to read it in the language in which it was initially written. And besides that, I don't know for how long, I would say for fifty years, certainly for thirty years or forty years, the fact that they could pass a barrier exam in French or German doesn't mean that he could read what he wanted to find out in that German book.

Jenkins: Or speak it or understand it.

Curry: That's right. So the language exam was simply an appendage to make it difficult, I guess, or some way to give this person carrying a Ph.D. title, something that he had done

that other people don't do normally. But as far as it contributing to his ability to perform in his career, it is highly questionable to my mind, in fact it is not even questionable, it just ain't so, that it enriched his own personal life. It may have enriched it to a very small degree, but if he could have spent that much time and effort in studying music, for example, or astronomy or the earth sciences or you name it, he would have been a much greater enriched person than boning away to get this dadgummed language exam out of the way. And once he had passed the barrier exam, how much of it was usable thirty days after he had passed the exam? So the answer to the question you raised. If the individual has a knowledge of Spanish or Russian or Chinese or Pakistanian or Greek or Morainian or whoever or whatever it is, sure, let him use that language as one of the barriers to his Ph.D. degree. If he has two languages, fine, that's all right, but no more than two. Now if he doesn't have the language . . .

Jenkins: Any language besides English.

Curry: Yes. If he makes sure he is literate in English, that he can--well, he will never get his doctorate in an English speaking institution, I hope, unless he has some command of the English language. Particularly of the reading and writing of the language. He may not be able to speak it very well due to his background. If he came up in a

home where there they said, "It ain't so," he is going to have some difficulty making an "ain't" sound incorrect.

Jenkins: That's right. But as a requirement itself, you simply don't see any more use for it.

Curry: No, not the language requirement. Now initially we battled that problem in our doctoral program, and of course the graduate dean was reluctant to see us, you know, it was so ingrained, it was so traditional, so everybody had to have a language. Well, even from the earliest days we got an exception for one of the languages. You didn't have to have German and French. You could have one of these and Spanish, for example.

Jenkins: But all of this was just a concession on your part, not a belief on your part.

Curry: Yes, that was a reluctant concession to substitute one of the languages to make it optional to whether it would be French or German and the other language. What they do now I don't know. The easiest bargain we could get. But within a year or two we made a strong pitch for requiring only one of the languages and substituting the quantitative computer area for the other language. And I think that's approved, isn't it?

Jenkins: I believe so, yeah. I think that is the way we are operating now.

Curry: But we still have requirement for one language.

Jenkins: Yes. Very traditional.

- Curry: Well, I would opt for myself, I am convinced that if you simply are requiring this doctoral candidate to have some degree of proficiency in a language other than English with which he has had no contact, really starting from scratch or very nearly, that you would do him a greater service having him reach a degree of competency in you name it, music or astronomy or biology or chemistry or physics or mathematics or something or other other than that language, because once he gets through the barrier exam, that's it.
- Jenkins: That's the way that I have often felt. If they really thought that it was going to do something, they should insist that we be able to use it, and hardly any of us could.
- Curry: Now if you have a doctoral candidate who visualizes himself a career in Mexico or Spain or someplace then, yeah, that would be a possible use of his time. But even my reaction to that would probably be, "By golly, the time it is going to take him to attain a reading knowledge or speaking knowledge or any other kind of knowledge of a foreign language is such a drain on the time factor that, just wait a while. If he gets in a situation in Mexico or France or wherever he happens to be that he is going to need this language, by dern, it won't take him long to learn it."
- Jenkins: That's right, and it's his problem.
- Curry: Yes, his problem.

- Jenkins: A problem that he needs to solve.
- Curry: Yes. But to make believe, and I mean that, make believe that there may be some research on his dissertation that he can not do without ability to read in that foreign language is a bunch of balony, pure fantasy. And that's the basis on which they insist that you have the reading knowledge. Stucks.
- Jenkins: Okay, anything else on the graduate program you want to mention. We will get back to all kinds of things through the pursuit of these other questions, but in terms of building it and so on.
- Curry: Well, I think you may cover this when you go back to relations between the School of Business and the department heads and dean to the graduate school, the president's office, vice-president's office and so forth, but this may be a better time to look at the problems, because you have this Graduate Council. And trying to be realistic and practical in a School of Business and getting over there in the Graduate Council made up in large measure of arts and science people where an Education professor is dean, you run into some philosophical problems, and personality problems for that matter.
- Jenkins: Yeah, I have a whole section on that. Okay, let's talk now some about your dealings as a dean with the various groups like faculty, students, administrators, regents, politicians, business community and so on, the kinds of

dealings that you had with them as a dean.

Curry:

All right. This was a sort of a strange, unique environment to me. I had been at the University of Michigan where faculty members were way up in the clouds, you know, as far as the general community is concerned. You were in demand for consulting work, speeches, everything. The Wharton School was the same way. So I come here and the metropolitan and the metroplex regard for universities in particular was vastly different to what it was in the middle west and east. Well, for example, at the Wharton School a student was very apologetic for coming in your office. He would bow and scrape and you know "Would it be all right for me to come in and ask you a question?" I get here, heck, they just . . . it had never occurred to them that they need to ask permission to come in your office or take your time to do anything. That was one aspect of the difference, but in terms of my relationship as a new dean in a teachers' college with the business community particularly in Dallas and Ft. Worth, they couldn't have cared less. Now the two reasons I guess. Number one, Fort Worth is a very provincial city. Nothing exists except in the city limits of Fort Worth as far as they are concerned, and trying to get even a little attention between Fort Worth and North Texas State was pretty close to a hopeless undertaking. Dallas was somewhat different. They are not all that bound within the

city limits, except they are not going to support anything very strong, at least weren't in those days, that wasn't Dallas. So I joined every group that existed that had anything to do with business, and started attending the meetings.

Jenkins: This is principally in Dallas.

Curry: Well, Dallas and Fort Worth. I guess, oh, in a month's time I would attend at least four meetings in Fort Worth and five or six in Dallas. So ten nights out of a month I would be in Dallas or Fort Worth, one or the other. And I got well acquainted with the people that were in these various associations, special groups, and they began to pay a little attention. But what we did to get some recognition and exposure and acceptance in Dallas-Ft. Worth was when we had these spring honors' banquets in the School of Business, you know, we would have a dinner and speaker and invite these people over, presidents of trade associations, presidents of the Comptrollers Institute, Society of CPA's, marketing groups, the management groups, and so forth. Their officers we would invite over as our guests, and they would come over and they couldn't believe what they found over here in terms of an education institution. Well, this was a long, drawn-out process to gain any kind of recognition in the Dallas-Fort Worth community. Now the relations with students I touched on just barely. The freedom students in this

area have relative to what it is in the east of the United States.

Jenkins: Did you tend to like that or dislike it?

Curry: Well, it has mixed blessings. The faculty member, say, at the University of Pennsylvania goes to his office, and he can leave the door open and get work done because nobody is going to beard him in his chambers. But here there is no way you can do any work in your office because you are going to be constantly interrupted by the telephone, by the faculty, by students. So I couldn't do any work in the office, and that meant that never could I get to bed before twelve or one o'clock at night, because when I get up to the college at the office, there was a constant turnover of people. Well, on the other hand I think it is wholesome for students and faculty to feel a degree of freedom to visit with each other, to ask questions. I don't know, I think there is an extreme, two poles apart in, say, the Wharton School and North Texas because at the Wharton School students, as I say, were just intimidated. They had to have a very serious reason for trying to come in to your office and talk to you. On the other hand here they come in whether they have got any reason or not, and I think those are extremes. There is a middle ground that would be more appropriate.

Jenkins: Do you think that had to do with the Wharton School being what it was, or it was a great deal to do with the part

of the country?

Curry: I think it's maybe a little of both, but mostly the--what would you call it--the attitude of the student toward the faculty member is so different there to what I have found here. He is sort of like a high priest in there.

Jenkins: Well again, I am wondering if that was because it was the Wharton School, or because it was that part of the country. Do you know whether other schools in the area were like that?

Curry: I think it would be typical of, well, Columbia or Harvard or any of your Ivy League schools, I would guess, had that same environment. Now whether it was true in the state supported schools I don't know. These were Ivy League. You know the Ivy League. The student bodies were a select group in the sense that there was virtually nobody there that wasn't from an affluent family. I used to chide my fellow faculty members at the University of Pennsylvania when they bragged about being so selective in their admissions. I said, "Yeah, you are selective in the admissions all right, but you just let Joe Blow, the multi-millionaire's son, make an application here, and it's amazing how quickly he has all these high academic standards for admission. You just don't turn him down."

Jenkins: You figure out some way.

Curry: Yeah, you figure out a way that he's a special case. And there were lots of that kind.

Jenkins: Over the years that you were at North Texas, do you have any feelings about any change in the quality or the attitudes of the students over those years?

Curry: Well, the quality, the basic, let's call it native intelligence, of the population in the Texas area is surprisingly high. I don't know if "surprisingly" is the right word or not. It is just high. High basic native intelligence. Now the development of that intelligence in terms of academic preparation, the ability to read poetry or literature, languages, or whatever. At the time I came here I would say was way below what you would find in Michigan or Pennsylvania or the middle west or east or that area. Now exactly why I don't know. I think it would simply be due to the fact that this was, and to a large measure still is, an agricultural rural setting compared to the environment in which those youngsters came to the university. Number two, the regard for university education in the southwest, we'll say, was much lower than it was in the middle west and east. For what reasons? Well, I guess, you could farm for one reason, and up there you . . . well, they were a decade or two ahead of this area down here in their regard for higher education. Well, so I got down here and found an environment considerably different to what I had experienced, but being a native of Texas and born and raised two hundred miles southwest of here, it didn't surprise me all that much. I didn't have

any trouble getting acclimated. I sensed very quickly any differences in environment.

Jenkins: Over those years, do you think there has been any particular change in the quality or type of student getting to the university?

Curry: In the mid-forties when I came here most of our students came from what we might refer to as a rural area. We got a sprinkling of students from the Dallas-Fort Worth schools, but more likely Gainesville or Sherman, Denison, Decatur, you know, even from way west Texas and south Texas came here. But as the years went along, pretty shortly close to half of our students were from Dallas-Fort Worth. Partly, I think, because of the rapid population increase in the area, and the fact that the capability of the educational institutions, of the universities was very limited. After all you had TCU and SMU and then Texas Wesleyan. And in Dallas some of the other church schools. And Arlington was still a two-year school. So they just flooded in here. East Texas had some growth, but this was handier.

Jenkins: I guess the GI's, too. Was there a change after that flood of GI's got through?

Curry: Yes. The GI's were mature, very serious. Well, I would say eighty percent of those who came to the universities were dead serious. They had a career objective. They weren't fooling around. And while, oh we'll say here is

a guy comes in out of the service, and he had been in school maybe a semester or two before he was called into service. Man, he never had a grade above a D, and you think, "Why is he coming back?" And you look him up a semester or two later and he hasn't had anything but A's and B's after he got back. He was just fooling around. He didn't know what he was doing.

Jenkins: Some of those would up on our faculty, as I recall.

Curry: Yes, several of them did. Well, yeah, there is a difference. After the GI's, the bulk of those were gone, and you raised the question about the changes or differences in the quality of students, and I think there is no constant in there. It is up and down. They immediately, oh, say early '50's, once again we got to a point where students coming in fresh out of high school, they were irresponsible. They were in college because that was where everybody else was, what everybody else was doing. They had no serious objective, many of them. They just fooled around. Getting an education was not their main objective in being here. It was a cheap country club.

Jenkins: I have often wondered whether the GI Bill, which allowed so many fellows to go to school, helped set part of this pattern where people got to thinking this was what you were supposed to do.

Curry: I don't think it was a predominate factor. It was an attitude that just prevailed in our society, and I think

maybe to a lesser degree today than it was thirty years ago. But parents would come in with their children and talk to me about them coming up to North Texas, and there was a constant refrain, "I want my children to get a college education. I don't want them to have to work like I did."

Jenkins: Well, this is kind of what I am after, where you think this attitude came from, how it developed. Depression children?

Curry: I think once again being a primarily rural, agricultural economy and society. When you get out there in that hot sun and work all day long sunup until sundown, particularly if you are picking cotton or the kind of agriculture that existed here cutting or hauling hay or whatever. The only kinds of things you did in Texas agriculture in the whole southwest was just plain hard, hot work. And they were looking at the people in town that were running the drygoods store or the bank, and they knew very well about doctors and lawyers and accountants and this sort of thing. And they looked at the white collar job relative to the kind of work of the blue collar, and they said, "I don't want my kids to have to work like I did." Not realizing really that you can work a heck of a lot harder with a shirt and tie and coat on in an air conditioned room than you can work out there in that cotton field.

Jenkins: We had talked at various times about whether all of these people should be coming to college and whether we have had and may still have students who might well lead a better life by not going to college. Do you have observations on that?

Curry: Well, unquestionably the kind of curriculum that four-year degree granting institutions set up, and they are pretty well inflexible because this is a peer judgement, you know. You just can't go off in all directions and not be under the gun from accrediting agencies and the approval of your sister institutions and faculties. So to answer your question, yes, there are many students who are misfits in the programs that are available at the institution that they choose or is chosen for them. Now that isn't to say that they could not profit from some kind of further education beyond high school, but they are wasting their time and resources of the institution where they wind up because they are totally uninterested in what is available at that institution. They are ill-equipped to use what is available at that institution, and as a consequence they are not interested in what is thrown at them, and they become a drag on the other student body. He is taking space in your classroom, he is taking time from the instructor, and he is the guy who is probably in your office every other day trying to figure out what he is supposed to be doing. So the answer to the question

is, yes, there is a tremendous waste in my way of thinking in the inability of all educational institutions, as an institution, to communicate adequately with the prospective, well, let's say with the students graduating from high school. How many students go to college in the fall, this coming fall. They selected the institution they are going to and have the fuzziest kind of notion as to what is there when they get there, or what it is they are going to do when they get there? How you can get that information without going there and finding out, I don't know.

Jenkins: Is there anything happening in "higher education" that in any way helps this, or is it getting worse?

Curry: I don't know the answer to that.

Jenkins: Are junior colleges having any impact on that?

Curry: The junior colleges, I think, are a great help. I think so many times a student is uncertain, and the logical thing to do is to stay close to home and take some courses. Maybe he works part time and kind of feels his way along. I think that is quite wholesome. I don't know any good way. To me it's a good deal like choosing a career. Here you are graduating from high school, and all of a sudden you decided that you want to be an engineer or a dentist or a manager of a savings and loan association or a banker or an accountant or whatever. How do you know? Well,

Uncle Joe says that is a good line of business to be in. And it is very difficult, if not impossible, to know whether you want to be an accountant until you become one and have served a while. And it's the same thing of an engineer or dentist or whatever. How many students who have gotten degrees, we'll say in accounting. Where are they now? Well, they are selling insurance. And how many guys got degrees in marketing we'll say, what are they doing? Well, he is over there in the accounting department at General Dynamics. Well, how come? Well partly it just happened to be that he was at a particular place at a particular time, but it wasn't because he had a burning desire to go from this where he majored over into that other field. All of a sudden he discovered that this wasn't so glamorous, what he started out to do. He didn't hesitate to take a little different path.

Jenkins: Do you find this winding up in a career not in a major a . . . does this concern you?

Curry: Not particularly, no. No, I think it is perfectly natural and goes back to what I said a while ago. There is no way to know when you are nineteen years old or when you are twenty-two years old, exactly where your strengths and weaknesses may be, not what your likes and dislikes may be. It is kind of like climbing a mountain. You get up two hundred feet and you look out over the plateaus, you get one view. And you climb another thousand feet and you've

got a completely different scene below. Well, as you go through life, what was just the most important thing in the world at twenty a few years later you wonder, "How could that have ever been important?" I used to say to my students, "When you were twelve years old, for example, did you want a bicycle so bad that you would just do anything to get it?" You would work day or night. You would change your behavioral patterns. You wouldn't spit on the floor for a year just to get a bicycle, if that was the kind of thing. And you finally get that bicycle. Two months later, where was the bicycle? Out in the rain some place. Well, that is what I am talking about in terms of careers. This policeman you wanted to be so badly when you were thirteen, by the time you were in college you had completely forgotten all about it. This lawyer that you wanted to be when you started to college, by the time you get to the junior year you wondered, "What was I thinking about. I don't want to be a lawyer."

Jenkins: Did you have a great deal of direct contact with students as a dean?

Curry: Limited in this sense. The students with whom I had contact were those who were in some sort of trouble, one way or another. They wind up in the dean's office. Usually it was academic, grade trouble, and whether they were going to be kicked out of school or whether Professor Jones had given him a fair shake. So often it was a question "This guy is unfair to me." Well, even this kind

of unfairness. Here is a fellow, he has a wife and two children and he is trying to get an education and he is working forty hours a week, and doggone if that professor hadn't given him a lot of homework to do. How do you deal with . . . he is just unreasonable. Well, he has got to talk to somebody, and he finally winds up in the dean's office. On occasion one of our gifted students would come in along about a few weeks before graduation and just volunteer that how much he had enjoyed being in North Texas, how much he thought he had benefited from it and volunteer some kind remarks about two or three outstanding faculty members that he had had the pleasure to be in their classes. But that, either you get the tag end of the low cut of the students and occasionally the top flight people.

Jenkins: On homecomings did you get much contact?

Curry: Yes, there was some feedback at homecoming, except the attendance at homecoming was pathetically small and . . .

Jenkins: Still is.

Curry: Yes. I think percentage wise even smaller than it was twenty-five years ago, partly because when they came back to homecoming they did see some people they knew.

Jenkins: Had had several classes with one professor.

Curry: Yes, right. And some students that they knew when they were here. Now they come back and well, the last time I was up at homecoming around the School of Business I

couldn't even find any faculty up there, much less students. No wonder they don't come. There is no program for them. There is no reason for them to be here.

Jenkins: Students now have a faculty member so few times. There was a time when we would have students three or four or six times.

Curry: That's right.

Jenkins: Let's switch then to talking a little bit about direct dealings with faculty members, as a dean. Do you care to address that?

Curry: Well, I don't particularly care to, but . . . The environment changes between a dean and his faculty, I think. When I came in 1944--as I say I think there were seven' other, there were seven members of the faculty, two men and five women. Well, we were close, intimately. We knew each other from everything that we were doing. You know, that small a group and with this small a community. We played together, we worked together. We would have dinner together in our houses. Just a very close association. I don't know why the attitude in those days up until, say the 1950's or so, universities tended to be run about like a high school. You had a superintendent or a principal, and what he said he wanted done so that's what you did. And so nobody ever thought about questioning what we were doing. We were here to build a School of

Business, and nobody tried to make any decisions except what came out of the dean's office. And the way the dean operated in one institution compared to another, that was up to the dean. So the way we operated, of course, there were questions and problems coming up daily. Many of them I just . . . "we do this," because one person's decision was as good as another and I just as well make it. That's what I was there for, I guess. But when it dealt with our program or when it dealt with some relationship between the School of Business and the President's office or the Budget or the graduate dean or whatever, I would simply pick up my phone or ask one of the girls in the office to go get Professor so-and-so and ask him if he can come down and talk to me. And I would say, "Here is what we are confronted with. What do we do?" And if it was something that involved . . . well, if it was a real policy problem I would simply write a memo and stick it in the box of maybe three or four faculty members and say, "Here is some communication I have gotten. Give it some thought and let's meet tomorrow and see if we can decide what to do about it." And that's the way we would operate. Once we got all of our facts and biases on the table we would bat it around and, generally, agree on what ought to be done. Sometimes we wouldn't agree, and sometimes they would be unanimous on one side and I would

be unanimous on the other, and I didn't hesitate to say that if I was convinced that they were wrong I would use my own judgement. I would do it my way. But these were rare occasions when they were wrong and I was right. And on occasion I would maybe be the only one who didn't agree with what they thought was the right thing to do, but yet I, even though I didn't believe it, I went ahead and did it the way they recommended because I thought they had better insights than I did. But we had no committees or anything of that sort.

Jenkins: Apparently you feel that things changed over the years. How do you view those changes and what are some of the things that you think caused the changes?

Curry: Things did change. We became a larger faculty, and as you get more and more people involved in a program your ability to know what each one is doing is less and less and less. And the relationship between each member of the faculty . . . It is one thing to have a group of fifteen or twenty, and it is another thing to have seventy-five or eighty or a hundred. And where you have this small group, up to thirty people probably, you know where each guy lives, you have been to his home, he has been to your home, you know his wife and children, and he knows your wife and children. You are friends as well as associates. But when you get this large group you meet in the halls, when you have a faculty meeting, but some of them you

probably have to stop and think twice to even remember what his name is. So, this was part of it, the getting larger, the more people involved in your program. But I think the key to the change in environment and in management of educational programs and educational institutions evolved from this movement of faculty government. Somehow this got into the literature and we had some faculty members with a missionary zeal with, I think, a sincere belief that the faculty ought to govern an institution, that it would improve the performance and the contribution to mankind if the faculty governed the institution. So the first thing you know you can't do anything, can't make even a mundane day-to-day operating decision without having the faculty involved in that decision. Well this becomes a very, very cumbersome operation. You can't give an answer today. You have got to wait until next week until the faculty meets so people vote on it. By that time, you know, the iron is already cold. There is no use making a decision a week from now. You have got to make it today. But you can't make it today, so it goes by default. And then you all of a sudden find yourself confronted with "we've got to have a committee;" a standing committee to deal with this thing that comes up, whatever the committee is for. You've got to have a committee. And then the committee has got to report back to the faculty as a whole. You can't have general faculty

meetings every day or every week. So this is at best once a month. And every faculty member has got one or more committees, generally more than one committee, that he is supposed to work on. And then you finally come to the monthly faculty meeting and you have got nine things to vote on, and the only people who know anything about this first one is the ones who worked on it and they make a presentation and recommend that you do this or that. Well there is always some cat sitting out there that wants a little attention or just psychologically an objector, and so he delays the procedures for twenty minutes. There they are, you've got nine of these to deal with, and by the time you get half through they couldn't care less whether you vote yes or no. And besides that they don't know what the question is anyway.

Jenkins: Now as far as you can tell, was this something unique either to the College of Business, to North Texas, or was this something that was kind of going throughout the higher educational process?

Curry: Oh, it was throughout the whole higher education.

Jenkins: Well, since this was something that was throughout higher education, what do you think are some of the things that contributed to this? Was it size? Was the change in general population attitudes? Just what do you suppose was involved in this?

Curry: I really don't know. I don't have any clear thinking on

it, except we came through, in our social and political institutions, some fairly rapid changes. The Supreme Court was making decisions. Number one, on way back starting with the Supreme Court's decision about segregation, integrating our systems, our schools, our society. Then the biases or discrimination against women was gaining national discussion. Then we looked at all segments of our society and said, "These people are being discriminated against." And then Congress comes along and they start passing legislation to aid, put money in the hands of this little minority group and that little ethnic group and this minority. You know, you look around and everybody can be some kind of a minority group. I noticed the most recent one is middle-aged widows. Here is a woman forty-five, and there is no group to look after her welfare, her benefits, and so Congress is going to pass a law to provide them with a monthly income because they are middle-aged widows. This is just sort of a rash on the whole body of the society looking for somebody to. . . well, somebody's been neglected and we ought to do something about them. Well, I think this whole kind of thinking permeates the university, too. Here is the faculty and there are the students. What's the institution's purpose, what is its reason for being? Well, the name of the game is for the faculty member to teach the students, and he doesn't have any voice in making the decisions

about how the institution is run. "Well, that has got to be changed. The faculty ought to run the university, not the regents and the president or the administrative staff. It is the faculty that has the responsibility." And that was the reasoning and thinking. Well, then the faculty members start writing in all the professional magazines about faculty governance. And in faculty governance, all the decisions that are made around the place have got to go through some sort of faculty representation from the grass roots up through a faculty senate. And then you lay on the desk of the president, or somebody, the decision that he is supposed to follow. So, yeah, the environment has changed radically in that sense. As I said, prior to the end of World War II the faculty never thought about trying to tell the governing board or the administration what to do.

Jenkins:

I know the number of terminal degrees depends upon the institution and the part of the country and so on, but do you suppose the increase in the number of doctoral degrees on a campus, whereas when in the forties when you came here there were hardly any Ph.D.'s. There were lots of women in your department. Would that combination possibly make a difference how people viewed administrators and their decision making ability and authority?

Curry:

Maybe a tiny degree, but I don't think much, because of the fact that these people did or didn't have a degree.

They had been on the campus a long time, and this was just the mores of the times in regard to the way schools are run. When you were in grade school or high school, I don't imagine any teacher in that school ever thought about he or she had any business trying to run or make a decision about how whether you would have a holiday on the Fourth of July. It wasn't any of your business, that's for the school board to say. This didn't occur to you that you had any input as to when you had a vacation or when the holidays came or whether you met school on Monday or Friday or Saturday. That was all decided. Your job was to get in that room and do your job.

Jenkins: Some people think that size alone and the distance between the administrator and whatever it is, whether it is the faculty or the people running the business, that this in itself, that gap, may cause greater distrust of the administrators. Might this have anything to do with it?

Curry: I think so. I don't think it is the size and the gap. The administrator is so "overwhelmed" with the size of his job. Well, always there is limited financial resources, and he was not free to sit back with his feet on the table and try to figure out what was happening and how to deal with it. They would just hit him so fast with the ever-increasing enrollments that he was unable to communicate, and I think this gap you are talking about was due in part

to size. It is just simply a communication problem, and if he had had the kind of resources he needed he could have seen it and dealt with it. But it got out of hand before he was able to take any action. And once the faculty began to get a hold of the idea that they were supposed to make the decisions then it was hard to reverse it.

Jenkins: What about the increasing claims upon administrators time by regulation? Regulations from every level?

Curry: This pervades our whole society and is one reason we have the inflation that we have. You are taking time of your most productive decision makers to shuffle papers for some governmental agency someplace. And when the papers get to the address to where they were mailed, whether they ever look at them or what happens to them, there is no productive feedback or almost none. So it is a self-defeating kind of requirement that we have gotten into, but it is an inevitable situation when the agency that is requiring a report provides some money for you to do something at your end of the line. Now, I well remember twenty-five years ago when the federal government started making money available to educational institutions, and there was a great debate about whether you could take this money and not be finally succumbed to direction from up yonder as to what you were going to do. "Oh, no," the governmental agencies, the congresses of state and federal

level, "no, that's not our intention. We have no intention of trying to tell you how to do anything." But look at it today. There is no way you can put money in something and not have the recipient of that money . . . You dare not put the money in there without having control. It would be utterly stupid to do so.

Jenkins: Let's look at how your relationships with administrators on the rest of the campus changed over the years.

Curry: Well, go back to 1944-'45. At North Texas we had a president and the dean of the college, period, and the department heads. I don't know how many department heads. Not very many, three or four at the most, I guess.

Jenkins: Campus wide?

Curry: Yes. So it was, once again, very informal. You might, once a month, need to see the president about something. All of the academic problems, per se, were handled by Dean Harris and his office, he and Inez Ray, who ran the shop. And in terms of personnel, well, I think maybe Wilfred Bain and I were the only ones who even had a part-time secretary. Anybody else, of course not. Why? Well, as we came out of World War II and the student population mushroomed this created many problems, of course, trying to keep up and accommodate the student enrollment. And this was handled in different ways. Some departments just simply set up X number of sections, twenty-five, thirty students to a section. When you went to register you

filled those sections. They just said, "It's closed." And you might have students standing around two or three days trying to get a class in English, for example. There just wasn't going to be any. On the other hand, over in our shop I took the position that you weren't going to help these students by telling them you didn't have anything they could take. And if we could find a room someplace on the campus, and we always did, we would create a section and teach them something. Now we didn't know who was going to teach it, but somebody would be around that could do a pretty good job. So this created conflicts, you see, between this department and that department because we were not on the same wave length. How are we going to cope with these increasing enrollments? Are you just going to shut the door and say, "Go some place else," or "forget it," or are you going to try to help the people? And there was nobody to say which policy you were going to follow. Are you going to accommodate the students, are you going to teach them, are you going to take them here, are you going to shut the door in their face and tell them to go someplace else?

Jenkins: There was no university policy?

Curry: No. No, each one operated on his own. And I don't think they ever did develop a policy. Well, this was irritating to me because my feeling was that, by golly, we ought to take care of these students and do the best we could with

them, even if it wasn't very good it was better than making him . . . Well, here is the student trying to get a course say in government, a required government course. They don't have any sections open, but he finally finds a section in, you name it, that he can take. Well, it gives him another course. And he takes it and he has no interest in it. He takes up room in the class. He might get something out of it, but the odds are that he just took it for credit and wasted his efforts and energy, if he put anything into it. Whereas if they had tried, over there in the government, they could have created another section and have gotten him moved along towards his degree objective. Back now to relationships between the Dean of the School of Business and other divisions of the university.

Jenkins: And the office of the President.

Curry: President. Well, we are talking about the relationships between the various divisions of the university and President Carl Matthews because this is the time span when the real growth took place. Dr. McConnell died, I don't know, '48 or '49 somewhere along in there. He had a Dean's Council and generally we would meet once a month. This was really, in addition to being a Dean's Council--what did we call it?--at any rate it was a place where we approved or disapproved new course offerings and new programs.

Jenkins: Curriculum committee?

- Curry: Yes. Curriculum committee. There were some non-deans on there, but it was really dominated by the deans across the campus. And here again, Dean Hodgson or Dean Bain of the College of Music or Dean Gafford in Arts and Sciences, they would come to this meeting, curriculum committee, and have a proposal for a new course. What in the by-heck business did I have, or did anybody else have on that committee around this table have, in trying to tell the School of Music, the School of Home Economics, the Physics Department or Accounting Department or the Management Department whether they ought to have this course or not? I didn't know anything about it, and as a consequence about all that ever happened, each one of us would make a report and recommend that this be done and all in favor say, "Aye", and everybody said, "Aye", and you wasted a couple of hours of time fooling with something that just shouldn't have been handled that way.
- Jenkins: Do you know how it was done before there was a Dean's Council?
- Curry: I have no idea how it was done before. I guess, probably, like I did it when I came here in the fall of 1944 and wrote a catalog and said, "Here are the courses." You see here in the 1944 catalog, I certainly didn't go before any committee to get that done.
- Jenkins: The President, I assume.
- Curry: Yes. Well, nominally, but as I say he didn't see it before it was in the catalog.
- Jenkins: He just had assigned you that job and you did it.

- Curry: Yeah. That's what he hired me to do, come here and build a School of Business.
- Jenkins: What are some of the other committees that grew on campus that you had to deal with as a dean? The Graduate Council, for instance.
- Curry: Yes, we had the Graduate Council. Nominally we had an Athletic Council.
- Jenkins: Let's deal with the Graduate Council and see what kinds of things grew out of that.
- Curry: Oh, about the same thing we had in the curriculum committee. The Graduate Council would meet once a month and more often if need be, but there were several things involved in the Graduate Council. Number one, the standards for admission to the graduate program were governed by the Graduate Council. And, of course, it served as a curriculum committee, also, for graduate courses. It, the Council, determined the standards and policies for a faculty member being a member of the graduate faculty. So it had a broader type responsibility, and, I think, an essential one in many respects. But here again, in terms of serving as a curriculum committee, I always questioned the wisdom of twelve or fifteen people sitting around a table trying to pass judgement on the discipline of another unit of the university, as to whether this course ought to be approved for graduate credit or not.
- Jenkins: Now when you created a graduate program in the College of

Business, you had to go through them, I presume?

Curry: Oh, yes.

Jenkins: For everything. Did this present any particular problems?

Curry: Yes. Well, it presented problems to everybody, because here you are, whether you are the Dean of the School of Business or the Dean of the College of Education or Music or Sciences or whatever. You have a proposal or recommendation as to a new degree program or even a new graduate course. The first step, you have to put in writing what this is all about, what it is supposed to do, why you are doing it, and that goes to all the members of the graduate council. They are supposed to have it a week before they meet around the table.

Jenkins: Were deans on that council?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Ex-officio members. Deans were always members of the Graduate Council?

Curry: That's right. And then there were, I don't know whether they were elected or appointed members, for other than the deans, but the deans were always on the Graduate Council. Well, then you go over, and the Dean of the Graduate School is chairman of the Graduate Council, and he invites you to make your presentation. Well, you have already written it up. They have got everything in front of them on paper, except as time goes along, many times the first you have ever heard of it is when you sit down at the table somebody hands

you a sheet of paper and this is a proposal.

Jenkins: It doesn't always get there a week ahead.

Curry: No, it didn't get to you a week early, and this seemed to be a designed strategy to hit you with it unprepared so to speak. So the presenter would know more than anybody else about what he is trying to do. Well, this was more of an irritant than anything else. The kind of time it took, and I think it was wholesome to require . . . these proposals didn't originate in a dean's office. They originate in your office. You've got, either a degree program that you want to get in at the graduate level, but more frequently it is not a program, it is just a change in a course. Maybe even a slight change in a course title. It has got to go before that group. Or if you are going to change the course number, it has got to go through this channel. And I think it is wholesome to require you to spell out in writing why this needs to be done, what benefit is going to accrue from doing it. And to that degree I think it was a good procedure, but then you get over to the meeting and you explain what you have already written out because half of them haven't read it yet, and they couldn't care less. And then, as I have been saying here this morning too many times maybe, there is always somebody, even if you only have eight people, there is one or more of them got more questions that have just a fringe relation, if any relation, to the question at hand.

They are going to take time to ask questions about this or about that, whether it has anything to do with your objective of getting this approved or disapproved is incidental. And this was an irritant, as I say. It was just another thing that takes time that I always felt could have been better spent on something else.

Jenkins: Well, as the number, as the structure changed and as the presidency changed, both in terms of people and functions, what changes do you see in the way it influenced the way the colleges could run?

Curry: The way they should run or the way we operated?

Jenkins: Both. Your views on how they should have been done, and how it was done. Carl Matthews was there, what, seventeen years?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: And the structure had changed even as he was there, adding vice-presidents.

Curry: Yes. For, I don't know, maybe the first ten years . . . I don't know when he had the first vice-president. Arthur Sampley was the first one. Well, there was no point, from the School of Business operation, to carry anything to Arthur Sampley or to Jim Spurlock either one.

Jenkins: Jim Spurlock was . . .

Curry: He followed Sampley. They couldn't make a decision, and I never knew for sure. I suppose that they had no authority to make a decision. But you take a man who is a poet, an

English professor, he never made decisions, and even if he had had the authority, I don't think he would have made a decision. You could talk to him. He was very pleasant, but if you want a decision about something and had something to do besides just visit, there was no point to going into his office. Jim Spurlock the same way. He was not going to make any decisions. And I think what they did, basically, was just strain people out from ever seeing Dr. Matthews. Maybe there wasn't any decision that they needed anyway. But in our operation . . . Well, this North Texas environment apparently was vastly different from, say, to the School of Education, to the School of Music, to the School of Business, to Arts and Sciences, to the athletic programs and so forth. I didn't have contact with the administration building, well, maybe once a month on an average. We just operated the School of Business, period. When budget time came I would always have a few words to say about us not getting our fair cut of it, and that helped some, you know. But from day to day and week to week operations, we didn't even know that the ad. building was over there. But other divisions of the campus, they couldn't turn around without getting a directive from the building, the president's office.

Jenkins: Why do you think that was? Do you think that was because of them or because of the president?

Curry: Well, maybe it was a two-way street. Maybe the dean or

department head of the College of Arts and Sciences was afraid to make decisions. And on the other hand, I know in reason that President Matthews had some doubts about whether this program over here knew what it was doing, or he was afraid to trust them, so he kept all the decision making over in his office. So I think it was probably part of one and part of another. But, seemingly, he took the view that we knew what we were doing, and we would go ahead and do it, and he just didn't bother us. And we didn't bother him.

Jenkins: Now, Carl Matthews retires, and the next president was . . .?

Curry: Kamerick, I believe.

Jenkins: Were there many major changes in the way you could operate there?

Curry: Well, yes. We had this selection committee, faculty selection committee, you know, that scoured the country to find a president, and this was right at the height of that faculty government kick that we had. And they found this John Kamerick, what was he, a vice-president or something at the University of Iowa, maybe. And he was a jolly good fellow, apparently, in relations to the faculty at the institution he was serving. Affable, he let the faculty run the place if they wanted to, as far as he was concerned. So that just appealed to them perfectly. Well, about a week before fall classes began, I went over to the president's office, I had never met the man, just to pay my respects. I thought it was

common courtesy to go over and visit with him. So I did. And before I left his office I said, "If it is all right with you this will be my last year as dean." I couldn't work with anybody like that. You couldn't get an answer out of him for anything.

Jenkins: This was what year?

Curry: 1969, I guess.

Jenkins: And was that your last year?

Curry: Yeah. If you will remember, what year it was I am not sure, but we always had a meeting of the faculty of the School of Business. Well, we had a general faculty meeting and then a departmental faculty meeting. Well, it was at that departmental meeting that I said, "This is my last year as Dean." I told you then, because here we had operated for seventeen years with a man in the president's office that, for the most part, made all the decisions about everything, even as to who had a key to the elevator, you know. That kind of great detail, that he wanted to keep within his own little fist. And the way to operate most effectively is just operate and forget that he is over there. And as long as you do your job he is not going to bother you. And so we got along rather well, except when you really had something that you wanted to do, and you present it to Dr. Matthews. The way to do it is first of all put it in writing and just send it over and say, "When you get time, I wish you

would give a little thought to this." Well, you might go two or three months and not hear anything. And some morning you would be in your office, and the telephone would ring, and here is Matthews. I knew his voice, and he knew mine, and we never said this is so-and-so. He'd say, "You know that proposal you put on my desk a while back? I think that is a good idea. Go ahead." Or more than likely a month, six weeks go by, and the phone would ring. A voice says, "I don't think we ought to do so-and-so that you suggested." Bang. That's all there was to it. Easy to operate that way. Don't waste time. And there is no point to discussing it, that's that. You do or you don't. Fine, go ahead. No, can't do it. Well, then we get to this Dr. Kamerick. Well, you have got to have a committee to do everything. He sets this thing up in such a circuitous route that there is no way to trace back to him personally any kind of a decision. I didn't do it. I wasn't going to operate that way.

Jenkins: Now you were what age then when you decided to retire?

Curry: I was sixty-four.

Jenkins: I see.

Curry: So, well, I had suggested to Dr. Matthews, oh, about the time I was sixty years old, I said, "I think I have probably made all the contribution to the School of Business that I am going to make, and I think the School of Business would be better served to get somebody else to come in as dean.

Whatever innovative, creative contributions that I have made, I am sort of drained dry. We have still got lots to do, but I just as soon somebody else would try to do it." And I would tell him that just about every year, for four or five years, until he retired. And he would look up from his desk, and "As long as I am over here, I want you over there." Well, I could have said, "Well, that may be, but what you want you don't always get, and I am just not going to serve another year." But if I had, all of us would have read in the paper some evening that Joe Blow was going to be the new Dean of the School of Business. He wouldn't have consulted anybody. He would, just out of the sky, have named somebody as the Dean of the School of Business. I had looked at the two people he had put in as vice-presidents and come to the conclusion . . . and the athletic director and some others in administrative positions. And no way did I want that to happen. I don't know what the objective was in the people he chose, but if he wanted performance, he sure picked the wrong people. So that is why I stayed until he retired.

Jenkins: Well, you felt that you would get a better dean, I assume, that way.

Curry: I felt that his selection of a dean without consulting anybody would be tragic. Whether that would have been so, I don't know.

Jenkins: Tragic in terms of what, how?

- Curry: The person he put in there.
- Jenkins: Not the process, but the individual.
- Curry: Yes. He seemed to have, well, a genius for picking the wrong person for a particular job.
- Jenkins: Now you were speaking of athletics. . .
- Curry: Yes, the athletic director, the two people he chose as vice-presidents. All I am saying is, here are two gifted, delightful, human beings, Arthur Sampley and Jim Spurlock.
- Jenkins: Great teachers, great people.
- Curry: Wonderful classroom teachers, but they should never have been moved from the classroom where they were great into a job that they didn't like, I don't think they liked it, and were totally ill-equipped to fill. And in the athletic director, here is another delightful human being. Jess Coerly, a delightful person, excellent in operating the Physical Education Department on campus. But he had the title of Athletic Director. What is an athletic director supposed to do, to be like? You think of him as a Hayden Fry type of extrovert, a promoter, an individual who gets out among the people in the athletic world. He is a fellow who can pick up the phone and call a coach or an athletic director at any institution in the United States and say, "Hey, we want to play you a game of basketball. Get us on your schedule." All kinds of things. He is a fellow that can call Dr. So-and-So and say, "Hey, I need a thousand dollars for a scholarship to a boy I have got

out here." Raise money. Well, poor Jess Cerly was completely out of his environment. To be an athletic director, his was not the personality to do it.

Jenkins: To what extent, if any, do you think that these appointments were a reflection of the president himself in his own personality?

Curry: Well, your guess is as good as mine, but I would say, yes, he wanted people that operated about the same way he did. Very low key, and he didn't want anybody in that administration building making decisions that he didn't tell them they could make.

Jenkins: Now you spent, then, just one year with Kamerick.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Did you have any other contacts with him that year?

Curry: Virtually none.

Jenkins: But you really didn't ever get to know him or operate with him.

Curry: No, almost none. We had a faculty problem while he was over there, but . . . Well, as I say, Dr. Kamerick, the first thing he did was to delegate everything that a president had been doing to somebody else. And so I worked on this faculty problem with Jim Spurlock. This washed around for three or four weeks and never did get anything done.

- Jenkins: Let's go back now and pick up with your dealings with the Board of Regents over the years.
- Curry: Well, that's easy. I had no dealings with the Board of Regents. Maybe once a year they might have a luncheon or something, and there would be one or two members of the board there, but all I ever did . . . the most I ever did, I guess, to a member of the Board of Regents was to say, "Hello."
- Jenkins: Well, will you express feelings, opinions, about the relationship of the Board of Regents to the governance of the university over the years?
- Curry: I never thought much about it. We operated in the School of Business the way we thought the thing ought to be run, and as far as the Board of Regents had anything to do with it, I never was ever aware of it if they were.
- Jenkins: You never felt that they . . .
- Curry: No, I never felt any . . .
- Jenkins: Helped or hurt you.
- Curry: I never felt any support. Well, that's not quite true. Through second hand, maybe somebody in town, or work would come to me that Regent So-and-So said, "You guys are doing a great job over there in the Business Administration," you know. But they never told me directly. They'd just, "Tell that guy that they are doing a good job," or something to that

effect.

Jenkins: Well, in terms then of any impacts that you think the board had on the university itself, their relationships with the president or the people on campus, were you very conscious of any of that? Do you have any feelings, opinions, on that?

Curry: Not really. Here again, as long as Dr. Matthews was over there, they were operating in the old, historical, traditional way of operating a school system. Here is a board of regents, a board of trustees, just like you operate a public school system, and after all it is a public school system, and the function of the governing board is to employ the superintendent of schools, the president of the university. And the board sets the policies, and the superintendent or the president carries out those policies. And as long as the policies are being carried out no questions are asked, and that is the way they operated here. So there wasn't any reason for me as a dean or you as a faculty member to even know who the members of the board were. I couldn't have told you who they were.

Jenkins: Even as a dean you simply had no . . .

Curry: No contact.

Jenkins: And all the time that you were there, you don't feel that that has basically changed very much then, with the coming and going of different individuals on the board.

Curry: It didn't change until A. M. Willis became Chairman of the Board.

Jenkins: Were you still Dean?

Curry: No, I don't believe so. Well, when did Ben Wooten die? I may have been Dean at the time, but I don't think so. And this didn't just change over night. It was an evolutionary sort of change, I am sure. But if they were helping or hindering or anything at all, that is the Board of Regents, it was hard to put your finger on. I wasn't conscious of it except that, certain things that I would recommend the School of Business do, and in due time Dr. Matthews would say, "We can't do that." And I found out from the first time I pressed him for an answer as to why we wouldn't do it, that it "was against the policy of the Board". Maybe my understanding and comments about the Board of Regents in relation to the School of Business, I really don't know, this is just the way it appeared to me and still appears to me, that Mr. Wooten is Chairman of the Board and Dr. Matthews' relationship was very close, and if whatever day-to-day decisions Dr. Matthews needed to make if there was the slightest question he just picked up the phone and he and Ben Wooten visited about it. And in that sense the Board of Regents was Ben Wooten. Now they would have regular meetings and agenda, but I would judge that virtually nothing ever happened that Dr. Matthews and Ben Wooten didn't say, "This is the way we want it done." So that leaves the question then "what did Mr. Wooten want done at North Texas"?

Well, I think he wanted North Texas to stay just about the way it was. He couldn't help the growth in student body, but he wasn't too keen about us becoming an outstanding School of Business, because he had SMU over there that he was supporting, and he was a big Baptist, and he was pushing Baylor. And so North Texas was incidental. He didn't necessarily object to our doing the best we could. He wasn't supporting it in the sense that he was pushing or supporting SMU and Baylor. And I think this prevailed throughout North Texas as an institution. He was proud that he was a former student up here, and he was proud to see the institution doing well, but he just couldn't quite come to being gung-ho about it and putting his financial and personal enthusiasm behind us.

Jenkins: What kinds of relations did you have as a dean with the political structure of the state?

Curry: Oh, a dean, at least a dean in this institution, I never tried to have influence over dealings with the political structure, and they never bothered me as dean. So the answer is a fairly simple one. Almost no relationship between the political structure and the state, or ever in the county or city for that matter. We were just not on the same wavelength. We were not dealing with each other. Of course, what they did in Austin affected the School of Business as well as the entire institution. The only politics, you might say, that we were involved in would be

the Texas State Teachers Association and the Texas Association of College Teachers, but I was not intimately involved in that. I knew some of the officials, and, of course, we had a definite interest in the retirement program, but I never was directly involved in any of that.

Jenkins: Do you want to speak to the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business for any reason?

Curry: Of course any business administration faculty member, beginning as early as, say, 1920's, was aware that there was an organization called the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business.

Jenkins: It is that old, then?

Curry: Yes. I have forgotten, it is probably, oh, I am not sure whether it was immediately before World War I or right at the end of World War I that the dean at Harvard and Columbia and the Wharton School and California and whoever else had business administration just met informally once a year to discuss their problems and what direction, what a school of business should do. And this was a new kind of thing. They had no patterns from European universities. The United States was the creator of the education for business, in the true sense. And so they needed to talk to each other and try to find out what it is they were doing or you were doing. Then some of the state universities, the University of Texas about 1925 or '23, early 20's, created a school of business, and so did most state universities, create

schools of business. And the deans would meet once a year, and it was sort of a country club or closed private club. And if your institution was a member of the big eight or big ten or Southwest Conference or whatever, you were just about automatically a member of the club. And they had no accrediting ideas in mind. It was to meet and discuss, enjoy fellowship and so on. But, after World War II virtually every kind of program, any level of education from high school on, had some kind of an accrediting body. And the, oh, what's this national accrediting agency, was about to take over accreditation of schools of business, and so the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business said, "Look, we have an organization and structure where we can do the accrediting." And so they became an accrediting body as well as an exchange of ideas in the business community and the deans of collegiate schools of business. So, of course, the institutions where I had been before, Michigan and my undergraduate work and bachelor's degree at Texas, so I had never been associated with any institution that wasn't a member of the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business. So when I came here, well, "one of our first objectives is to get a program that is strong enough to meet the accreditation standards of the Association. We need an accredited School of Business." And the standards were loaded in terms of the quality of your faculty, the teaching load that that faculty had to

carry, the structure of your curriculum, the quality of your students, and just what you would expect to find somebody looking for in a quality program. And when I came here I was the only one who had a doctorate, so we had a long, long way to go. Our curriculum was mostly business education and skill courses.

Jenkins: When did you have your first, what, review or whatever they do?

Curry: Oh, when did the first visitation team come here? Oh, '56 or '57, somewhere along in there, I would guess. And we knew we were marginal at best.

Jenkins: Did you make it the first time?

Curry: No. No, that was a very interesting experience for us. Earl Gaumnitz, the Dean at the University of Wisconsin, and he was to be chairman of the visitation committee. They sent three people. Paul Green, the Dean at Ohio State was to be a member, and Henry Engler, the Dean at Loyola New Orleans. That was their visitation committee. Earl Gaumnitz was chairman, Paul Green and Henry Engler were members of the committee. Henry was from Loyola New Orleans. I think it was Saturday before Earl intended to take a plane down here on Sunday to be here Monday morning for the visitation group, had emergency surgery. So he couldn't come, and I have forgotten who they sent in his place. Paul Green had a board meeting of some company that he was connected with

and he sent Dorothy Litherland, his assistant. And then Engler from Loyola New Orleans, they had become a member of the Association a year before. So when they got here they made Henry, since he was the only dean in the group, chairman of the visitation committee. Who in heck did Gaumnitz send? I don't remember. Any rate, here were two people that were not deans, just assistants to a dean someplace, and Henry Engler who had an operation completely foreign to the kind of thing we would be doing here—a Catholic, metropolitan, business operation and a rather small one at that. Well, they stayed two and a half days looking over our program, and everything that Dorothy Litherland saw she would say, "We don't do it that way at Ohio State." Well, that is no great surprise, I guess. She had been at Ohio State all of her life, she knew nothing else.

Jenkins: Maybe she had met Jesse Pickrell.

Curry: Maybe so. (Laughter). Well, and the other two, Engler, a delightful person, but he knew nothing except the Catholic environment, collegiate schools of business. Everything he saw, he knew nothing about it. And as I say, I don't know who they sent from the University of Wisconsin, but there was no great surprise, number one that they . . . They held in their report that they saw great promise for the future, but we were not yet ready. Well, it is true that we didn't have the percentage of doctorates that we should have had. We had too many part time people on our program, teaching.

They didn't raise any questions about the performance that we were getting with our students. They spent time interviewing our students and were well impressed. But we understood that they couldn't recommend admission, accreditation. And this, in a sense, was a plus for us because we could take their written report over to President Matthews and say, "Look, here is this and this and this that we will have to correct." And the only way that we can correct that basically was with money and faculty members to cure the weaknesses that we had in the program. It wasn't a real weakness in the program, it was in the personnel that we had to operate it. And the, oh, I think, the following year Horace Brown was the Dean up at the University of Oklahoma and the vice-president of the association, and I invited him to come up for a couple of days and review our program. And what we did, we spent most of his time here over in the president's office and the dean of the graduate school's office and wherever anybody else had given us any static about our program, Horace Brown and I just went over and sat down and said, "Here is the way it is." And that gave us some more ammunition to get people to. . . Well, the quality of faculty.

Jenkins: When did you get in?

Curry: I think 1960.

Jenkins: Did you have any more visitations between?

Curry: Well, no more visitations by committee. As I recall, we

resubmitted our application the third year from the time we were turned down. And this time, I believe his name was Love, Dean of the University of Kansas School of Business, who a year or two later became president of the University of Kansas, George Manners from Georgia State, and who was the third one? I don't know.

Jenkins: So one visitation, but what, four years later?

Curry: Three years later, probably.

Jenkins: You did get it.

Curry: Yes. And it was almost standard procedure that you don't be admitted on your first visitation. You know, there always must be something that they can find. As they describe it, I am not sure that they don't have tongue in check, but the visitation team ought to be able to help you to get some things that you don't have, and if you are admitted and accredited, then that seems to indicate that you are in a good shape and don't need anything. So if you need some leverage with your administration, a good way to get it is to make an application and get turned down and get the report where it spells out where you are deficient and then you can go to the administration and get what you need to have.

Jenkins: How often were you reviewed once you were in?

Curry: Well, once you are in, every five years you are supposed to have a review.

Jenkins: Were you ever threatened?

Curry: No, no. We were commended for the rapid progress we had been

able to make and the quality of our students and the quality of our faculty in the program, and all of this. But then when they started accrediting master's degree programs, we like--you know, if there is a standard that you can meet to be accredited for a master's degree program, we better take a look and see if we can meet it, because this is a measure, somebody's measure, the Association's measure of the quality of your program. And immediately we ran into problems there because, I guess, you can say largely due to me, we were admitting a good many students who simply didn't come close to the standards for admission to a master's degree program. And what I had been saying, and I still believe, here's an individual who makes application for the MBA program. He had an undergraduate grade average of, maybe, C+ or halfway between a C and a D. He is just not a top-flight academician.

Jenkins: Or at least hadn't shown it yet.

Curry: Yeah, but you start examining his transcript, and what you find is that the first seventy-five hours he had about a D+ average, and in the last twenty-five or thirty hours he had an A- average. And he has been out of school for ten years or seven years or something or other. He has moved from initial employment to a middle management position in some company, or he is operating his own business and is doing extraordinarily well. And you say, "Let's have him do the AACSB admissions test." Well, maybe he makes 390 or 400 or

something or other. He is not in the top twenty percent, but you say, "Well, that's no great surprise. The guy probably hadn't read two books since he left the institution. But I bet you he can cut it if you put him in that classroom." And I always said there was one thing that these standardized tests don't measure, and that is how hard will a guy work, how motivated is he, how important is it to him to do well in whatever it is that he is going to undertake, and he wants to do this MBA degree. So we put him in there. And nine times out of ten they just eat it up. The fact that his grades weren't all that good, the fact that he didn't make a high score on the admission test, didn't have much to do with what he would do when you put him in the program. In fact, oh, I guess, about 1960 I did a research project myself. I took the names of everybody that got a bachelor's degree in Business, and you know they were giving that college entrance exam, test score, and I put their test scores by everybody's name, and then I took those who made an A average, and those who made just a C average to graduate, and the test scores were virtually the same. If anything, the C group graduating had, in total, a higher test score than the A group. So I say what difference does it make what you have on that test score? You didn't measure the motivation and how hard does the individual work. And if you had some measure of how hard he worked, if he had just some kind of

intelligence above a moron level, he would do well in the program.

Jenkins: We want to be sure to get back to the AACSB. This causes me to want to ask you another question. As you have observed over those many years, suppose you had made some kind of measurement of the success that these people were having out in the business world and put some kind of rank on it and put it along side those grades and that test score. What is your best guess as to what you would have found?

Curry: Almost no correlation between test scores and performance and success.

Jenkins: Has this ever raised any question in your mind about our system of grading them and what is going on in the market place?

Curry: Yes, of course. You don't know, really, why this individual would make a C in your course, or an A in your course, or fail it or drop it or whatever. If you had the time and the resources and could sit down and spend an hour or two with a fellow who failed your course or makes a C, but, of course, if you are going to teach more than one course you just can't do that. And, probably, you find more productive use of your time anyway. What I am trying to get around to is thinking . . . Motivation, in my view, is the key to what you are going to get in outcome. The guy or lady who just is going to succeed no matter what, and this is partly a character trait, I guess you would say, psychologically or

something or other. Some people just won't give up. Some people just won't be beat. And others at the other extreme. They quit. So when you go out there in the business world and see the success that that individual has attained in five years or ten years after he left the classroom, what relationship does it have to "what kind of degree" he took, what kind of grades he made. The correlation is very difficult to find. One of the reasons, in my thinking, is that any kind of intelligence test or any other kind of test score does not measure his ability to relate to other people. And the person who is going to succeed in business or any where else in terms of a management position, manages through what he can get other people to do. If he can't work and get the people he is associated with to perform, or if he hinders them in performance, he is not going to get very far up the ladder. So we don't have any measure of this drive and this ability to get other people to perform for him.

Jenkins: What about in accounting? Do you suppose the correlations are better in accounting? between success and grades?

Curry: Yes. I think in accounting it would be somewhat better, because I think the type of test comes nearer measuring the resource that you need to succeed in accounting. I think, say in marketing or in personnel administration, the test we give, any test that you can design is nearly worthless because it is not measuring the resource the individual is

going to need to succeed in that kind of career. Now whether you can design a test that would measure it, I don't know.

Jenkins: Without putting them in the job.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Okay, let's get back to the AACSB.

Curry: In our MBA program, back again, we were way below in our admission standards on the undergraduate grade averages and on the AACSB admission test. We were admitting too many people that didn't measure up in the upper twenty-five percent. And here we were confronted. We look at the people who were in our program and those that are outstanding in the MBA program, and a bunch of them are those people that the AACSB would say didn't belong in the program. So it's a question, do we quit admitting people that, certainly I am convinced are going to do well, and some of the others in the faculty dealing with it are convinced that they will do well, shall we just tell them that they can't come because they don't meet the standards, or shall we operate our MBA program in a way that will serve the region and the people in it and say to heck with the AACSB accreditation MBA program? Well, we batted that around and batted it around, and I guess we went on along four or five years before we made application for accrediting our MBA program. Well, we refused to admit a sprinkling number of applicants who had low undergraduate

records or had extremely low admission test scores. But mostly we spent more time interviewing these applicants before we admitted them, to try to get a feel as to how important it might be to that individual in the work he was doing and the direction he was trying to go, and whether the motivation and energy and time would be there to really succeed in our MBA program.

Jenkins: Did you then eventually get that program?

Curry: Yes. Yes, I believe we were accredited the first time we submitted an application. They raised some question still. And they modified the accreditation standards. You could admit X fraction of these people who were in employment situations that didn't meet the undergraduate twenty percent upperclass quality and had admission test scores below the cutoff point. You could admit a fraction, twenty-five percent or so, of your MBA student body.

Jenkins: Were you ever on an AACSB review committee?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: What kind of experience was that?

Curry: Well, it's an interesting experience. You are a member of the AACSB visitation committee. You are representing the association and the accrediting body. And you go to this campus simply to make an appraisal of the quality of their program, their Bachelor of Business Administration degree program. So you pay a courtesy call, naturally, on the president of the university, and then you go to the dean's

office to visit with him. And, of course, he knows you are going to be there and makes the usual pitch that all the records and anything you want to see he would be very glad to make it available to you. You have already had a written application. You have before you the whole layout of everything they have. But when I went on the visitation committee, about the first thing I wanted to do was to walk up and down the hall and drop into an office where I saw somebody sitting there and say, "I am Jack Curry from the School of Business at North Texas, and who are you? I want to strike up a conversation with you, the faculty member and get your reaction to how good you are and what the quality of your students may be and how well you work with the Dean and what the relationship is between Business Administration and the university as a whole. Does the School of Business get a fair shake in terms of budget for the entire institution." This kind of thing, and while I am walking down the hall I see a young man or young woman, "Hey, tell me about this place."

Jenkins: What school did you visit?

Curry: Tulsa University was one, and I think East Texas State made an application, and I went over there.

Jenkins: Let's switch to the business community now. What kind of relationships have you had with the business community? Now I will have a section where I will ask you if you have been on boards and these kinds of things, and you have spoken

about joining clubs for the sake of trying to make contacts, but what kinds of dealings have you had, have you tried to have, have they tried to set up with you in trying to bridge the gap between education and the business community?

Curry:

Well, for Denton itself the relationship has always been friendly, good, but it is a vastly different kind of relationship to what I had at the University of Michigan or the Wharton School. Because at both places you were in demand steadily. Somebody wanted you to do consulting work. Somebody had a problem, and they wanted a faculty member to help them solve it. This apparently was never thought of here in Denton. Maybe they didn't have any problems, I don't know. But they never came to us for faculty help the same way that you would experience it in the metropolitan cities that I had been associated with. Of course, Ann Arbor is a small city, but it is in reality a suburb of Detroit, the same as Denton is a suburb of the Dallas-Fort Worth complex. So that surprised me a little bit, that businesses here in Denton or Gainesville or in the satellite area didn't come to the university for expertise, but they just didn't. Well, otherwise, shortly after I came here the university maintained or, I guess, it paid for five or six memberships in the Chamber of Commerce. And shortly I found myself a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and in another two or three years a member of the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce and chairman of a research committee

that was set up to try to bring industry to the community. That kind of relationship between the university and the Chamber of Commerce and the business community. And that is about the extent of this direct relationship between the School of Business or me as the Dean and the business community. Now in the metropolitan area, as I say, I felt that we needed recognition over here as a School of Business, and this was very difficult because everybody thought of North Texas and Denton as a teachers college and all it did over there was prepare teachers. And as I have already said, I went to the Office Management Association, the American Marketing Association, the Personnel Administration, the Dallas Management Association, the accounting groups and so on in both Dallas and Fort Worth. And Cleve Littlefield went to all the management programs. I think Eli joined the marketing associations groups, and when Al Cox came he was very active in the sales management group over in Dallas, whatever they called it. So we gradually got help from the faculty in maintaining these memberships. Vernon Payne was very active in the Fort Worth Office Management Association. And then when George Christy came he joined me in the Financial Executives Institute, and he is now a director. At one time I was a director and chairman of their education committee, and he has had the same experience. I think George one day may be president of that

Financial Executives group in Dallas. And David Fitch, I believe, has a membership in the Fort Worth chapter of the Financial Executives. So what I am saying is this was a very slow, deliberate effort on our part to gain, well, simply to let the leaders of business in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolplex know that we are over here. One of the endeavors, oh, I guess, starting in the early to mid 1960's was to get outstanding business people, presidents of trade associations and whatever in Dallas and Fort Worth and organize business advisory groups. And we discussed this within department head meetings time and time again, and we always had one or more dissenters. They just didn't want to do it. Surprising to me, I just couldn't see why they wouldn't want to have an advisory council. But they took the position they didn't want somebody trying to tell them what to do. But as we continually, year after year, ran into opposition from one or two departments I just said, "Well, those of you who want an advisory council let's go ahead and create one, and if you don't want it then you don't have to have it." So, I guess, the first one was the accounting advisory council.

Jenkins: Now you are talking about a council for each department.

Curry: Yes. Not for the School of Business as a whole, because we had this opposition to it. And I felt that as long as you didn't have complete support for it, you would probably be better off not to take it. So we had advisory councils for

accounting, oh, what? I am not sure who all had it. The only one I am positive of was the accounting department. Marketing had sort of an unofficial advisory council, because the McWhorters had close relationship with Sanger-Harris and Joske's and two or three others in Dallas, Fort Worth and Houston. It wasn't an official function, anyway.

Jenkins: What about bringing business people to campus, to classrooms for exposure to students. What kind of encouragement did they get there?

Curry: Well, we set aside a week, as I remember, each year to invite local and, well, whoever the faculty member would like to have to come and meet his class from Denton, Dallas, Fort Worth, wherever. Some were very active in doing this. Others just didn't participate, as you might expect. And the marketing department established, I don't know, many years ago this annual Marketing Seminar. And then each spring now we have, or early year, the finance forecast. Primarily the economics and finance people giving the forecast on what to expect the year to bring. That, we started a good many years ago, but not as formally as it is now carried out.

Jenkins: I suppose over the years individual faculty members probably had people in their classes individually and clubs would have speakers so that there was that kind of interchange.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Any other observations on that that you would make?

Curry: We developed our employment service. Many times, here is a recruiter from this company, that company, whatever, you know.

Jenkins: About when was this done? Do you recall?

Curry: Oh, we got started in business recruiting in about 1950. John Brooks had come in and was teaching salesmanship and marketing, I guess, and some publishing company representative stopped in and said, "Are you going to be in . . ." "No," he said, I will see you next week in San Antonio." And I said, "You will? For what?" He said, "The National Association of Placement Officers is going to be meeting down there." I never heard of the National Association of Placement Officers or anything relating to it. So I said, "Well, oh, yeah." So I then went over to Dr. Matthews and said, "There is a National Association of Placement Officers, and they are going to meet in San Antonio next week, and I think we ought to be represented down there. And I think Mr. Farrington ought to go." He looked up at me and said, "If you think we ought to be represented, you better go. Farrington is not going to go."

Jenkins: Farrington was primarily the teacher placement man.

Curry: Yes, he was a teacher placement man, yeah. So, okay. And I think now, "Hey, we don't want to get in the placement business of all things. I don't want that for sure. We have got enough to do without that." So I asked John Brooks to go with me. Well, Jiminy Christmas, this was quite a

meeting, you know. Engineering schools, business schools, from all over. And we got back home, and I told Dr. Matthews what it was all about and that we, by all means, ought to become a member of this association and that we needed somebody to head up our placement operation because, well, we had run into problems.

Jenkins: Now you were speaking of the business school needing someone.

Curry: Yes, right. Oh, I guess, when we first began to get students getting BBA degrees and they were looking for jobs, I'd sent them over to the placement office. Where else? To register, you know. And they started coming back in to my office and saying, "Hey, Dean, what goes here?" "What are you talking about?" "You send me over to Mr. Farrington's office to register, and all I get is a lecture. Mr. Farrington just jumps up and down and says, "If you had taken a couple of courses in education I could get you a teaching job." And I am not interested in any teaching job. I didn't come here to teach, and I resent the guy chewing me out for not having taken some education courses." So this I related to Dr. Matthews, and I said, "We need to create our own business employment service." And that is what we did. And that was the beginning of why we got into employment in the School of Business. We broadened, hopefully, to some degree, to any non-teaching graduate who wants service from the business employment service was welcome to it.

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- Jenkins: Now that then eventually was all consolidated, wasn't it, over into one placement service in the Union Building?
- Curry: Yes. It's one placement service and one director of the placement service, I think. But we have, I don't know, Ray Lewis handling teacher placement primarily.
- Jenkins: They still have the special sections.
- Curry: Sure, because the people who are affected with the school systems and school superintendents and junior college presidents and so forth needs to be somebody who is primarily in the College of Education. But that individual is certainly not equipped to deal with the representatives of the companies coming in to recruit for business and industry. I guess John Brooks still handles the business and industry side of it.
- Jenkins: Let's look now at the changes in the organization structure of the College of Business and the dean's office, particularly while you were there as it grew.
- Curry: Well, from the beginning we set up the various departments. Business education, marketing, finance, accounting and management. And these just remained pretty well the departmental structure. Now there was considerable change within the departmental structure, but these remained constant in terms of their organization. The American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business raised questions about how collegiate schools of business should be organized. And once again there were extremes. A good many schools had

maybe a dozen departments. They splintered in every direction. You might have a department of industrial marketing, retail marketing, wholesale marketing. You know, it just splintered. And there were other schools that said, "You don't need departments, period. All you need is a school of business and a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. And departments, no." So we just stayed like we were when we originally organized. I couldn't see any great virtue in change. I knew we didn't want to splinter the way that some of them have done. I knew that we didn't want to go to the kind of organization they had in the fifties down at the University of Houston, where you had a department of hotel management and that was broken down into food service and on and on. Well that, I think, was wholesome for Houston and the clientele they served, but not for us, of course. I have already said, as far as the dean's office, the structure within the School of Business was just almost no change. The changes were within the department. Management did a great deal in, well, you moved from just a management major to concentrations in personnel and administrative and whatever else I don't recall, general management, I guess.

Jenkins: Well, let's go to the dean's office. Now certainly you started off with a parttime secretary.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: So let's at least look in terms of the growth of folks working out of there regardless of what kinds of organization

you had.

- Curry: Our faculty grew in size and the student body increased rapidly. From a parttime secretary when Elgin Phillips left--who with his skills and quick ability to grasp everything that was going on, he was equal to a fulltime assistant dean.
- Jenkins: Now was he the parttime secretary?
- Curry: No, Johnny Tate continued to work, but she graduated and married. So after she left Elgin just was the only one. But then when he graduated I prevailed on the powers that be, Dr. McConnel at the time, I believe, to give me a fulltime secretary. And Bobby Hendricks. Her husband was a student over in the School of Music, and I employed her as secretary, and she was good.
- Jenkins: Fulltime.
- Curry: Fulltime, yes.
- Jenkins: That was your first fulltime secretary?
- Curry: That was the first fulltime secretary, and that was the office structure, the dean and a secretary, period. And she handled all the correspondence and, oh, waited on the traffic that came in through there with parttime student help. We always had some student help. Well, once again, as the school grew and the program became more and more structured, we needed additional help to handle registration problems and the budget and ordering supplies. So we brought in Gertrude

Lowe as a parttime assistant, and turned this kind of work over to Gertrude. And she took that kind of load off of the secretary, and the secretary could be a secretary.

Jenkins: Before Katie Henley?

Curry: Yes. I think Gertrude was with us when Katie came.

Jenkins: I see. I have known Gertrude forever, but I didn't realize that . . .

Curry: I believe that is true. I wouldn't swear to it. Well, Bobby's husband got his degree and went out to the junior college out at Sweetwater on their faculty in the music department and, of course, Bobby went with him. And about that time, Dr. Matthews had become president. And he called me over one day shortly after he became president and said, "I have a request. Something I want you to do for me." "Hear what it is." "I want you to take Katie Henley as your secretary." I didn't say anything. I just sat there and wondered. And he said, "Katie is a wonderful person, a very capable person, but she has been filling a void due to Dr. McConnell's state of health. And for the last year or two she has in fact functioned as the president of this institution, and as long as she is in this office I never can be president."

Jenkins: Well, she had been Dr. McConnell's secretary for a long time, then.

Curry: Yes, right. "And I think you are the only one on this campus that can handle Katie. So will you take her?" "Well,

yes, I think Katie and I can work together effectively. I need a top quality person. Katie can make decisions, and, yes, sure, I will be happy to." So Katie and Gertrude and I, with parttime student help then, ran the dean's office.

Jenkins: This was when?

Curry: Oh, '51 or '52, I guess. That was the total structure of the dean's office the whole time I was there, except when our graduate program grew and the kind of reporting that was required kept increasing and increasing, the manner of drops and adds and transferring students and changing classrooms, and all that goes on at the beginning of the semester and the burden of recording grades and keeping records for all the reports we had to make to the American Association and other agencies and whatever. We just needed more help. So we got Betty Fowler then to take on some of the load that Gertrude was carrying, as well as some of the load that Katie had. And that, then, was the total structure of the dean's office until the day I left, except back about 1960, I guess, '62-3, it seemed to me that the time had come that we ought to have an assistant dean, an associate dean or something, to take part of the load that I couldn't delegate to Katie or Gertrude. The president finally agreed to do it. I well remember the first time I proposed it to him. "Well, you are not going to have an associate dean. Nobody else on this campus has an assistant, but if it is anything it is going to be an assistant. It is not going to be an associate." Exactly what

all that great difference is I don't know, but to him there was a great difference. So he finally approved a budget position for an assistant dean, and that is when Tex Mewhinney came in. That appointment didn't turn out quite like I anticipated, but maybe it was just as well.

Jenkins: Now Tex had been teaching.

Curry: No, he was a submarine captain in the Navy.

Jenkins: But had he taught some before he became? . . .

Curry: I think he, yes, he had taught at one time or another. He all but did a law degree or something at Georgetown University when he was stationed in Washington, D. C.

Jenkins: So his first employment at North Texas State was as assistant dean, but he did some teaching with it?

Curry: Yes, oh, yes. Yes, in fact I don't know of anybody, in the dean's office or anyplace else, except the president and maybe vice-president, that didn't at least teach one class. So, yes, Tex had a couple of classes in addition to his assistant dean's job. And as our faculty was becoming more diverse and larger, I think he served a very useful purpose in kind of being a cohesive force in keeping his ear to the ground as to what was going on in the faculty more than doing the kinds of things that I envisioned an assistant dean would do when I created the position.

Jenkins: Why did you need an assistant dean?

Curry: I wanted to have an assistant dean in complete charge of the registration procedures, assigning of people to whatever they

would do in registration, to direct the workings of the record keeping in terms of students, and to be on top of recommendations for course additions and changes and this kind of thing that always fell on my desk because Katie or Gertrude, or whatever, wasn't equipped to handle them. Well, this was working fine except Tex had been a top level Navy man for most of his life, and I suddenly discovered that when I would ask him to take care of something, it was on Gertrude's or Katie's desk.

Jenkins: He had learned delegation.

Curry: Yes. And not only had he learned delegation, but he had been a naval commander all these years, and he simply couldn't do anything with his own hands. He had to have an ensign to do what he told him to do. So all I was doing was just passing it through a second hand.

Jenkins: So this was the structure as long as you were dean?

Curry: Yes. When I left the dean's office we had Gertrude as a parttime person handling the business records, orders and inventory control. And we came to the point in time where we had to have an annual, complete inventory of the last sheet of paper.

Jenkins: I remember some of that.

Curry: Gertrude was a genius at doing this. And then the AACSB annually wanted all kind of statistical data. Gertrude kept control of that, and so on. Katie did a whole lot of counseling with students, really. Some secretarial work, but this

is what she loved to do. She loved to work with students. She was every student's friend that got in trouble. She interceded between the students and the dean all the time, "poor thing." Well, she served a very useful function there and is fondly remembered by many, many students that she befriended. And I can understand. And then Gertrude was picking up more and more of the work that Katie had been doing, because Katie knew that she was going to be leaving, partly just because of retirement, but her sisters over in Marshall were needing her help.

Jenkins: Now was Tex assistant dean when you retired?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Okay, so that structure had stayed.

Curry: Well, let's see. I believe we did bring Glen Taylor in while I was still dean. I don't know what title we gave him, Director of the Graduate Program or something like that. So he can take the load off of our office when we began looking at accreditation of the masters program, we looked for someone to really just take charge of the MBA program. Not that he would make all of the policy decisions, but when the policies were laid out that he would just run the program. I first thought of Glen Taylor, but I believe Porter Henderson was the first person that took on that responsibility, and was doing it when he was unfortunately killed in that automobile accident. And then we brought, as I remember, Glen Taylor in to take it over, and Glen is a tremendous detail

man and helped us through all the reporting we needed to do and the screening of applicants to our program, and I guess was largely responsible for the successful accreditation of the MBA program.

Jenkins: Anything else about the structure?

Curry: No, only to observe that in the nearly ten years since I have left that dean's office there has been an awful lot of restructuring.

Jenkins: If you would, address your thinking to this thing that is often called the "loneliness of leadership." How have you felt about it?

Curry: When I first came here and for I would say, roughly, ten years, I felt no impact of what you think of as "loneliness of leadership" because as I have already said, we were just colleagues. And I would frequently say to the fifteen or twenty and as we even got to be thirty faculty members, "Look, my job is simply different from yours. It is true that I have to represent you fellows over in the president's office in trying to get budget and doing various and sundry things that the dean's office has to do, but I am simply a worker. I work for the institution just like you do, and frankly, I had much rather be in that classroom than sitting in the dean's office. But that is not where I am, and I am simply a representative and we are colleagues and we are working together and these are our objectives." And I think everybody felt the same way. I wasn't the boss, at

least I didn't feel like I was the boss of anybody. Probably some of them did. But it was just a delight to be working with the group, and we socialized together, we worked together, but then when we got, say, to be forty and fifty and sixty and seventy faculty members, that relationship broke down. There was no way to maintain it, really. In the days when we had no more than thirty faculty members, several times a year they would all come out to our house there at the south end of Avenue D. I've got all kinds of games that we used to play. Well, maybe I ought to show you some. Were you ever out? You know, we played battleship and we had these sheets of paper. Here is a telegram that had, oh, maybe, a whole 8½ x 11 sheet of some guy sending a telegraph to his wife about what was going on. And up at the top it said, "There is the names of fruits and vegetables in this telegram. See how many of them you can pick out." All kinds of things like that that we did and had great fun at it.

Jenkins: And as I recall we had some barbecues out at the clubhouse, and out at somebody's farm out towards the Country Club.

Curry: Yes. Well, so in terms of the being alone, I really had no such feeling at all. But as we grew and it became increasingly necessary to look at the objectives, the goals we were trying to attain as a collegiate school of business, then it became necessary to push your feelings for your associates in the background. The management function now is to go this direction, to attain these objectives, and you can't let personal

feelings enter in. You must forget it. And then is when the lonely environment began, because it became questionable, if not just downright impossible, to call a faculty member and say, "Hey, why don't you and your wife join us for dinner tonight," or "Why don't you come out to the house?" And when they called me I would have to say, "I'd love to, but I don't think I better." Because your faculty members become extremely sensitive when they know that the dean has been out to dinner with somebody down the hall. "Wonder what that is all about." I saw it develop at the University of Arkansas about the time Dean Fichtner was fixing to leave. So I knew that you couldn't do that. And this was painful, because just about the only close friends I had were on that B.A. faculty, and now there is an environment developing where I can't really enjoy them. Now it is true that when Al Cox got his boat, some of us did go up to Lake Texoma. You remember one trip up there I am sure. I don't know that that created any problems. I never felt that it did. If it did I didn't know about it. But, yes, there was probably in the dean's office certainly less of a lonely pinnacle, because it wasn't much of a pinnacle, but enough that you certainly were aware of it.

Jenkins: Well, did you pick up other relations around campus or in town to fill in that . . . ?

Curry: Not adequately, because your interest, your life was on that

campus, not someplace else. And while, of course, we did have friends that weren't related with the university, from the church and Kiwanis Club and others, it just wasn't the same.

Jenkins: Did this have much impact on the way your wife could lead her life in the community?

Curry: Not any great degree. One of the things about my wife, she was never comfortable, you know, when we had a dinner or anything, a function in the School of Business, where does the dean sit? At the head table, and I must admit that I had rather have been out there in the audience, and she just resented having to be up front all the time. So she attended the faculty wives functions, because she felt that it was an obligation. Somehow she couldn't refuse to do it, for the same reason that I joined a lot of things--to promote the School of Business. And as this necessity of not having that intimate relationship with the members of the faculty developed, she didn't miss it a bit. So in that sense I think she was glad that we no longer found it necessary to have a group out at the house or go out to the clubhouse for a function. That was great with her.

Jenkins: Let me get you to talk now about your observations on how things have changed at North Texas State and the College of Business there since you retired as Dean. Perhaps during the five years when you remained teaching, and after you retired completely from that. Let's kind of lead up to the

actual retirement from the deanship. You had mentioned that you had told Dr. Kamerick that that would be your last year.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: And from there, then.

Curry: Yes, well, as I also told you, I had felt for at least five years that we needed a younger, creative, innovative individual to come in as dean. I felt that we had half a dozen men on our faculty that would make great deans for us. And so when Dr. Matthews retired, I felt that the School of Business would be better served with the kind of person that I am talking about as dean. I didn't like the looks of what I found in the president's office when I went over there that day, so it was easy for me to simply say, "This is going to be my last year as dean, and that we start looking now to find the person that can take the School of Business to greater heights. We have got a solid School of Business but much, much can be done yet." And so, that last year was an interesting year, to say the least, because here was an entirely different kind of relationship between the Dean's office and the President's office. Heretofore, for seventeen years, if the president, which was rare, needed something with the School of Business, with the dean, usually would just pick up the phone and in thirty words the whole thing, I understood and he understood and that was that. And more often, I would need something from the president's

office, and many times I would just tell Virginia Briscoe what I needed, and she would take care of it. And if she didn't feel that she could take care of it, she would say, "I had better let you talk to Dr. Matthews about that." She would connect me and tell him what the problem is or what I wanted, and either "yes" or "no." It was just "Okay" or "Can't do that." That was the kind of thing we did. And then here Dr. Kamerick comes in and he is president, and try to get some kind of an answer from something from him and he doesn't know or there is a committee to take care of that or Dr. Spurlock is handling that or whatever. I go to Spurlock and he would hum and haw and "maybe so or maybe no" or "we had better check here and we better check there." I just couldn't operate in that kind of environment, and I knew it the very first day I saw the man, and I wasn't going to. And besides that, as I say, I felt that the School of Business would make more progress with somebody else as dean. So there was no problem in retiring. I had always rather teach than do what the dean does.

Jenkins: Now all during your career as dean you had taught at least one class a long semester, hadn't you?

Curry: Yes, and usually would teach one class during the summer term. The last two or three years I was dean, I didn't teach class in the summer time, but for many years I did. So it was a delight to return to fulltime teaching. And, as I say, I suppose everybody expected me to return to teaching accounting,

but accounting was an extremely, extraordinary strong faculty already and my resources, I felt, were just as good or better in finance than in accounting. I had taught finance at the University of Arkansas. So I felt perfectly comfortable in going into the finance area to strengthen that department, hopefully, and thoroughly enjoyed the five years that I taught finance.

Jenkins: Now, the things that were happening to the School during that time, that you have expressions on.

Curry: Well, the selection of Cliff Hutton . . . Here was a delightful man. Got along well with everybody as far as I know, and I had met him when I was on an inspection for AACSB when we visited Tulsa. I liked the man, and he was recommended very highly by all the other deans that I ever talked to.

Jenkins: What was he doing just prior?

Curry: He was dean at the University of Tulsa. So we brought him in here. Well, I say he was dean. Dean Hargrove at Tulsa had been dean for twenty-odd years, I am sure, but he either had retired or was in the process of retiring. If they hadn't already made Cliff dean, they were going to. Let's put it that way. And so we beat them to the punch. I don't know exactly why he chose to come with us, but he did. And I'm not sure that I paid very much attention to what he was doing. I was delighted to be doing what I was doing. When he came in I simply told him "Here are the files, I am just going to leave them as they are. You can do what you

want to and throw out everything or you can keep it or whatever." I wish now that we had kept the personnel files. But we didn't. I left that to him, and I think he was afraid that he might be influenced by something that was in the files, and so he just threw them away. Now I think he could have left them in there without looking at them, maybe, but that is neither here nor there. I suppose the automobile wreck that he and his family had made it kind of a sad experience for him to stay here. I think he liked to work more directly with students, anyway, than the kind of work he was doing. And then he was on the selection committee to hire a president to replace Dr. Kamerick. And he voted against Jitter Nolen coming here. I don't think it would have made any difference, but he did. He felt that since he had opposed the appointment of the president that he was vulnerable.

Jenkins: So he was here . . .

Curry: Two years, I think. When the vice-president for student affairs or whatever his title is up at Tulsa opened up, he was happy to go back with it, back to his home, I think.

Jenkins: He is still there in that position?

Curry: Yes, as far as I know. And then the selection process for a dean, I am not sure what kind of input the faculty of the School of Business had in finally choosing Dr. Berkley.

Jenkins: There was a faculty committee. In the meantime, now, we had . . .

Curry: Barry King served as interim dean for what? A year?

Jenkins: I believe so, yeah. There was a faculty committee to choose a new dean.

Curry: Well, as I remember the faculty committee's participation was largely ignored, and that the president and vice-president made the selection. Now I am not sure to what degree the faculty committee was ignored.

Jenkins: The faculty committee had the opportunity to respond to that recommendation.

Curry: Yes, okay.

Jenkins: It was not a negative response.

Curry: Well, what I am thinking about is they made several positive responses and recommendations that were ignored. Let's put it that way. Well, I was pleased, I would say. I thought that at the point in time and the development that the School of Business, the stage it had reached, an industry man, a public relations man was what the program needed. The same way that I felt a promoter, public relations man was what the university needed when they hired Jitter Nolen for president. This was the point in time where you needed that kind of a person in the dean's office and in the president's office, and I think it has worked out extraordinarily well. I had, oh, fifteen years ago, tried to get President Matthews to give us the green light in doing in a limited way what the Professional Development Institute is doing today. There again was this blank wall. "No, you

can't do that." He didn't say the regents, he just said, "Well, we just can't do it." But I knew that the regents wouldn't approve it, that's all. So, the changes that have taken place over the past five or six or seven years I think moved the School of Business of North Texas in a direction that it was destined to go. That it is now a much stronger School of Business than it has ever been before. That its future is still ahead of it. It has had some problems and always will have problems. I think maybe its greatest future, if you want to look at that now, is in its graduate program. You have the junior college structure surrounding us. You have a great evening program over at UT Arlington. The quality of faculty which has been assembled over here at Denton, and the fairly remote environment relative to the metropolitan area, you are close by but you are not downtown, so to speak. You are not constantly influenced by the traffic and the environment of a great city. So this is an environment conducive to outstanding graduate work and research and so on, in my thinking. Now as to changes in the structure. For twenty-five years Katie and Gertrude and I, to all intents and purposes, operated the School of Business, with the exception of bringing in or allocating the MBA program to Porter and then to Glen. Since that time you've had an expansion of personnel in the dean's office and assistants and associate deans and so on, which I suspect are almost essential to the way you are going to

operate, or are operating now, and to prepare for the future. The reasons are several, I would suppose. One, you have this constant dealing with committees, faculty committees, student committees. I guess there are student committees. I am not sure. Then you have almost a separate School of Business operation in your Professional Development Institute, which is a tremendous plus factor for North Texas State University. It is really a showcase kind of performance that only a School of Music can . . . they have a natural showcase, performance. The only other facet of a university that is visible to the public is your athletic program, and since North Texas is not in the Southwest Conference, that is severely handicapped. No matter how good the football and basketball and track teams are, they are just not going to get any recognition. You would have to beat Notre Dame, Michigan, Southern Cal, Cal and Texas to get headlines in the paper from North Texas. So this Professional Development Institute is another showcase. This is a way to make it abundantly clear the kind of School of Business North Texas has, and more power to them, I am delighted to see it, and at the same time not only is it a showcase, it is a prod to the faculty. You are not going out in that program very many times without being prepared. And being prepared to present programs to the personnel that confronts you in that program, you better be good. And it is a great tribute to the faculty that they have been good

enough to make that program grow. And it is a feather in Paden Néeley's cap that he has put the people in the program that can do the job, and of course they are very fortunate in having the people there that could do it. So I am delighted with that development that has taken place. Whether you need, what do we have? an associate dean and one assistant dean or two assistant deans or what?

Jenkins: I think one.

Curry: And then I don't know how many staff people in the dean's office, secretaries and people doing the work that Betty Fowler is doing and counselling and keeping degree programs up to date, but I suspect all of this is really needed. As I say, you have got committees that you have to work with. Everything that you do you have got to go through some central university committee, not only a curriculum committee and the graduate council but personnel committees, I guess, when you hire somebody. When I was dean if we wanted somebody on our faculty in the School of Business, by golly, we hired them, period. As a matter of courtesy we would carry them over to meet the president, but that was as far as we went. Nobody else was going to tell us who ought to be on the faculty and who hadn't ought to be. I guess you have to go through a selection committee now, I don't know. This is an aside, but, oh, I guess, ten or fifteen years after I came here, Dean Adams retired as long time dean of the University of Oklahoma. And they invited me to come up for an interview

to see about moving from Denton to Norman as dean of the School of Business at the University of Oklahoma. And Mary and I went up. Left here early one morning and we were instructed to come to the president's home, and we would stay in the president's home while we were visiting and interviewing at the University of Oklahoma. So we enjoyed meeting the president and his wife and then he took me up to his office and I met the personnel, the vice-presidents, the people in the administration building, and then went over to the School of Business and spent two days up there interviewing. But the thing that convinced me that I didn't want any part of being dean at the University of Oklahoma, they had a committee that reviewed all faculty appointments, and particularly did they view recommendations for promotion. Well, you could just sit back and look at any university structure, who is on that committee. Well, Colleges of Arts and Sciences have umpteen departments, and each department has a representative on the committee. So it is loaded. So how are you going to get promotions for people in your School of Business when they have got to run that barrier of English professors and history professors and government professors and psychology professors and chemistry professors and physics and you know, on and on and on. Oh, no. No, if I have got to make a recommendation, here is the faculty of the School of Business, you know that you have got a faculty member that has earned promotion,

clearly without question. Can you get him promoted?

No, you have got to go through this other committee.

You can't go directly to your president or the academic vice-president. You have got to go through a committee.

Not for me. I am not going through that committee.

Jenkins: Well, let's look at your observations of the changes made in the administration building at North Texas since you retired, as dean and as a faculty member.

Curry: I had retired before Jitter Nolen came in as president, but it seemed to me abundantly clear. Here was a man who operated exactly in the opposite direction to what Dr. Matthews had done. Dr. Matthews would never make a move until he was absolutely sure that this could work. He looked all the way from the campus to Austin to see what, if any, effect this would have on appropriations when he got down there. When you go to Nolen, apparently he just looked at the individual making the proposal and "did it sound like a good idea?" "Yeah, let's try it. It may not work, but 'let's go.'" So where the chips fell he didn't seem to care. And what was good, what would develop North Texas State, that was what we were going to do, period. What the consequences might be or what somebody else might think about it, to heck with them. Let's do it. And that was what we needed at the point in time. And as I look at it today, that administration of Nolen's accomplished more in eight years than had been accomplished at North Texas in the previous

fifty. Whatever else had happened had happened in spite of what anybody had done. This happened because somebody had a hand in causing it to happen. I think one of the things that demonstrates, where did they go to get a dean in the School of Business? By golly, they dug up a guy in industry. I don't think a faculty committee dug him up, did it?

Jenkins:

No.

Curry:

It was Nolen that through the board of regents or somebody, I don't know, maybe knew this guy, but he dug him up. Where did he go to get a football coach? To Hayden Fry, a guy who had been at Southern Methodist and gotten fired. Who would have thought of bringing Fry over here? Jitter Nolen, that's who thought of it, I guess. Somebody put the bug in his ear. He had a board of regents that didn't hesitate to take chances, to try something. For forty years before that, oh, no, they wouldn't risk that sort of thing. Somebody might object. So what I am saying is, we had a complete reversal in management philosophy at the regents level and at the ad building. Now Gus Ferre seemed to me was a disaster. I was happy to see him go over to the osteopathic operation. Is he still over there?

Jenkins:

No. From what I gather he is back teaching philosophy, though no one sees him.

Curry:

Well, I would say, probably if he belongs in an institution that is where he belongs. We were talking about our athletic

program. Resources and commitments to excellence in the athletic program, I think, is another plus for this institution. That again is your showcase, your advertising. And I am happy to see that they are . . . well, it seems to me you do one or two things. You deemphasize intercollegiate sports to the degree that you almost have a club sort of sport and compete with, oh, East Texas and Bishop College and whatever, or you put money into it and go all the way. And if you go all the way and create a national champion in basketball or NCAA championship in whatever sport, particularly in football, you would be amazed at what happens to the academic program in the university. That's the way you build it, with your advertising through your showcase performances. Athletics is the number one best way to do it. You get some recognition with your performance of their music, but it doesn't take much to have a fine acapella choir or a jazz band or whatever. Lots of institutions have good performing musicians, but when you win a NCAA championship . . . I knew about North Texas because of the Rideout twins and olympic performances that they gave way back when. Soon after I came here Fred Cobb's golf team won the NCAA championship. All across the nation people knew about North Texas State. Your mind's eye image of an institution is created by the news media of the performance of very, very few activities and very, very few people. And the football program is the number one way to

make a great university. Now winning a NCAA championship or a cotton bowl or sugar bowl or gator bowl or rose bowl doesn't make a great institution, but as far as the world is concerned, it does make the great institution. That's the way it is. It is unfortunate. It is tragic in a way, but it is just so, that's all. So, looking at the changes that have taken place in the last eight or ten years, this is a great step forward, and I hope whoever comes in as president realizes that. But there is only one of two directions to go, and that is to go whole hog or back off completely, because you are not going to get what you are looking for in building an institution with a so-so athletic program. You have got to compete with the best, and in Texas it has got to be in the Southwest Conference. Well, as I said, I hope the in-coming president whoever he may be will do one of two things: Put every resource dollar he can get into the athletic program or back off from it completely, because in my view it is not going to help to be just hanging around the fringe. Now, looking back at, what is it eight years that Jitter Nolen was president? I think so. I have already said that he did more, positively, to finance the institution in that eight years, himself and the people he brought in, to carry on the programs than had been done in a long, long, long time, maybe a half century. I am not at all sure. The circumstances surrounding his resignation, about all I know is what I read in the paper.

But just as an interested observer I do feel that he was one of these individuals that he saw something that he thought would be good for the university, and, by golly, he did it. He didn't stop to wonder whether he was right within somebody's ethical concept of what was right, or whether there was some legal procedure set up by the state that he wasn't quite following. I don't think it bothered him. Here was something that needed to be done for North Texas, and that was what he was going to do. And I may look at it and say, "Gee whiz, what right did he have to spend donated money or tax payers money for a banquet for a hundred and fifty or two hundred people in the metropolitan area. I would guess that he looked at it and said, "Look, we need the support of these influential people in this area. What better way than have a big blowout, a banquet. Wine them and dine them and have plenty of liquor and all this good stuff that they are accustomed to when they are entertained." And now, whether that is right or wrong, he was doing it to build North Texas State University. What we read about the Educational Endowment Fund and whether he kept the right records for that, I imagine he didn't. I don't imagine he even thought about it. I am sure that somebody must have told him that he was going to get into hot water on it, but that was . . . I would guess, what little I knew about Jitter Nolen, he just didn't have time to worry with it. Now I think I would fault him for not having somebody around him

that he gave the responsibility to see to it that they didn't violate any laws or any . . . really, any proprieties. But he didn't and that is where he is.

Jenkins: Let's move now to an overview of your personal career in writing, consulting, professional organizations.

Curry: All right. I guess the first meaningful consulting work I did was when I was working on my doctorate at the University of Michigan, and there is no point, I suppose, in going into details on this. I had a research fellowship, working with Professor Bob Rodke in the finance department. And he came to me one day and said, "There is a furniture manufacturer," I have forgotten what town but maybe fifty miles from Detroit, "and they want somebody to come over and help them with their problems, and I have suggested to them that you do the work for them. Are you interested?" "Oh, sure, I am interested." "Well," he said, "it will pay well and you can do it whenever you feel that you have time to do it." So I went over, and it was Woodard Manufacturing Company. And it develops that Mr. Woodard had three sons and a daughter. And he died and left the Woodard Manufacturing Company in the hands of his three sons and son-in-law, the daughter's husband. Well, he had died four or five years before I went on the scene, and the son-in-law, the daughter's husband, had complete charge of the casket factory. And the youngest boy was in charge of outdoor, wrought-iron furniture. Another one of the sons had charge of the dining

room furniture, and the other one had living room suites. They divided up the management in that way. And they had more business than they could take care of and were losing money hand over fist. Well, that's an interesting situation. They had more business than any one of the units could produce, but lost money on everything except the casket factory. It was a money maker. Well, I went through the factory and it had these big, thick walls with fire doors every thirty-forty feet, you know, in the furniture factory. Big factory, gee, it was big. And each time I would go from one door to another people would look up at me like I was some kind of thief. I mean the glares you got were not friendly. I couldn't figure this out. I went back to the accounting office and told them what my feelings were that this was a hostile workforce for some reason or other. Why? Well, the explanation that they gave me, and maybe it was true I don't know, said it is because you are in the furniture factory. Over in the casket factory they have a work incentive plan. They set a quota for the number of caskets that are to be built each day, and they have a rigid inspection system over there, and if they meet the quota, when they meet the quota, they are through for the day. And those guys don't even bring their lunch pails any more. They know they are going to meet that quota and be through by one o'clock or before, and they don't have it over here and they are all mad about it. Well, to make a

long story short, what was happening is, each of these sons was a design artist, he loved to create extraordinarily beautiful lawn furniture and wrought iron, extraordinarily beautiful wood and beautiful designs for dining rooms and living rooms. And they would go to these furniture markets and take handmade models, and they had no idea what it would cost them to build one at factory level operations. And so they would sort of just reach up in the air and put a price on this at the furniture market, and they would get orders for a heck of a lot more of them than they could produce. And in going through the factory up in the loft part of the furniture building, man there was living room and dining room suites from one end to the other, just stacked. Well, what is the matter with these? Well, in an effort to meet the production quotas we hurried the production, maybe we used some green wood when we should have had fairly dried wood, or dried it too fast, but most of this is in the paint, the finishing of that and it was dried too fast and you see it is all crinkled. And so when this happened, when a reject came back in we just put it up here, and that is where it is, thousands of pieces. Well, in my consulting work then what was I to say? First thing you do is find out how much it is going to cost you to build something before you ever take it to market or anyplace else, and then you are going to have to forget some of your exotic ideas about what lawn furniture ought to look like, or what living room or dining

room ought to look like, or bedroom, and design what you can build at a cost that will return a profit. Well, they found that very difficult to accept, but they did. They gave the comptroller and vice-president of finance complete authority to approve or reject a design, and they then got on solid ground. Then Electric Bond and Share, one of the J. P. Morgan subsidiaries, had a man in New York get in touch with me, and the reason he did, he was born and raised within five miles of where I was born and raised, or within ten miles. And he knew from his brother that I was at the University of Michigan, and so that was why he got in touch with me, and he knew I was majoring in accounting and finance area. And they, Electric Bond and Share, had marketed some preferred stock and bonds for Champion Spark Plug. What he wanted me to do, some federal agency had challenged Electric Bond and Share, the propriety of them doing this underwriting and marketing on a basis of their capital structure. You know, an underwriting company can do billions of dollars in underwriting with a very, very small capital structure. Maybe they do five hundred million dollars of underwriting in a year, with a million dollars in net worth. And they were challenged on this and he wanted me to do research and justify that company doing this underwriting. And that is what I did and made a report. There wasn't anything unusual about it. All the underwriting companies were doing the same sort of thing. Why they happened to pick on Electric

Bond and Share at the moment, I don't know. Then I did some work for Champion Spark Plug after I had gotten acquainted with them in this other work. I have forgotten exactly what I did do for them, but that is the kind of thing that faculty members at the University of Michigan were constantly called on to do. Then, due to the health of Jack primarily, just a baby when we were in Michigan. In fact we went there when he was a year old, I guess. We had moved from the University of Arkansas, and that was the beginning of the Small Business Administration just before World War II. And since everything in Arkansas, there were not very many four year degree granting institutions up there at the time anyway, and those that were there were an outgrowth of teachers' colleges. So everything came to the University of Arkansas for whatever, took place in the way of consulting work, but there was very little of that. It was pretty much like it was in Denton when I came here. Businesses just didn't need any consulting, as far as they knew. They didn't call on anybody for consulting work, at the university they didn't. Now they had a strong agricultural school, and being a land grant college the county agents worked through and out of the university. But aside from agriculture, there was no consulting work, except all of a sudden the Small Business Administration set up programs all over the state to help small businesses, and I got involved in several of those. I will never forget, the federal

employees organized a class in bookkeeping, we will say, for small businesses. And they get everybody in town to sign up. I think they paid them to attend these classes. And then I go out from Fayetteville to this town and here I have a classroll as to who is to be in this class with thirty members signed up, and five people show up or ten, you know. They couldn't care less about what the Small Business Administration is trying to teach them. They either didn't have any books, or whatever they had was adequate. They hadn't felt any need to keep better records, and there wasn't any way to convince them that they needed better records. Now as I say, maybe you would have thirty people on that list and five or six had felt a need. Okay. You could help those four or five or six, but these things were supposed to run say two months or three months, one meeting a week for three or four hours each meeting. Well, after you had met say the third time, one of these guys had already learned all he needed to know. He had a problem and he knew he did, but he had already found out how to solve his problem in the two or three meetings he had. So the next time he is not there. And in another week or two another one has got his problems worked out. So by the time you get to the end of the three months or whatever it was, you might go out there and nobody shows up. Well, that is the kind of consulting I did at the University of Arkansas.

Jenkins: Did all those people who signed up get paid as far as you know?

Curry: I am not sure. I think they got maybe five bucks or something to say they would attend the class. Registration to cover . . . you know, maybe he paid fifty cents for a book or something, I don't know. Nearly everything was furnished in terms of reading material, but there was some incentive to sign up, but there wasn't any incentive then to continue to attend. Let's go back to the years I spent in Philadelphia interim. I did all kinds of consulting work out of the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School. But I got there in September, and on December 7, Pearl Harbor. So from that point on my work was war related with the petroleum industry, and there was no consulting per se because all my time and energy was with trying to get the oil companies working in harmony with the military forces and with the civilian population.

Jenkins: That was the American Petroleum Institute which you have spoken of.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: And that is where you spent all of that time.

Curry: That's right. I did continue, I guess, through 1941 teaching night classes at the Naval Depot in Philadelphia, and a night class or two at one of the polytechnic institutes where they had contracts with the Army or Navy or Air Force or whatever for people who needed instruction in accounting. So I did teach through at least 1941 in the night activities with the military personnel, and probably

in most of 1942, I continued to do that. But then, as I have already said, Betty had pneumonia twice the last year we were in Philadelphia. Mary's dad had cancer in his jaw down here, so we decided to come to Denton. And when we got to Denton, once again, the environment here for consulting work was virtually nil. And besides, who had time to think of anything but teaching four or five classes a week and trying to start a school of business.

Jenkins: Okay, you are ready to talk about your writing?

Curry: Okay. I don't know, I guess 1946 or '47, at the University of Michigan and Arkansas and later Pennsylvania, the head of the college department at Southwestern Publishing Company, Earl Alstock, would call on these big universities himself, and I got to know him reasonably well. And also Richard Erwin was starting a publishing company at the time. I was acquainted with these people, and I guess maybe about 1947 or '48 the Southwest Social Science Association was meeting in Dallas. And at these meetings Earl Alstock, the manager of the college department of Southwestern Publishing Company was here at Dallas. And way midnight or after, in those days the publishing companies just opened their suites to their faculty members and everybody went up at all hours visiting and drinking and so on in the publishing companies' suite and as the publishing companies' guests. So way, way into the night I had had several drinks, Earl Alstock put his arm around me and said, "Now I want to talk

to you. Let's get out of this room." There was all kinds of commotion and talking and laughing and going on, so we walked out into the corridor of the hotel. And he said, "When are you going to write us a cost accounting text book?" And I said, "Earl, I don't have time to write a cost book or anything else." "Yeah, don't tell me no, because we want you to write us a cost book." And about that time Mary came out to see what was going on. She thought maybe Earl and I were going to a honky-tonk or something, I guess. At any rate, she heard the tail end of the conversation about Earl wanting me to write a cost book, and she said, "No, no, no." Well, I said, "I tell you what. If you will get Herb Taggart at the University of Michigan or Adolph Matz at the Wharton School to join in this endeavor, we will write your blankety, blankety cost book." He said, "Which one do you want? Herb or Adolph?" And I thought a minute and I said, "Well, Herb knows more cost accounting and is a brilliant thinker, but Adolph will work and Herb won't. So you better get Adolph." Well, within a week I had a letter from Alestock and Adolph Matz both saying, "Let's go." So we started a cost book. The only way I could find time to work on a text book, leave the office at North Texas, say, at six o'clock. Go home and play with the kids a little while, have supper, mingle with the family, see what the children were doing and play around until say about nine o'clock. About bedtime for the children

I would go out to that little room off the garage there at the Highland Park house and start work on the text book. And when I got to the point where I couldn't be effective working any more, twelve, one, two o'clock, whatever time it was, I would go to bed until six o'clock, six-thirty and go for another day. So this went on day after day, week after week for, I guess, a year and a half. We finally got it, I don't know, it seemed to me it was two years before we actually had a text book in print. And that's the creation of the Cost Accounting book. Well, I figured if we ever got a dollar an hour for the time I had put in on it I would be lucky because Neuner had this cost accounting market completely dominated. There was only one cost accounting book in the field when he wrote his cost accounting book, and it was just antiquated. And Neuner modernized the concept of cost accounting and cost control and standard costing and so on. And his book had been on the market for five years, so he had the monopoly on the cost accounting market. So it just seemed to me that there was no way anybody else was going to break into that market. Well, for three or four years nothing much happened. We got an adoption here and there, but a sprinkling. Began to get a little royalty, but it wouldn't amount to anything significant. And then we started work on a revision. We already had a good book, but this revision was really superior, definitely, clearly superior to what Neuner had.

And when the book came out Neuner and Richard Erwin, who was the publisher of Neuner's book, realized that we had them beat in the quality of the textbook. So Neuner rushed a revision, and he had it full of errors. So by the time that second edition was ready for the third edition, we had gained control of the market. Everybody was going to Matz and Curry. And so from then on it dominated the market. It is so exacting to do that kind of work that on the fifth edition I said I have had it. No more.

Jenkins: Did you write any other books?

Curry: No. Not now. Well, yes, John Pearson and I wrote a textbook in business math, and this was an excellent book, but it came at exactly the wrong time. This book came on the market just at the height of this "new math" concept, and everybody was using new math. And the old standard arithmetic in business math, it did reasonably well, but it just was not the "new math" type of book. It went through the second edition. I have a notion that if we wanted to bother with it now it would make a killing.

Jenkins: People are going back.

Curry: Going back. And this is an interesting thing. When I started working on this math book, I did some reading, of course, and I discovered some things I didn't know about algebra. That algebra developed among the egghead intellectuals as a puzzle, a riddle. You write so much and then

from what you had written, if you were perceptive enough, you could complete the equation. And they would mail these things back and forth among themselves to see who could decipher the riddle. And what I am coming around to is, why did they ever call arithmetic simple arithmetic? There is nothing simple about it. There is no formula you can rely on. You have just got to turn the wheels in your head. Shortly after I came here I started teaching this course in business math that we had, which was arithmetic, and the illiteracy was appalling. When I started that course I would give them a pre-test. What is 82% of 165 ? Well, if you got five percent of your students that could do that, you were lucky.

Jenkins: Things haven't necessarily gone down hill then since I was . . .

Curry: Well, are they any better today?

Jenkins: That is what I am wondering. We say they are worse today, but I am not necessarily sure.

Curry: They could be worse, I guess, but it would be stretching it pretty much. And if you said, "what is $3/4$ of $5/8$ " you just as well forget it.

Jenkins: Now this was in the mid-forties you are talking about.

Curry: Well, no. It was late forties and through the early fifties.

Jenkins: You certainly felt that things had slipped since you had been in high school.

Curry: Oh, yes. And if you asked a guy what is 12×9 , he would start figuring it up. Our little eight or nine year old

granddaughter is doing multiplication tables now.

Jenkins: They are going back.

Curry: They are going back whole hog. Well, a part of this thing I mentioned the other day, rebelling at a lot of things that are happening in the public schools and the universities and the excessive cost related to it, and people have begun to demand, "By golly, let's get back to the basics in the public schools," and that is exactly what they are doing.

Jenkins: I've got a section on that. I want to get back to your writing career.

Curry: So each four years, I guess, from beginning about 1947 or '48 go through that revision process again.

Jenkins: Cost accounting.

Curry: Yes, and I don't know when it was we wrote the business math book, and redid it one time. But here is the string of revisions on the cost book, and as you see, there is an edition in Japanese or Chinese and there is one in . . . I guess those three volumes there in paperback in green is Italian. And there is a French edition up there somewhere.

Jenkins: Do you have any idea how many individual volumes you sold over those years?

Curry: No I don't. I am sure the publishing company could tell us right quick, but I don't know.

Jenkins: So in terms of book writing, those two, with all of the revisions. How about journal articles? Did you get involved

in that much?

Curry: I wrote only three or four. When we started the business studies I wrote for each of those, I guess, the first two or three editions to kind of encourage the faculty to make contributions. I have reprints of several of those. I wrote, oh, an article or two when I was president of the Southwest Social Science Association, and it was published in whatever that publication is that the Association used to have. And that is about the extent of my magazine writing.

Jenkins: Are you ready to move on to professional organizations?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Okay.

Curry: Well, that is not very extensive. I guess in a way it is how you define professional organizations.

Jenkins: Well, you certainly joined a bunch and attended them in order to make North Texas known.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Have you mentioned most of those at some point?

Curry: Maybe.

Jenkins: Run through the ones that you can remember, anyway.

Curry: The Office Management Association. When I belonged it wasn't the Purchasing Management Association, it was the Purchasing Agents or something, I believe. The American Management Association, and in Dallas, you know, they had a splitup. Some of the leaders in the Dallas chapter of the American Management Association felt that they didn't get

any benefits from the national hookup, and so they created the Dallas Management Association. Well, I belonged to both of those, and particularly did I participate in the Dallas Management Association. I thought that was a better group than the American Management Association. In fact I think the American Management chapter just folded and went to the Dallas chapter eventually. And the American Marketing Association in Dallas. The Comptrollers Institute, which became the Financial Executives Institute, of which I am still a member. And the Dallas Sales Executives, or something like that. And let's see if there were any others. Oh, one thing that I forgot to mention. Through the late fifties and early sixties in consulting, the telephone company had an ongoing program in their first line management people, and they met in the Baker Hotel over in Mineral Wells I believe it was. They met over there for a full week training session, and I would meet with them, I believe, the first night, which would be a Monday night, on the economic system and the way it works. A three hour session, and that I did for several years. And then Lone Star Steel also had an educational program for their management people, and Dick Johnson at SMU and I collaborated. He would go one week and I would go one week, conducting that program.

Jenkins: We were talking about any other professional organizations.

Curry: Oh, yes. Well, I think now I have mentioned, essentially, the professional associations. I was a member of the Southwest Social Science Association. For many years a member of the American Accounting Association. I would attend the Dallas chapter of CPA's, and the Fort Worth chapter quite a good deal. And they organized some of their accounting association groups, Public Accounting Association, I believe they called it. Jack Robason was president of the Dallas chapter shortly after it was organized, but I think they met over at Richardson, hotel or motel or something over there. I attended that a great deal. I don't believe I ever joined it, I just went with Jack to attend the meetings. And that pretty well covers the professional groups. On campus, oh, Delta Sigma Pi, the business fraternity, and whatever that counterpart was in the women, they made me an honorary member of that group. They had a campus chapter of the marketing association and the management association. I don't know, I guess just being dean they always put you in that group, too. And that covers it all.

Jenkins: How about civic organizations?

Curry: Well, I am not a great joiner. I did join the Kiwanis Club shortly after I came to Denton, and in due time served on the board of directors and various and sundry committees and eventually vice-president and president of the Kiwanis Club. Somewhere here I've got a plaque or something that says when I was a member of the Kiwanis Club, president of

the Kiwanis Club.

Jenkins: Here it is.

Curry: Yeah, that's it. What, 1950 or so?

Jenkins: '59. You were president in '59.

Curry: I am still active in the Kiwanis Club. In the church, if that is a civic organization, I guess, in a way. I have been a speaker at the Rotary Club a number of times, but I am a member of the Kiwanis Club. That is about the extent of my civic activity except being in the Chamber of Commerce. When I lived at Highland Park Road in the city, I was a member of the board of directors, as I have already said, head of the research committee which is now this industrial development committee.

Jenkins: You are talking about the Chamber of Commerce?

Curry: Yes, right. But I am no longer active in the Chamber of Commerce. We had a committee made up of every organization in the city when we were going through that charter revision thing in shifting from the type of government the city had when we went to city manager type. I was president of that group for a couple of years.

Jenkins: Any others that you can think of?

Curry: I had pretty well forgotten even that one. When I came here the war was still going on, and the Kiwanis Club had a service club. Recreation hall, I guess you would call it. It was right across from the old fire department there at the City Hall. You know, there was a great big wooden

building in there that the Kiwanis Club had built for the recreation for the service men.

Jenkins: North of the City Hall.

Curry: Yeah. Well, when the war was over and Camp House was disbanded, then we converted it to a recreation hall for the teenage group here in the city of Denton, and we operated that for several years, and I was chairman of the group or committee that ran the place. And we made it into a skating rink and, oh, dance and whatever, just to keep the teenagers of Denton off the streets and give them a place to come on nights and particularly on the weekends. But as we got into, I don't know, sometime in the late fifties as I would guess it, maybe early sixties, they became more interested in tearing the place up than they did in using it for recreation. So I recommended to the Kiwanis Club that they close the place, period. Because, you know, every time you had it opened, and we finally got to where we just kept it open weekends, they would break up the furniture and steal the cokes and money, and it was impossible as far as I was concerned. Even with somebody there to chaperone the place, it got out of hand.

Jenkins: Times were changing.

Curry: Times were changing, right.

Jenkins: Okay, let's talk about honors that you recall over the years that we could get into the record.

Curry: Well, one of the early ones was being elected to Beta Gamma

Sigma when I was at the University of Texas.

Jenkins: As an undergraduate?

Curry: No, I did my undergraduate work during summer school, so I was never there. I did graduate with honors in my bachelor's degree, but when I started work on my master's degree I was teaching in the high school and met classes some in the daytime. But at any rate I was a master's degree candidate when I was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma. And, you know, your life is an interesting kind of thing. Being a country boy . Nobody in the family had ever been to college. Nobody, I guess, had ever even graduated from high school. What business did I have being in this kind of a situation? And when I graduated with honors in my bachelor's degree I think, "Well, maybe, it may be that I am more than just barely average." And then I get inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma and start thinking about doing a doctor's degree. What makes you think you can do a doctor's degree? So you never know what you can do. You have to have hurdles and people who have been there to kind of guide you as to whether you can cut it or whether you can't. And I owe a great deal to Dr. Jim Dolly at the University of Texas for encouraging me or giving me a reason to hope, at any rate, that I could do this kind of thing. He was perfectly frank. He said, "You are not brilliant, you are not a genius, but much of the world's finest work is done by people of above average intellect and ability that "get with

it.'" And that is how come me, I guess, to try it. Now, honors. Well, one of the honors that I appreciated. At the Wharton School a faculty member is selected to conduct what they call the research seminar, and undergraduates must write a research paper as part of their requirement for the bachelor's degree. And the second year I was there, darned if that faculty didn't elect me to conduct the research seminar, which was a great distinction, really. But in terms of the sort of thing that you think of as honors, as I have already said every club or organization that had anything to do with the School of Business I became a member, at any rate, an honorary member of something or other. The Kiwanis Club . . . when you go to a foreign country you get a schedule of the meeting dates and places where Kiwanis Clubs meet in France, Germany, Switzerland, England wherever you go, Mexico or whatever, there is a Kiwanis Club in cities of fifty thousand up you are going to find one. And hopefully you will take time out while you are in a foreign country to attend a Kiwanis Club in their country. And so when you get back they give you this kind of thing. (Plaque on wall.)

Jenkins: Ambassador of Good Will.

Curry: Yeah. One of the honors that I appreciate most, I guess, in the years at North Texas, you know the students name an individual on the BA faculty as an outstanding faculty member of the year or something. I don't know if it is in one of

those year books up there, I was selected by the students. I have a notion that David Fitch promoted it, to be the outstanding business administration faculty member, and of course, each of us had our picture and a message to the students in the yearbook. And let's see, after the war the Navy had active programs at the colleges and universities recruiting people for the Navy program and particularly for the Navy Air Force. And where they had a considerable number of cadets from an institution they would invite generally two faculty members to Pensacola. They would fly you in a Navy plane from the base over at Grand Prairie, I guess, to Pensacola. And then you take a Navy boat of some sort out into the Atlantic where the aircraft carrier was cruising, and you pull up alongside this aircraft carrier and they have got that long rope ladder hanging to the side of the aircraft carrier and you climb that ladder way the heck up yonder. Man, it must have been a hundred and fifty or two hundred rope steps up that ladder to the deck where you were being entertained. And so you spend a day or two with them on the carrier watching the takeoffs and landings and what the cadets were doing. The scheme of things was that when you get back to your home base to your educational institution you can tell your students what a great life it must be to be on the aircraft carrier. And, you know, when you are off duty and not in that plane, by gum, it's first class. The lounges and all

the entertainment and everything that went on with it, it was impressive, I must say. Outstanding Educator of America, that is, I think, one faculty member each year at North Texas State, for example, is recommended to some selection committee on the national level to receive this Outstanding Educator's award, and I don't know why, but in 1972 my name got submitted. Through the president's office is the only way it could be done, but who put it in the president's office, I don't know. Once again Dave Fitch, I guess. Who, I don't know, but any rate that is an honor that, oh, I don't know if it means very much, but I appreciate it.

Jenkins: That's a national honor, now?

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Have you been personally involved in business ventures in your life?

Curry: Limited. Well, shortly after we moved to Philadelphia during World War II prices of agricultural products went from a nickle a pound for cotton and maybe seventy-five cents a bushel for wheat, to forty cents a pound for cotton and two or three dollars for wheat and cattle went sky high and everything else. So a lot of farms were bought here in Texas at two or three hundred dollars an acre, I guess. I don't know how much they paid for them. And then after World War I prices collapsed, and the insurance companies found themselves owning an awful lot of farms, I guess

throughout the United States. And one of these farms was a three hundred fifty acre farm with about three-quarters of a mile of river front in Milam County which joined my father-in-law's farm. And he wrote me in Philadelphia that a John Hancock representative out of San Antonio had been to see him and had told him that that was the last farm they owned in Milam County and they wanted to get rid of it. It was too much trouble to supervise it from San Antonio where he was working, where his office was, and they wanted to sell it, and that they would take forty dollars an acre for it. And this was say April or May that he wrote this.

Jenkins: Now you are talking about what year?

Curry: 1942, I guess. That whoever bought it could take rent from the crops that were already planted on the land, and my father-in-law was working the land, he had it rented. And he said, "We are going to have a good crop." And I think, "Well, gee whiz, yeah, and with a war going on that crop is probably going to be a pretty good price." Everybody was looking at the price of the year before World War II started. And so to make a long story short, yeah, I bought the place. And the rent he got from the crops that fall more than made the down payment. And it has carried itself ever since and paid out and so on. So I have a three hundred and fifty acre farm down there. And when I got to Denton there was a good deal of land that I wanted to pasture, and I wanted cattle on it. My father-in-law was

right there and he could look after the thing. So Charles Tinney had about forty head of heifers that he had just bought as baby calves and had raised them out there on his place, and they were now a year old and some of them eighteen months old. And I bought that forty head from Charles and moved them down to the farm in Milam County, and that is where I got started in the cattle business, and still have cattle down there.

Jenkins: Is Charlie's place out near the airport, or something like that?

Curry: Yeah. Well, it was due south of my Highland Park house.

Jenkins: I interviewed him and he spoke of that. I have a vague recollection.

Curry: That's still undeveloped, I guess. You know where Paul Voertman's place is?

Jenkins: No.

Curry: Well, it is out in that area, and it is on south of Dr. Lueke and Miss Rain's place. Well, so I have that farm, and then this one here, but I don't own this one anymore. I have given all of this except the house and five acres right here to Betty and Jack.

Jenkins: You have raised some cows on this one?

Curry: Yes, I have. I have the cows.

Jenkins: Oh, I see. Do you look after them?

Curry: No. No, I have entered a partnership agreement with Curtis Porter who lives up on the road here. And he looks after them and maintains the fences and takes care of the whole

thing, and I own the cows. And David Mulkey and Charles and Jack, my Jack and Guy Laney, my son-in-law, and I bought some land off of Mayhill Road. And we bought it and sold it. And then the group that bought it from us finally defaulted this past year or maybe it was early this year. And in the meantime they had paid us enough to clear, outright, sixty acres fronting on Mayhill Road. So we still have that partnership with the sixty acres that are free and clear. Well, it wasn't quite free and clear. David and I put the money in to clear it, and we own that. And then Guy and I have a partnership upon a hundred and some odd acres over in Tarrant County south of Haslet between Haslet and Fort Worth.

Jenkins: Have you done anything actively on that?

Curry: Well, we have it leased. There is a good house on it and a big, big barn. The fellow, I think, is training horses and that sort of thing. And he has some wheat or oats or something planted on it. A real estate broker in Fort Worth brought us a closing statement on it this past week. They didn't bring us any money yet, so we may have it sold or we may not. We sold it once. That's another one, you know, we sold it, oh, when everything was selling here anywhere within a hundred miles of Dallas or Fort Worth with prices you wouldn't believe. So we sold it and then that one defaulted last year. But like I say, again, they made interest payments over the years and some . . . I

believe they had one or two principle payments when they finally defaulted. So I think we will come out on it all right, but I would feel a little better if we would get that money that this man brought us on the closing statement the other day.

Jenkins: Now are there any other business ventures?

Curry: That is the extent of my business operations.

Jenkins: Other than investments.

Curry: Yes, well, I have five or six houses in Denton that I own including the old home place there on Highland Park Road.

Jenkins: All these are rented out.

Curry: Yes, they are all rented.

Jenkins: Are you the repairman on a lot of that?

Curry: Yes, I do, oh, the reroofing or repainting or anything that is to be done, just about. Once in a while I run into a plumbing problem that I can't handle, or don't want to handle, one or the other, but otherwise I . . . Well, I have repainted completely and reroofed one of the houses last summer. I don't believe I have one that needs reroofing anymore. They all have got good roofs on them.

Jenkins: And you get up there and do the roofing?

Curry: Oh, yeah. The one I reroofed last summer is over on Lattimore Street in the Mozingo addition. Neat little house, a good house. But I found out something that shouldn't have been a surprise to me. I had put a roof on the garage over at the Highland Park house, oh, six or eight years ago.

And I would just take a half a bundle of shingles and throw it up on the roof. And I started reroofing this one last summer, and the first half-bundle of shingles I threw up came right back down in my face.

Jenkins: Didn't quite make it.

Curry: Yeah. So pretty soon I discovered that about five or six shingles was all I wanted to throw up on the roof at one time.

Jenkins: Time does catch up with us.

Curry: Yeah, it does make a difference.

Jenkins: Any other things that you want to be in this business venture part before we close out.

Curry: Well, not particularly. I do have some, well, for me, some considerable investment in stocks and bonds. I spend some little while at my desk in here analyzing what I ought to do with what I have and buy and sell.

Jenkins: But you are not actively engaged in it?

Curry: No, no, only just for my own entertainment.

Jenkins: Anything else for today?

Curry: That is it for today.

Jenkins: Resuming the O. J. Curry interview, May 23, 1979.

Jenkins: Let's look at the changes that you have seen and felt in public education during your career, and how you view some of those changes, both positively and negatively.

Curry: Let's start out with a lifetime involved in education, with some interruptions. Now when I started to school I started

to a one room, one teacher school. We attended school five months in a year, I guess, five or six at most. In this one room there were beginners, as I was, up to twenty years old. And from the first grade to the seventh or eighth grade. And you had a long bench, everybody just sat on a long bench. There weren't any individual desks or anything of that sort. And there was a recitation desk up front. And all day long this one teacher was having recitation up there on that front bench, and the rest of us, I suppose, the rest of us were listening to what was going on up there on that front bench. And you learned an awful lot. If you were interested and alert, gee whiz, you knew anywhere from the first grade to the eighth grade if you were that smart and tried to learn. But the big difference in what I have observed in the grade schools today compared to what took place in that one-room school is the discipline. The teacher didn't put up with any foolishness in that one room. It was a big room. And you couldn't operate a school and have any sort of foolishness from anybody in that room.

Jenkins: About how many students might be in there?

Curry: Thirty, forty, fifty. And there was always a big board, a big hickory limb laying up there on that teacher's desk, and although the teacher was usually a woman, in fact always was in that one room, she could flat use it and did. And the big difference in then and now, as I see it, is that when that youngster that caused any kind of disturbance in

that classroom got home that evening, he got it worse than he did when he was in school that day. The parents would not tolerate their children misbehaving at school. Now you look at the environment in which teachers try to operate today, and I suppose this is particularly true in the large cities. My teachers of fifty, sixty, seventy years ago just wouldn't believe that you could have school in this kind of an environment, and in fact, I don't guess you do have school the way they saw it.

During December and January each year I am invited to make forecasts of the coming year to Denton service clubs, Denton Area Retired Teachers etc. In December this year (1979) to the retired teachers I am going to say something on the order of the following.

Evidence is mounting that the educators in our U. S. Public School System are re-appraising its mission and goals in today's social, political, economic, and technological environment--relative to the year two thousand and beyond. Do you remember the 1955 movie "Blackboard Jungle" about a group of delinquents who relentlessly terrified a high school teacher? If the news media reports are anywhere near accurate and close to the facts, Blackboard Jungle is now surpassed in many large city schools and some not so large and in our own state and even in Denton County.

In the 1960's well meaning people decided that the public school system was so imperfect it required extensive reform, and instituted the "Students Right Movement." The American Civil Liberties Union went to the courts and to legislatures to challenge "practices which school administrators claim are necessary to control their schools. The outcome--a large and complicated body of state and federal law governs what schools can or cannot do to students. Teachers do not know what is permitted or not permitted, and to avoid going to court leave discipline to the principal. The principal and assistants are busy administering the lunch program, scheduling buses, complying with bilingual mandates, balancing classes to comply with ethnic standards, trying to avoid sex discrimination in the classroom and in athletics, and so on. Little time and less desire on the part of the principal to deal with discipline results, and principals do not relish confrontations with angry parents and they too do not want to try a case before the school board or go to court. Besides, they have to keep informed as to what they can and cannot do in interviewing and hiring teachers, and overseeing all the paper work in reporting that all rules and regulations have been complied with, or explaining why it was not possible to comply. A Result; an environment where teachers cannot teach and

either quit, or stay on the job only for the pay check. A school principal used to be a prestigious job, but many of them now feel they have become low level bureaucratic robots spending time with pressure groups, parents, due-process hearings over suspending an unruly student. What now? Perhaps it is time to abandon the long held belief that public schools should provide an equal educational opportunity to all, in order to best serve an open democratic society. As we move to the year 2,000 and beyond, what is needed from our educational system to serve the U.S. as a nation? We will need an increasing number of very intelligent, well educated, and highly skilled young people in the years ahead to manage all of our institutions in a highly competitive and even dangerous world. This means that we will need a top layer of planners and managers in both the private and public sector. We will need highly skilled and very intelligent people to operate power plants, computerized manufacturing processes, fly aeroplanes with sophisticated controls, invent ever more sophisticated and destructive military hardware and educate adequate numbers of people to effectively operate the very complicated army, navy, marines, air force, and the entire defense posture of our nation if we are to survive as a free nation. In short, we will need gifted and dedicated people to manage businesses, schools,

hospitals, churches, city-county-state- and national government; and we will need skilled "blue collar" people, and workers with little need for skills or education.

What is needed from education now to prepare for the 21st century?

1. Expand existing programs and design new ones to identify and educate the mentally gifted and motivated children, beginning in the early grades and continuing through the Ph.D. level. Russia and Japan have long done this, even to the extent of having separate schools for the gifted, average, and the low ability children. This means spending much more money to develop the gifted youth and relatively less on the handicapped and low potential of our youth. Our system to now is based upon compassion and love for the disadvantaged and the below average, but if the nation is to survive through the 21st century we can no longer indulge in compassion and neglect to maximize development of the gifted and the strong.
2. A needed and urgent first step in our secondary schools is to lower the age for compulsory attendance. A New York State University professor says, "The solution to the schools' problem is simple; abolish compulsory attendance laws and permit only those who want to learn to attend." The move to do surgery on compulsory

attendance is understandable. The high school drop-out rate in New York City is 45%, 50% in some California schools, and in many cities only a third of those who enter high school graduate. The busing of children to achieve racial equality may be a desirable social goal, but the program contributes greatly to lowering standards of performance and in reality depriving many capable and motivated students from the educational opportunity which otherwise would be available.

3. Careful consideration should be given to the two track school system that separates children at an early age into those who will have a chance to pursue higher education and a professional career, and those who will perform skilled, semi-skilled, and little skill but essential work that requires little classroom instruction. Employment opportunity in manufacturing is declining due to automation, and jobs in the 1980' and 90's will be mostly in the service area. At the Super Market checkout counter today we see packages wiped over a glass looking sensor plate which records on a ticket handed to the customer description of the item, quantity and price. Even in fast food establishments the cash register operator no longer need be able to add or multiply or even read. The keyboard has a

picture of a hamburger on a key, a bottle on another key, an ice cream cone on another key, and so on for all items available. Press that key and the cash register prints the tape for the customer's bill.

In summary, we desperately need to educate the individual to the reasonably attainable level of that individual if desired by that individual, and quit wasting resources in trying to keep 90% of high school age youth in high school.

4. We may soon need to abandon the twelve grade secondary school system, revise the curriculum from about the sixth grade, into Junior College vocational bound, University Degree bound, and not college bound; with the not college bound reduced to nine or ten grades with compulsory attendance ending at the seventh grade or age 14.

Colleges and universities have been since WW II and today are over built and over staffed to accommodate large numbers of young men and women who have little idea of why they are there, have limited resources for the program selected, and will contribute little to society as a result of the college experience. Their presence dilutes the ability of the faculty and capable students to provide high quality programs, is a waste or at best a questionable use of financial resources, and in many cases the

mis-directed student may actually be harmed by the college experience even though a degree may be attained. We will be better served if we direct the poorly equipped away from our institutions of "Higher Learning" and permit the faculties to develop the capabilities of the gifted. By definition, the University is a Community of Scholars.

Now to come on along, my first teaching was as a high school athletic coach and principal of the grammar school, as we called it . . .

Jenkins: This was where?

Curry: At Melvin, Texas. This is a small, Swedish farming community--ranching, farming--and they were dead serious about their school. And they were dead serious about how much it was costing them. While I was teaching they simply refused to pay their taxes for a half year. They thought the tax rate was inequitable. It was a little town and the ranchers in the surrounding community and the school board, somehow in assessing school taxes on property, got the ranchers into the notion that they were paying too much of the load, and they just didn't pay taxes. Well, that was an interesting experience. The school closed about the first of February or January. In fact, we didn't go back after Christmas. We eventually got paid, but they had no school that whole spring.

Now when we get to the higher education at the college, university level, I don't know how much difference I see today compared to my days as a student, with this kind of an exception. Most of us who were getting degrees in the early 1920's, the number of students in the University of Texas at Austin when I was there, were not from the elite affluent society as we have them today. There were a few. I had a roommate whose father was a big cotton buyer and merchant over in east Texas, and his son was one of the affluents, but the other two guys that had a room next to ours, were just farm boys like I am, working their way through. I would say eighty percent of the student body was ⁱⁿ that same situation. Although, I guess, of the girls, quite a few of their parents were in such a position at least they didn't have to work and could drive their automobiles and spend money. The guys generally were middle income or lower middle income families and dead serious about what they were up to.

Jenkins: Were you aware of the people who were going east to the big schools, or were you out of touch with them?

Curry: No, I had no knowledge that this was going on. To what degree it was going on I have no idea. It just didn't occur to me that you would go to school anyplace except in Texas, near home. You couldn't afford to go away from home. At least out of state. Well, as a student at the University of Michigan, this was a brand new experience.

I had never been outside the state of Texas when I left to go to the University of Michigan. This was in 1935, I guess. I found it very interesting to be in an environment with people whose backgrounds were so different to mine. Even the farm boys in Michigan and Ohio and Illinois, their experiences and their background was different from a cotton farmer's here in the state of Texas. They were much bigger in terms of the kind of income that the farms produced and the diversity of products which they produced in the ready market for nearly everything that they did produce.

Jenkins: When you were preparing to go up there, did you feel that you were going into an intellectual group that might be different to what you were accustomed to? Were you in any way uncomfortable about going?

Curry: Not in that sense, because I just had no inkling of what the environment was going to be. The thing that bothered me a bit was that one of my neighbors, my closest friend my age, I was at their house and my friend's daddy came in and something was said about me going to go to Ann Arbor, Michigan. And he looked at me and said, "You will freeze to death up there. You don't know how to live in that kind of climate." And this bothered me a little bit. I knew it was going to get cold, but I said to my mother when she was saying "can you live up there?" I said, "Well, I don't know, but I guess about two-thirds of the people in

the United States live up in there, or at least in areas that get as cold as they do around Detroit, and if they can live I can, too." Well to get back to what took place in the educational structure at Michigan. They had students in the doctoral program from all over the world, which was a totally new experience. And this made you wonder. You know these foreign students in a doctoral program at Michigan are very highly selected students. And at that time, and maybe still are I don't know, they were subsidized by their federal governments. They were sent to that institution for a specific purpose. And they were hand picked to do it.

Jenkins: Were there very many of them? Percentagewise?

Curry: In the doctoral program, yes, I would say twenty or twenty-five percent, from all over.

Jenkins: Nothing new, then?

Curry: No. Well, they were, as I say, very gifted people. In economics and business, only men. There were no women in that group. Now I suppose in other divisions at the University of Michigan there may have been women students from these foreign countries, but I didn't have any contact with them. This was an interesting experience in another sense, in that you don't know whether you can compete with this kind of thing. I suppose it is a bit like playing high school athletics and going to college, can you make the team? And when you leave college as a professional athlete, can you make the pros? Or do you even want to try? That was the first question. Well, now looking at education today

in the broad sense I have no quarrel, no debate in my mind but what is being done at all levels of education is superior to what it was a half century ago, perhaps better than it was a quarter century ago, but I am now beginning to question what is being done in terms of cost benefit effectiveness. What can you do, in terms of educating our great natural resource of our young people, to make the "kind of citizens"--who knows what kind of citizens we really want. But we have to have some kind of objective as to what we want, what influence we want to have to bear on the students at all levels of our educational process. And I think the goal setters are very fuzzy in their thinking about what outcomes they want. They are even fuzzier about how to go about getting to those outcomes. And I think as I reflect on it you see the same mentality and policy making decisions that seem to say to themselves, "Look, if we throw enough money at this problem it will solve it." And we see that in all facets of the public or the non-profit sector of our society. "Just throw money at it. Let's see what good it will do."

 Their intentions are good, but they have no regard for how much is it going to cost to find out. And then once they find out that it isn't working. . . well, you just can't get them to change their mind about it. They got a mind fixed that they started out to solve the problem this

way and, by golly, they are going to solve it if they have to spend all the rest of the money in two Midas' baskets. You can't change their mind, apparently. And so we see in our public schools and our universities all kinds of programs. And we have, I think, another development at the university level, and I would say also at the public school level. When I started teaching you did it for maybe one or two reasons. In my case, there weren't any other jobs. This was the depression. Or it was a way to acquire some savings so you could go back to school. Those who were in the schools teaching at the time, the ones that were middle aged and more, they were in teaching because it was a calling. They didn't think of themselves as "professional" or anything of that sort. They were called to teach the same as a preacher is called to preach. And they would tolerate almost any kind of environment and just go on teaching because they loved the children, and they loved their mission in life to teach. Well, you look at what takes place in education today. The teacher from the first grade on wants a higher and higher salary, and he or she is likely to be teaching because that is going to pay more than the starting job in the private sector. And number two, it offers a way to get this pretty good income without doing much work. And to me, I just can't conceive of teachers in our public schools having what they call "workdays," where the students don't go, but the teachers go to catch

up on their paperwork or prepare an exam. I don't know what they do. Maybe if I went up and sat around and tried to find out what they do on a workday I wouldn't have such contempt for it. But, my heavens, what do you do through the week when the normal operation of your school work is going on? Do you have to have an extra day about once a month to catch up? Well, you look at the total environment and you don't blame them much. That is what they do in the labor unions, and in the private sector they negotiate for rest time and such things as that.

Jenkins: To what extent is this syndrome a part of the society syndrome?

Curry: I think it is simply a part of it, woof and fabric. Paid vacations, paid for everything, you know. And I think the teacher naturally responds to the total environment and said, "Gee whiz, why should we be in a semi-profession or a profession where we are imposed on and don't get these kinds of benefits." And so the school boards and governing bodies, how can they say no when everybody else has it?

Jenkins: Now are you speaking primarily of the public school system or do you include higher education?

Curry: I have been speaking of public schools, but now when we turn to the universities, junior colleges through the university level, I think they have become more and more what I would call "mercenary" in their approach to teaching. That the youth of our land, young men and young women, have the kind of intellect that does well in abstract thinking, or whatever

you want to call it, that gets the college degree and particularly a Ph.D. degree. And they get the degree and employment opportunities in the private sector, except for very limited numbers, is no better with the doctoral or Ph.D. degree than it is with a bachelor's degree. So the individual who completes a Ph.D. degree is very likely to turn to the public sector, teaching or governmental agency someplace, research or whatever. And there isn't a missionary zeal sort of thing to be in this role. It is just a matter of elimination, or least resistance or whatever you might call it, it seems to me, that causes this individual to be on a university faculty. He probably, when he started work beyond the bachelor's degree, did envision himself becoming a college teacher at some level, but the reason being that this was probably, consciously or unconsciously, the most advantageous use of his resource from his own personal gain point of view. I could be wrong, of course. But I question whether he ever really gave any thought as to whether it was the most productive use of his resource for the society or the community in which he was going to live. He was looking at it from his own advantage point and not from any contribution that he might make to better the world. So as I look at education today at all levels, there is a tremendous amount of sheer waste of resources. The waste comes, I think partly, deliberately to avoid work on the part of the teacher. And

the other part of the waste is due to the system, the decision makers, from the governing bodies to the superintendents and presidents of the institutions, in not having any clear objectives. And it boils on back down to deans in the colleges, to principals in the high schools and grade schools, to department heads. What specifically are you trying to do for the students in this department? And then when you come to your own class and your own area of expertise and you walk in the classroom at the beginning of the semester and here are forty people or thirty people or whatever the number is that are in the class, do you ever ask yourself . . .

Jenkins: What are you going to do with them.

Curry: Yeah. How are these people going to be different at the end of this semester than they are now? I don't know that I have any other comments to make on the role of education today compared to sometime in the past. The one difficult thing about it, the most dedicated, the ablest, most sincere professor, teacher, in any level of educational structure from five years on up to doctoral programs, you may have as a professor a very clear, philosophical notion as to what you think you ought to be doing as a university professor, and you may know exactly in your own mind what the students in your class, how they ought to be different at the end of the semester as to what they were at the beginning of the semester. But the problem is you have

got to wait forty years to find out whether you were right or not. So this makes it doubly difficult to sit here in this room and appraise what I have been saying as to what I see in the educational process, because there is not going to be any way to know for another twenty or twenty-five years how good this education is that you are giving them today.

Jenkins: Well, does that leave, then, the educational process at the moment considerably as an act of faith?

Curry: You have to believe that what you are doing has some validity.

Jenkins: And who do you depend on to get that value from? Department heads, deans, presidents, superintendents, the public, the goal setters?

Curry: The social structure, that is the public, can be in the direction which all education goes, but any of us who have ever been in a classroom know full well that no matter what directives are given from what level of authority or management above you, what takes place in that classroom is wholly dependent upon the individual who is directing what takes place in that classroom. And if the management, meaning, say, the regents, the trustees, the president, the department head or whoever it may be, let's say he has a strong feeling that big companies, big businesses, ought to be broken up or that he just has a bias against a big company. I know that and he is my boss. And he doesn't give me an order, but sitting around and drinking a cup of

coffee or something he just makes a comment that he wishes all of his faculty members that deal with these young people would convince them that these big businesses ought to be broken up or destroyed or whatever he would like to see done. Okay, I go back and teach my class, maybe it is accounting I, or whatever it is, and I can do exactly the opposite of what he would like to see. Very subtly, maybe so. The way you feel as an individual I don't believe there is any power above you that can cause you to impart to that student his philosophy instead of yours. Maybe there are people different from what I am, I am sure there are, but I just can't believe that the student won't detect the lack of sincerity you have in trying to present somebody else's philosophy or point of view. And they will detect the sincerity of your point of view. They may not agree with it, but they will darn well know whether this guy is on the level or not. So what we are saying is, whatever outcomes you may have from students in any teacher's class depend almost wholly on what that teacher wants to have come out of that class.

Jenkins: Do you see--and we may get into this more deeply when I get into the "big" syndrome, but I think of it now so I ask it now--do you see any major problem or benefit out of having students one hour hearing this professor with this point of view, bell rings, he goes across the hall and he hears another professor with an opposite point of view.

Does this detract from or aid in the educational system?

Curry: Well, you would think it would be of benefit, it would aid the learning process. But to what degree I'm getting more and more doubtful, for this simple reason. Once you have a point of view established, even though it is based on almost nothing, you just seem to feel that way. Then you shut your mind. You don't listen to any opposing points of view. You see it, I think most dramatically, in political campaigns. Next year we are going to be confronted with another presidential election. How many times are you going to listen or read anything that the opposing candidate says.

Jenkins: Except to realize how poorly he thinks.

Curry: Yeah, right. And I think to a lesser degree you get that in the classroom at the high school level, the college level. Here is a fellow who believes or doesn't believe something or other, and he goes to one class and this point of view suits him and this is a great instructor and he listens to him, and he just thinks, "Oh, he is good." And he goes across the hall to the other guy's class and the other fellow thinks differently, so he spends most of his time thinking about something else. He doesn't pay any attention.

Jenkins: But an alternative to that being getting everyone on the same wave length, what do you get there?

Curry: Well, I don't know that you can get everybody on the same wave length. The advantage of having these opposing points of view is that maybe in this class of thirty-five, twenty of them listen to the professor in room A and fifteen then listen to the one in room B, and all you do is reinforce their biases and prejudices, but you don't have all of them with the same bias and the same prejudice, which is better than having them all of one mind.

Jenkins: Let's go back and look at another thing. You indicated that you thought that today, at every level, education was probably being done better than it was twenty-five, thirty, fifty years ago. Let me explore that with you a little bit. Is that an indication that we are simply teaching things that we didn't know then or that what is being taught is being taught better?

Curry: Well, I think it is, in considerable degree, just a matter of better resources, technology has come to bear. And when I was in high school, sure we had a building, but the lighting was poor, the ventilation was poor. We didn't have enough classrooms. In our chemistry and biology laboratories, well, . . . there is no high school in the United States today that doesn't have much greater equipment, materials, resources to work in the laboratory. The first course I took in chemistry at the college level, the laboratory, gee, no high school in the state would even think of a laboratory as poorly equipped as that one was.

So a good deal of it is simply that you have better facilities with which to do the job of teaching. The second one is that the number of students per class is much smaller than it was in my days of going through school. Hopefully, the teacher in the classroom is better prepared, better equipped, better educated.

Jenkins: Do you have reason to believe that is true?

Curry: Well, they have got more degrees and more credentials. I question, you know, whether in the true sense they are better educated.

Jenkins: Well, this is what I am getting at.

Curry: One detriment though is the lack of motivation, I think, the degree of motivation of the teacher of a half century ago compared to the one today.

Jenkins: Well, I guess this is what I am getting at. If a big part of the purpose of a public education system is to better equip folks for living in this world, are we doing a comparable today--better, worse, about as well--as they were doing when you were sitting in that room of fifty or thirty or whatever?

Curry: How do you know? Let's wait another thirty-five years and find out. Or you can look back at, how well did the educational system or to what degree, what contribution did educational exposure to our people who are now, say, fifty-five years old. How well were they equipped through their educational experience to have an abundant life and contribute

to the betterment of society over their active work career? How well did the educational system equip them? Gee, I don't know. Because of the diversity of human beings, some of them benefited greatly. I suppose you could make a pretty strong case that others were actually-- it was detrimental to their future. And I suspect that is happening today.

Jenkins: You spoke of credentials, that lots more folks have credentials today. Certainly as more and more people go through institutions of higher learning and get degrees, the higher degrees are beginning to get out into the public school system. There are more doctors' degrees in the public school systems. Do you view this as good, bad, indifferent?

Curry: Well, how do you know? My own quick reaction would be that very little . . . I think the impact could be inconsequential. So what, a guy is superintendent of schools or a high school principal or chemistry teacher and he has a doctor's degree. What did he learn that he is going to be able to teach better by having a doctor's degree than having a bachelor's degree? I think the key to it is how well does he relate, tune in, to the capabilities and needs of the students that are out there in front of him, and I don't see that the added degrees are going to help him all that much. In fact I think they may even be a handicap.

Jenkins: I was wondering if you were going to raise that possibility. What do you have in mind? What possible handicap?

Curry: Well, he wants to feed his ego by showing those students out there how much more he knows than they do. And if it isn't an ego trip, it is very difficult, you know, when you are teaching something on an elementary level, and you have got many things yet to do in the course of the four months or whatever that you are going to have these students in class, but you get on topic that you wrote your dissertation on or that you had two or three courses in it and this is only one paragraph in the text, that fellow who has the doctorate in this field is going to find it awfully difficult not to just go on and on and make a week or two weeks out of something that ought to be covered in five minutes in terms of his total objective for that course. So I think that becomes a handicap. The first thing you know the semester is over, and he has only covered three chapters of twelve.

Jenkins: So much educated is not necessarily well educated?

Curry: Well, you can be over educated for the work you are attempting to do. It is the same sort of thing that you have in the private sector when, here is an individual he is a top flight engineer, but due to the state of the economy he is out of a job. And he goes looking for another job. Well, he has been a very high level employee, and he comes to your firm, and you look at him, and you can see that here is a top

quality human being and a real outstanding specialist in his field. So what do you say? "Well, you are over qualified for anything we have. We would love to have you, but, gee, we would have to put you at a job that-- we would be embarrassed to put you in that kind of work. You are over qualified for anything that we have to do." Well, I think that is what you are getting in doctoral candidates or doctoral degree people teaching at elementary and high school levels. Now I think there is possibly an exception. That here is an individual in our society today that just has a missionary zeal to teach at the fifth grade level or something of that sort, and he just educates himself, gets every tool in his bag that he can put in there to do a better and better job at this level of educating students, and he could be a great asset, a great contribution. But I think those would be great exceptions.

Jenkins: There has been a lot written, as you know, about the possibility that a similar "over-education" of the American public has resulted in a lot of people having credentials which they think entitles them to certain things in the world which simply are not there. Do you see any dangers in that?

Curry: Well, I don't suppose any more than I see a danger in, oh, an apprentice plumber who gets his union card, and all of a sudden he is entitled to fifteen dollars an hour whether he does anything or not much, you know. But, yes, I think that

whole thing is a potential danger. I think we touched on it maybe a while ago. The teachers today, I think not just teachers but in our total society, the private sector and the public sector, expect a high compensation, dollar wise, for less and less productivity. They don't want to work all that much for what you are going to get paid. And you see it in our labor unions. Now, with inflation and fairly high hourly rates anyway, talking about now going to a four day week. That is going to be the thrust of the eighties, to a greater retirement benefits, to ever increasing health and accident protection, to longer paid vacations, and then it is the same thing in both the public or private or nonprofit sector. People are looking at what this group gets and what that group gets and if that group can get six weeks paid vacation after ten years of employment, then this group says, "why not." If this group can get what we now think of as forty hours a week pay for thirty-two hours work, then everybody is going to want that. And in our school systems if you can draw your salary teaching twelve hours a week, and here is an institution in Oklahoma or Illinois or whatever and pretty soon they are getting their salary for teaching three classes a week instead of four, how long is it going to be before everybody is demanding that the work load is three classes, not four. You have seen it since you have been on the faculty. Nobody ever dreamed of teaching any less than five classes a week, fifteen semester hours

a week. Now it would be a crime if you had to teach five classes, and if you can think up some extra duty like reading two or three master's theses in a semester or having a chairmanship of a committee or something you don't want to teach four, you ought to have only three or two. So in answer to your question, yes, these trends, I think, are dangerous. You look at one of the real base causes of our inflation in the world today, and particularly in the United States, is that over the decades we have had an increase of productivity measured in output per hour of work in units of output of ranging, I guess, averaging four or five percent up until the mid-1960's, and then it began to taper off. And from 1965 until 1975 we probably had an increase in productivity of between one and two percent, and for the last couple of years maybe one-tenth or two-tenths of one percent. Well, you look at wages going up say eight or ten percent a year and the units of output from those wages going up at most one or two percent a year, what do you think is going to happen in price levels? We want more for doing less, to put it in a nutshell.

Jenkins: How have you experienced personally or seen the growth of greater numbers of minorities getting into the educational system? Minorities in any way that you want to label minorities. Women, blacks, browns, whatever.

Curry: Well as you know I majored in accounting at the University of Texas for a bachelor's degree in the 1920's and early

1930's, and I think in all the accounting classes above the first year of elementary or principles of accounting, in classes of thirty, thirty-five or forty there might be one, sometimes two, ladies in the class.

Jenkins: This was . . .

Curry: U.T. Austin. And those who got bachelor's degrees in accounting, I think in my class there was one girl, but I think the reason she did it, she and one of the young men in that class were together all the time and were fixing to get married. I don't know whether she was taking the accounting just to be with him. What I am saying is in education for business, and women being educated for management or careers other than secretarial in the late twenties and thirties, it was quite the exception. In terms of ethnic groups I don't remember any blacks. Certainly I just don't believe there were any through the bachelor's degree level, and here in Texas not through the master's degree level. There were occasionally a foreign student, a Japanese or Chinese or mostly it would have been a European, in the master's classes at U.T. Austin. But when I went to Michigan I believe there was, oh, maybe fifteen or twenty black students on the whole Michigan campus in the mid-1930's. They were welcome to come, but they just weren't there. There were no black students in any of the classes that I was in on the doctoral level at Michigan. I don't recall seeing a black student in the building of business administration.

Certainly there were no black faculty members or anything of that sort. There were in the doctoral program Chinese and Japanese and some other foreigners that I at the time couldn't identify. One or two I know were from India, but there were Europeans, French or Italian or whatever, but just one or two was all. Now when I went to the University of Pennsylvania, here again in the Wharton School in the three years I was there I maybe saw a half dozen black students but virtually nothing else. I don't remember any Chinese, Japanese, Europeans. The Wharton School population, in their program was mostly New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the New England seaboard area, with a sprinkling number from all of the United States. But I don't remember very many if any foreign students. Certainly I didn't have any in my classes.

Jenkins: How about women?

Curry: No women. None. In fact the Wharton School was an all-man school. They simply didn't admit women. Now they did have . . . for example, the University of Pennsylvania had a women's college. And one of the faculty members who officed right next to me taught accounting over in the women's college. But you didn't put women in the Wharton School classes. They were across the street in another classroom.

Jenkins: Were they taking essentially the same accounting course?

Curry: Oh, yes. It was the same course, identical.

Jenkins: What about as you came south?

Curry: When I came back to Texas in 1944 there were certainly no blacks. The Mexicans could come, but the state had a law, I guess prohibiting the blacks from attending a state supported white school. And then you had this case of a black making application for admission to North Texas, and a Sherman judge held that the institution had to admit him. Well, this was a test case. I think he had no intention of coming to North Texas. He was just being an individual that the National Association for Advancement of Colored People had chosen to be the guinea pig in this test case. So the judge ruled that he had to be admitted. Well, the following fall then a big, buxom, black woman from Fort Worth showed up at the North Texas campus to register. I don't know what the registration procedure was, but she was a middle-aged woman in business over in Fort Worth, but here again she had been picked, I am sure, by the Association to see if North Texas would in fact admit a black student on the basis of the judge's ruling. And, oh, I guess, about 8:30 one morning President Matthews called me, and he said, "A black woman is going to register to take courses in business administration." And I said, "Okay." Well, I remember she was going to take two or three courses on a part time basis, since she had the business in Fort Worth and would commute to Fort Worth. Well, okay, we meet classes and everything goes smoothly. And then a day or two

later, along about 8:30 in the morning, President Matthews calls again and he says, "There is a crew here on campus from one of the Dallas television stations, and they want to take pictures of this black woman attending class over in the BA building." We were in the old demonstration school building at that time. And I said, "Well, that is a heck of a note. We've got congressional medal of honor students in our classes, and outstanding athletes and outstanding people from military service in our classrooms. I wonder why they have never been interested in coming over and making a television show out of the outstanding accomplished people that we have in our classrooms." "Well," he said, "I don't know about that, but I have told this camera crew that they could take all the film they want outside the building, but we prefer them not to take pictures of the classroom. It would be disruptive to the regular class routine." Well, I had hardly hung up the phone, and I walked out in the hall and here was, I believe three young men with all that big television equipment and electric lights, and, man, they had to have three people to carry all the equipment. And they were setting up in one of the classrooms there. And I went in and asked them who they were, just as if I had no idea what it was all about, and they told me. They were going to film the proceedings in that class. And I said, "Why?" "Well, you've got a Mrs. So-and-So," I don't remember her name, "in class and she is the first

black woman that has been in class over here, and we want to make a special of it." Well, I said, "I don't want you in this classroom." "Well, we've got a job to do and we are going to be in here." Well at that time I was a sponsor or a faculty observer or whatever we called them of the Geezel Fraternity. And the Geezel Fraternity was made up almost entirely of athletes. And as the class bell rang and students started milling around in the halls, every one of these big football players that came by, this was early in the fall, I said, "Hey, come here. I have something that I want you to help me to do." And I got about six or eight, including old Bill Bishop and Quincy Armstrong and a lot of these huge guys that later became great pro football players. So the class traffic had quieted down and students were in the classroom, I just said, "You see those cameras in there and those three guys?" "Yep." "I don't want them in there." And I said, "Don't you reckon you could get them out?" "Don't worry about it, we will take care of it." So I walked in with them and I say, "Now I told you that I didn't want disruption in the classroom with you filming with your equipment and so forth. So we would like you to move it." "No, sir, we are going to do this." And I just said to the boys, "Just move everything outside. Take it plumb out of the building, and put it out there somplace. Don't damage the equipment. Just get it out of here. And get these guys out while you are doing it."

Well, you know, they looked over at them. "You fellows didn't want to be in here anyhow, did you?" So out they go, and after the class they did take pictures of this woman leaving the building, and it was on the news-cast, you know. The color line had been broken at North Texas. Well, she didn't stay in school more than a couple of weeks and then disappeared.

Jenkins: Did the camera crew say anything about not being able to . . .

Curry: They did mention the fact that they were able to make pictures only outside the building. That "Officials" at the college wouldn't permit filming in the classroom. They did make that observation. Well, then I guess the following fall, Otis Mitchell called over to Dr. Matthews and said, "There is a black boy who came out to the football field just a while ago, and he wants to get a uniform and enroll. What should I do?" And Mitchell's story is that Dr. Matthews said, "Well, put him in a uniform and let's see if he can play." Well, that was Abner Haynes.

Jenkins: I remember it well.

Curry: And then the next day Abner brought this King boy up with him, and the two of them then were the first who had football scholarships.

Jenkins: And were really fulltime enrollees.

Curry: Yes. They were the first two real fulltime students. And fortunately, Abner particularly, became a campus favorite and a great football player, and it helped to break the color

barrier. And I think in a university faculty environment you would expect ready acceptance of anyone who has the resources to do the kind of work that you expect to be done in a college classroom. We had no bias, you didn't, I didn't. I had had black students before, very few, but who cares what color he is as long as he has the resources to perform? Now getting to the question of what I would feel about minority, ethnic groups, of women or religious group or any other kind of minority however you might classify minorities. When you come right down to it, I suppose there is not a human being in the world that couldn't be put in a minority group of some kind, in age or height or weight or I.Q. or big feet or little feet or something or other. He could be a minority. So how do I react to what we have had in the last twenty-five years in terms minority groups and the attitudes of the white majority toward minorities.

Jenkins: Let me check here just a second. Now over those twenty-five years at the time you retired from North Texas what kind of growth in, say, blacks in the College of Business and at the graduate level, and women do you recall our having?

Curry: I think I can be more accurate about what the ratio of women to men for the university as a whole. When I came here, and for the first twenty-five years, or just about, the enrollment at North Texas was sixty-one or two percent men, and the other women. Now I understand it is about fifty fifty.

Maybe a few more women than men in the university campus. Now in the College of Business I would say from 1945 to 1960 or thereabouts, eighty-five, ninety percent men, ten or fifteen percent women. Most of the women in the fifties were in the business education-secretarial science program. An occasional few in marketing and each year maybe one or two or three women would graduate with degrees in accounting. Rare that they were in finance or insurance. I don't know if there were any in management or not, very few. Occasionally you would have one or two. When I left five years ago I don't know what the percentages would be, but in accounting I know there was a steadily increasing number of women majoring in accounting. I don't know, maybe forty or fifty percent of those in marketing. It would just be an off-the-hat sort of observation. More women in all aspects and all facets of education for business and management positions. Quite a few women doing MBA degrees.

Jenkins: How about doctoral?

Curry: Sprinkling, and this not, oh, what, a very small fraction of the people doing doctorates are women in business.

Jenkins: But we had some.

Curry: There are some. Well, of the, what, fifty or sixty doctorates that have been conferred in business would be more than four or five of them women. Three or four, I don't know.

Jenkins: Three or four maybe. I don't recall but two.

Curry: One or two of them came out of, well, they were already teaching.

- Jenkins: Yeah.
- Curry: And were not really coming up from the high schools through the educational process. They were already mature people. That is mature in the mid-twenties at least. Most of them were around thirty when they really started the doctoral program, because they had teaching positions and this was the logical thing for them to do.
- Jenkins: What is your recollection, I remember who it was, but I don't remember when the first master's degree in business was granted to a black at North Texas? Jim Jolly is his name, but I don't remember the date.
- Curry: I remember Jim, but I don't know. It was around 1960 I imagine.
- Jenkins: It was in that building, yeah, I believe you are right. It was in that building. Certainly in the undergraduate program at North Texas we became probably, I've heard probably the highest enrollment of blacks in the state of Texas. Have you heard that?
- Curry: I heard that, yes, in the earlier years, and it might have been true. As I say, the administration, we had the . . . I guess North Texas was the first state supported school that had the court order to admit this black student, and as a consequence this opened the door here on this campus earlier than elsewhere.
- Jenkins: And our location . . .
- Curry: Yes, and our location in the metropolitan area. Now it's

true that Houston's percentage of blacks is greater than it is in this metropolitan area. But, I don't know, the environment was different and they didn't have a court order down there to admit students. And Rice wasn't about to admit them, anyway, at that time. And I guess if Rice wouldn't do it the University of Houston wasn't too eager either. But at any rate this was the early start for them. Most of the blacks were not interested in business. They wanted to study psychology, sociology, music. But education for business just didn't appeal to the black mores, or whatever you want to say. I think it was in large measure the kind of propaganda that they had experienced all their lives about equality, and this seemed to be the direction to go. If they came to us in the School of Business, personnel was the area they were most interested in following, which fit the whole pattern of what the black seemed to have been, in my way of thinking, misguided in the way he could fit into the mainstream of economic life in this country.

Jenkins: Well, what happened? Did the black enrollment pick up over the years while you were there? I know today it is quite large.

Curry: Is it large today?

Jenkins: Lots of black business majors. At least I see lots of them.

Curry: Well, this has happened then in the last six or eight years because when I left the dean's office, oh, we might have had

thirty, forty blacks out of, what, twenty-five hundred students or something like that. Very few.

Jenkins: Well, I have no idea what the numbers are, but I know in any given class I may have five to ten sometimes. And at the graduate level, too, it has picked up considerably.

Curry: In a class of thirty or forty, when I left the dean's office, you might have three or four outside, and in some classes you wouldn't have any. But the numbers were small. My feelings are this. Any nation, and this applies to the United States perhaps with greater impact than any other country I can think of. The United States so long cheated itself out of the great human resource and contribution that gifted women and gifted blacks and gifted Hispanics and other minority groups could contribute. It seems to me a tragedy from the Civil War to 1945 or '50 that we kept the door closed to the gifted black person. And as a consequence society lost the input of extraordinary gifted black people, simply because there was no way they could make their contribution. The door wasn't closed to the gifted women in the sense that there was some law prohibiting them from entering various and sundry professions and work avenues, but the mores of the age did prevent them, the peer pressures and so on, did prevent the gifted women who would have liked to have done things other than shorthand and typewriting and sales work or the cash register at some supermarket or five and ten store. Women who wanted to work or had to

work were simply shovelled into places for women. That is about the way the male population looked at it. But now we have opened the doors, or the women have opened the doors for themselves. Whatever the reason, we are now in a society where a gifted person who has the motivation can make his contribution, and I think we are richer for it. I think it's great that sex, religion, color--now as we look at the remainder of the twentieth century--has almost no bearing on what an individual in this country may be able to accomplish. But I am a little concerned, I guess is the right word, that just because this individual is black or female or belongs to some "way out" religious group, and I am more likely looking at the black and the women, being pushed into positions of responsibility and authority without qualifications that are anywhere near a white male. And this bothers me. Now I think if you had a Margaret Thatcher in the United States, for example, or somebody of her stature or anywhere close to that, you would see them very likely elected president next year. Or if you had a black whether he was outstanding or not that had the charisma that is needed in a political campaign he might very well be elected president of the United States. And I think this is going to happen before the twenty-first century. Well, I don't know if we ever elected presidents very wisely on the basis of their qualifications anyway. It depends on how you describe qualifications, and maybe this is all right.

At a little lower level, you see every corporation today getting on the band wagon putting women on the board of directors, blacks on the board of directors, other minority ethnic groups on the board of directors. Well, this is pressure in part from the government. Whether these people belong on the board of directors of General Motors and Ford and Chrysler and General Foods and so forth, you have to wonder. What can they contribute? True that they have selected women and blacks that have, well, they have attained something more than just the average human being attained all right enough, and I have no objection to it, but I have to raise the question. If you look around, what was the main reason for putting this woman or this black or this Mexican or whatever on the board of directors? Was it because they had unique contributions they could give you or was it because this is a woman? If you have to look at it up and down and say it was because of the minority group. So in that sense I am a little concerned.

Jenkins: Moving into a little different area, over your lifetime you have seen cities, chambers of commerce want to get bigger. You have seen businesses want to get bigger and conglomerates came into their heyday. Educational institutions seem to want to get bigger. Do you have any observations and comments on the advantages and disadvantages of bigness itself?

Curry: I don't think there is any great virtue in size or bigness per se. There has to be a reason for being big. I used to

ask my students, "What is the most popular automobile in the United States? Who makes it?" Well, General Motors makes it. Well, then, how come General Motors to get so big? Did they get big because they wanted to or did they get big because you made them get big? Well, now to back off a little bit from this point of view. Many activities, business activities, in our technological society today, it is a matter of economy of size. No small company had any possibility of surviving in the steel industry, in the automobile manufacturing industry. You can look all around you where you have big companies, there is no way a small company can survive in that industry. It is just that simple. How could you have a small electric utility, except a municipal? Well, the capital required is simply beyond the capacity . . . and the size of the manufacturing unit has to be so large that a small one would be so inefficient that there would be no way it could compete. So there are reasons why you ought to have very large companies in the private sector. Now you look at the colleges and universities. If you are looking at cost effectiveness, how small can an educational institution be. Well, it has to be large enough to be cost effective, looking at the dollars and cents, has to be large enough with enough students to keep your classrooms occupied, how many hours a day? You certainly wouldn't make sense in a privately financed institution, or a publicly financed institution, to have classrooms where you meet one or two classes a day. It would be

extremely wasteful to have engineering laboratories or chemistry or physics or any science laboratory where you had one or two classes a day in that laboratory. Meaning to say, how could any business institution survive using its facilities one or two or three hours a day? You would have to operate the thing at least seven or eight hours a day. So there is a minimum size let us say . . .

Jenkins: Size in terms of enrollment or facilities?

Curry: Enrollment, relative to your facilities. You can't build a chemistry laboratory for five students and make it meaningful at all, in my view. Well, you say we build the smallest chemistry lab we know how to build that would accommodate maybe twenty students at a time. Well, you better have a hundred and twenty or fifty students in chemistry at that institution. Otherwise you have got an expensive investment here that is sitting idle. It is like those typewriters I was talking about in the office of the faculty member. Two or three hundred dollar investment and you are using it thirty or forty minutes a day. You can't justify it. So it is only natural for a department head, a dean, a president of an institution of higher education to want to build. He wouldn't be a good person in that position if he didn't have an ambition to see it bigger. Why? Well, is bigger better? It serves more people, and you get greater diversity with the larger numbers in your educational institution. Now you go back and look at the private sector on the other

hand, the conglomerate fashion that you looked at, it had several motivations. Mostly it was the board of directors, the upper level management officers in that company, but it usually came down to a chairman of the board, a very strong individual, who called the shots. And he simply wanted to build a great corporation. Maybe a monument to his name, but mostly it was simply an environment where we, the people who owned the company through our stockholdings, looked at the earnings per share in that company and that then became a multiple by which we measured how much we pay for the share of stock. And what you could do then was acquire other companies with considerable book value. And what you did was, say, here was a company with land, building, machinery, equipment, marketing facilities, transportation, whatever they had--two hundred million dollars worth of property. It has been, whatever the reasons, you can buy it. And the owners, maybe you have five people who own eighty percent of the stock in that two hundred million dollar corporation. So you say, "Hey, we will give you twenty million dollars in cash, and then we will give you a hundred and fifty million in debenture bonds or first mortgage bonds, any debt instrument, and then we will give you thirty million in the common stock of our company." So here is the acquiring company. They get two hundred million dollars of assets. They increase the number of shares of stock in their company for only thirty million. Well, if

this company can earn ten to twelve or fifteen percent on the two hundred million dollars of assets, look how much that is going to add to the earnings per share of the company in spite of the fact that we had interest to pay on the debt. But you are paying, in the days of this conglomerate acquisition fever, the interest rate is five or six percent at most. So you earn ten or twelve, skim off that difference, and it goes to the common stock. So you get ever increasing earnings per share by acquiring companies, and this puts the market value of the stock higher and higher and higher. So that was the name of the game.

Jenkins: Was there any indication, as a generalization, that this improves the performance of the individual companies in here? Improved it or hurt it or was there any pattern that you know of?

Curry: I don't know that you could generalize. It would take an awful lot of research to determine whether there was a general pattern or not. In many cases, yes, it improves the performance of the acquired company. Because one of the reasons that you could acquire this company, the return on its investment was not all that good, and as a consequence the stockholders had no great reluctance to see somebody else take it over. Or it was a company that had been family built, and the individuals in the family who had built the company were now getting old, or had already gotten old, and

wanted to get out of the responsibility of managing the company, or wanted to get the thing in shape where they could transfer ownership to the company without the burdensome estate tax destroying the family ownership. At any rate there were always reasons why a company was on the market to be acquired. Now they may have fought the acquisition, but nevertheless there was something there that caused it to be a sitting duck for a company that wanted it.

Jenkins: I take it that this conglomerate era has subsided somewhat, from what you say.

Curry: Yeah, it's picking up again though, yes.

Jenkins: Why did it subside?

Curry: Well, I guess there were several reasons. One, there were laws passed that in many cases is this, accounting wise, a merger where you had to bring everything on the books at the acquired value and show the gain on the acquisition, and that sort of thing. So the laws began to come into play to make it somewhat more difficult to report added earnings by virtue of the fact that you acquired this company. Another reason was, the number of sitting ducks that were real prizes. if you could get them, steadily decreased. Another one was that the smaller companies, sometimes a little company acquired a bigger one, but the company to be acquired, management got ever more sophisticated and wanted more and more for their company, to where it wasn't such

a bargain after all. And then I think one of the great reasons, or one of the reasons why so many managers of would-be conglomerates found out that this synergism, you know, that six and four make fifteen instead of ten by acquiring the assets of another company, or the management of another company, or whatever it was that the other company had that would so greatly increase the productivity and the profits of the combined company. Sometimes it was a genius out there in marketing that you wanted in your company, and you try to hire him and, no, he is loyal to the group he is working for. So you just buy his company and that is the way you get him. Or they have got a president of a company over there, and he is giving you fits in your line of business. His company is just too good for you, so you go over and buy him, company and all. But a great many of these acquisitions turn sour. Too many just bought a company for the sake of acquiring it and making their company bigger, and their management expertise in running that kind of a company just didn't exist. And as a consequence a good many of these acquisitions became white elephants. And it then became apparent that you don't just run out helter skelter, willy nilly and acquire a company without knowing how you are going to manage this thing after you get it.

Jenkins: So you say now it seems to be picking up again, though.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: For what reason?

Curry: Because it is much easier to buy existing plant facilities than it is to build them. You look at the financial reports of these companies and here is their buildings, machinery, equipment, fixed assets, listed at cost less the estimated used up cost and the net undepreciated value. And you look at the dollars of earnings of this company and you say, "How much would it cost to reproduce the facilities this company now has?" And you look at the figure they've got on their balance sheet and you say, "Heavens, it would take four times or three times that many dollars to build what those guys have got. So let's see if we can buy them out." So the answer to your question "why is the merger, consolidation, acquisition thing picking up," it is simply because to build a company today, or a building or a factory, is so expensive that you can pay what looks like a . . . here is a company whose shares of stock are selling for thirty dollars a share, and you look at it and say, "We could pay sixty dollars a share for that stock and still get the company for less than it would cost us to build what they have got." So the reason is just what I have said. The cost of building versus the cost of buying what you need to expand your company's productivity, or you need more products, or you need to diversify your product line, so you find a company that is already doing that and buy it.

Jenkins: Let's switch now to cities and get your view of the growth of cities and the benefits and disadvantages and attitude toward growth.

Curry: Well, I am certainly not one who would have any worthwhile judgement on what a city ought to do in terms of growth. Cities are forever looking for new industry, whether it is the private sector or public sector it doesn't matter. If you can get a federal office of some kind located in your city, you go after it. If you can get a new business to come to your city, every chamber of commerce, every city has an industrial committee working toward getting new industry for the city. Why? Well, it brings employment opportunities for your citizens, it broadens the property tax base. I guess once again it goes back to this human characteristic. How do you achieve if you are mayor of a city? How do you achieve if you are a member of the chamber of commerce? And what is the measure of achievement if you are a university president or a school superintendent or whatever? Why, you say ten years ago when I took over the superintendent or the president of the college or mayor of the city or whatever, the manager of the chamber of commerce, population was thus, and now look we are twenty percent bigger than that, or ten percent bigger than that. You don't have any meaningful way to say, "Look, when I took over the city, the quality of life was this. Now five years later we have had a twenty percent increase." What are you talking about?

Who knows what the quality of life is in a city, or country either? So you have a quantitative measure in growth figures, and if you are any good as a manager of any kind, you want to grow. You want a measure of your contribution, and the only measure you have is in this quantitative area. If we knew how to measure qualitative improvement, then I think we could get away from the natural, unavoidable drive to get bigger. Now here you are at North Texas State University. During Dr. Matthews, seventeen years, I guess, the university grew from what, four thousand or so to seventeen or eighteen thousand, sixteen, I don't know what the figures would show, but a lot of growth. The campus grew from X number of buildings to X number of buildings. The dollars invested in the campus grew from here to there. How much quality improvement was there on the campus in those seventeen years? No way to measure it, really. It is just a matter of opinion. Some think it is worse and some think it is better, I guess. And there are too many other variables or outside influences other than what the president could say, "Look what happened while I was president." Well, you have got the same thing in the private sector. The quantitative measure is all the manager has to reflect his tenure of holding that responsible position.

Jenkins: In a city like Dallas for instance, are there also, though, some quantitative measures which may indicate that bigness

may be getting out of hand, even quantitative measures?

Curry: Oh, yes. One of the things that bothers rapid growth is you are bringing in new industry, and it takes a thousand people, new employees at that company, that plant. Well, are there unemployed people in the community that move in and provide the employment? Generally not. They don't have the skills that this requires. Some of them will, but we'll say half of the people have to be brought in from elsewhere. Well this, say, five hundred families move into your community, and it is true that the plant and the houses and so forth provide a tax base to pay for city services including schools and water and sewer and streets and so on, but they are here now, right now, and the kids are going to be in school in the fall. And the houses are being built, so you don't have the tax base. The tax base lags by some time span, and a considerable time span generally, from the time you must begin providing the services. And so where do you get the money to hire the teachers? Where do you get the money to build the schools that you have got to have a long time before this new factory and these people who came in pay enough taxes to build that new school?

Jenkins: How about the number of automobiles attempting to get by a given point?

Curry: That's what I meant a while ago when you had the streets to build and the highways and thoroughfares. As the population grows you reach a point somewhere along the line

where your existing main arteries of traffic simply won't handle the traffic. Well now what do you do?

Jenkins: Of course, as we know now, it is not just a matter of the number of people, the attitude of the people about transportation has a lot to do with that.

Curry: Yes, that is true, and we look at what we have here in the United States, and it is not unique to the United States, but I think only in degree. In the European countries that we have visited, the automobile congestion is about the same as it is in the cities here in the United States. Two dollar gasoline doesn't seem to have had any impact. The streets are absolutely jammed with automobiles and traffic snarls and everything else, the same as they are over here. But they do have a much greater fraction of their people on their public transportation. Now what would it be like if the same percentage of their population was in their automobile, all you would have were streets full of automobiles that couldn't move, I would guess. But here in the United States for twenty-five or thirty years the United States government has imposed price ceilings controls on oil and gas. And as a consequence while other prices were doubling, tripling, oil and gas are still the same price. Well, what is the incentive for our major oil companies or even wildcatters, individuals, going out and trying to find some oil? The costs of finding it, the odds are ten to one, will be greater than he can get for it when he gets it on

stream. So only the major companies would risk drilling for oil and gas. And if it wasn't a real big find, it wasn't economical to even hook it up. The cost of building the transportation system, even after you found it, was too great to make it a marketable production. So here we finally reached the point where our consumption of oil and gas was exceeding the new finds, and we get excited. And the government still has controls and a policy that simply is no incentive. Particularly is it no incentive for the kind of economic unit that finds or has found historically most of the oil and gas. And that's twenty of you university professors and some promoter that knows something about drilling an oil well say, "Look, here is a tract of land. Our geologists are very high on this location. Now it is true that there is no production within forty miles of this place, but we can lease a million acres out here for a dollar an acre. And we can drill a four thousand foot well, that's where it is shallow, for maybe two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. We would like to sell you a thousand dollar interest in this well if and when it comes in." What I am saying is, a group of small investors with a promoter and probably one pretty sizeable contributor . . . maybe this whole thing is going to cost a quarter of a million and he has got, oh, fifty thousand or maybe a hundred thousand and you raise the rest from little guys and go drill the well. The odds are at least five or six .

to one that it will be a dry hole, but it is a pretty good gamble anyway.

Jenkins: Is an abundance of gasoline going to improve the transportation system of Dallas?

Curry: No. Dallas, if it hasn't already, is very rapidly running into bottlenecks of transportation in and out of the city on almost all of its highway routes. Central Expressway is already a hopelessly clogged artery. How long 35E will provide access in and out of the city during rush hours is a question. You drive in there now at rush hour morning or afternoon and you better allow at least a half hour extra if you are going to get into downtown. And even to get around the city. Say you are going from here to Houston and happen to go in there at a rush hour. The odds are you are going to have some waits. Maybe not too long, but it could be if it happens to be a little fender bumper up there up and down the road someplace you may have an hour's wait. Well to answer the question. No, the availability of gasoline will just make that situation become critical and crucial that much sooner. What they eventually do to solve it . . . You know, they are talking now about putting an overhead on Central Expressway, have that two levels, or else widen Central Expressway and make it--what is it now? four lanes? or six--make it much wider, anyway. Well, either solution is very expensive and time consuming, and by the time you get it built whether you widen it or make it two levels, it

will probably be getting inadequate again by the time you get it completed, if there is availability of gasoline. I don't go to Dallas very often, but I do go often enough that I am now curious as I drive up and down 35E on the way from here to Dallas. I kind of make a mental note of how many automobiles do I pass or pass me or I meet that have more than one person in them. And I would say, what, eighty to ninety percent have one person in that automobile. Well, the availability of gasoline just makes it worse, and I think that it is true that people do drive somewhat less with gasoline at eighty cents a gallon or seventy-five cents a gallon than they do when they got it at thirty-five cents a gallon. And I think if it goes to a dollar or more, there will be less driving somewhat, but it won't stop it. It might slow it enough that the expressways and toll roads and interstates that go in and out of Dallas, for example, might be adequate for another ten or fifteen years. Maybe twenty. But I notice the statistics now in the amount of occupancy on Amtrak, for example, is all the system can handle. That the Long Island coming into New York is now. . . you can hardly get on the train. That the bus system in many places is carrying up to five to thirty to forty percent more people than it did a few months back. So the price is having an impact. Well, how tragic it is that the government didn't decontrol, how tragic it is that they ever put controls on in the first

place. If they had done this, then you wouldn't have the bottle neck kind of thing that exists today. The price would have in a sense rationed. Now that doesn't mean that you couldn't get the gasoline at fifty cents a gallon instead of twenty-five that it was for many, many years, but that you would have improved your public transportation system and there would have been enough riders on your public transportation to have made it economically viable. But except in rush hour in Dallas, in Houston, in every city that you go to, city busses running up and down the streets with two or three people on them.

Jenkins: We just won't do it.

Curry: That's right. By golly, I want my automobile. You hear people . . . many of my friends, say we take a trip to Europe or to wherever. "How did you go?" "Oh, we flew, of course." Well, we took a trip down to Jefferson. Well, "How did you go?" "On a bus." "Gee, I wouldn't do that. I am not going anywhere that I can't have my automobile. I just don't feel comfortable in making any kind of trip without having my own transportation." Well, I would rather have my own automobile, too. But, by golly, it doesn't make much sense anymore to drive several hundred miles with one or two people.

Jenkins: Let's get back to big business, then, for a moment.

Curry: We talked about the mergers and the acquisitions and consolidations of companies. Partly economy of size, partly this

fad of the mid, well, early sixties through to the mid-seventies, of increasing earnings per share by acquiring other companies. For a number of reasons as we approached the mid-seventies this binge of acquisitions tailed off. Maybe it was declining even in the late sixties. Now it is picking up again, as I say, due to the fact that the cost of building now, relative to the cost of buying existing facilities, is so heavily loaded on the side of buying existing facilities that many companies are now where they have demand for their product greater than their existing facilities can produce, simply going out and buying somebody else's plant that will produce their line of product. Or else in many cases now here is a . . . well, say, Allied Chemical. For years, been in business seventy-five years or so. A chemical company. Well, they used to be and, say, half their business today is still industrial chemicals and some specialty chemicals. They are the company that had problems with, what was it, Keepon? That was dumping Keepon, in that lake or river or whatever it was? They got heavy in agricultural chemicals, but now they are a sizable participant in the Baltimore Canyon with Texaco. The only real find that they have had out there, and they don't know yet whether that is commercial or not. They have a sizeable stake in the North Sea with the British people. They are heavy in oil exploration and production in Indonesia. In other words they are an energy company,

an oil company. They are now in production of nylon, and this new fabric that they have come out with. They make fabric for rugs. In other words they are a big company in fabrics. And so it goes. They are, I guess you would say, a conglomerate of sorts, and they are selling off certain parts of their chemical plants that are not providing an adequate return on the dollars invested. They got heavy in coal here six or eight or ten years ago and bought some coal property. Well, they have had nothing but trouble in the coal business, partly due to strikes, partly due to the government's imposition of environmental controls of burning the coal at the mine and even mining the coal that they didn't anticipate, you know, when they bought the coal company or bought the coal land. I wouldn't be surprised but what they sell that off. So you have got a problem here of a company growing, but in fields different from what you expect by the name of the company. And it is going to continue that way. The management is committed to getting a higher return on the dollars they invest in new plant and equipment, and they will sell those that are not giving them an adequate return. You see the same thing happening in Exxon. Exxon has just this last week made a tender offer to somebody that makes small electric motors. Why do they want a manufacturing company that makes electric motors? Well, they say they have some ideas about building a much more efficient motor, and if their ideas are sound and

so on, why don't they just build their own manufacturing plant? Because they can buy it a lot cheaper than they can build it. That's why. So, getting back to this whole concept of size, big. I think we, per Teddy Kennedy, over react to something just because it is big. Sure, the telephone company, American Tel., is big. It has a monopoly, semi. It nevertheless is rigidly regulated in what it can and can't do, and the prices it can charge for it's services.

Jenkins: Let me ease into this next question, because you are headed that way. What do you see in the future concerning capitalism? What are your fears of what is happening to it, may happen to it, and what are your hopes of what it can do?

Curry: My fears are in opposite poles to what my hopes are. I think throughout the world no government can survive with an unemployment rate above 6 or 7 percent. Not for very long. Now the first thing I think we need to do is redefine what unemployment is and what full employment is. There are two things. One is a sort of optimistic hope about employment and unemployment. And the other one is not so optimistic. With the declining birthrate that we have had within the last decade or so, the number of new people entering the job market is going to begin to decline by the mid-eighties, I guess, and we could have a shortage of labor from, say 1985 through into the next century. We now have about forty percent of the women in ages 18 to 60 in the labor force. That is going to go on up to, say, fifty or

sixty percent, I think. The news media make a great to do about one tenth percentage point change in unemployment from 5.6 to 5.7 and it gets spread all over everywhere, papers, the radio, television. Everybody, you know, "unemployment went up a tenth of one percent this past quarter." But they don't say anything about a million added persons holding jobs. It is to me miraculous the number, ten to twelve million more people working today than there were three years ago. Well, why don't we just stand up and shout and say, "Look, this is unbelievable." No, you don't get any news spread about that at all. So that is the hopeful sign, but the somewhat negative aspect of this is that the labor force you are going to need now, it increases daily, is for skills of all the various kinds. And so many of our labor force don't have the skills and don't seem very much interested in acquiring them. And this program that the government has poured billions of dollars into to "educate" is worthless. You know, the funds that they provide cities and counties and local districts of all kinds to provide employment for people who wouldn't otherwise be employed. Nearly all those jobs the city would have had anyhow. They would have had to raise local taxes, I guess, to provide it, but all they did was to take the income tax money from Washington, or the deficit financing from Washington and hire people that they had to have anyhow. No job creation, or virtually none as a result

of it. How many of our employable people are going to be unemployable because they do not or will not acquire the skills to function in the technology of this century. You look at the classified ad section even in the Denton paper, much less the Dallas-Fort Worth paper. Page after page of "wanted, this kind of a person, that kind of a person, this kind of a skill, that kind of a skill." You just can't believe that there are that many unfilled jobs, but there are. Yet the way we count unemployment, we have this terrible unemployment problem. Another not so promising factor is that more and more of our people go into the service industries, the health, the sort of thing, you know, we have got a Span here in Denton that provides transportation for the handicapped and elderly. All of these kinds of things that you find in the nursing homes and services of all kinds made available to all kinds of, I guess, needy people, in a sense needy. And there is virtually no way to increase productivity in the service industry. Well, there's limited ways to increase productivity in the service industries, and that is one reason why our total productivity since the mid-sixties has steadily declined because of the increasing number of the employed people in these service industries. Now then, looking at what do I see in terms of the free enterprise system, capitalism, in the next quarter or half century. I am disturbed that what I see evolving in the pressures of the Security and Exchange Commission, the

other governmental bodies, on who should be a member of your board of directors. All right. The stockholders own the companies to be sure, but who are the stockholders? Well, there are many millions of people like you and me who own some stock, but the pension funds are one of the big, big, stockholder units. The trust funds, from mostly banks that have trust departments, which are held in trust for individuals who don't want to try to make their own stock portfolio. Or this is a trust for the survivors of somebody who has had moderate success in his lifetime. Well, we come back now, the pension funds, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the courts, take kind of a dim view of them having people on the board of directors because this, you know, may be a conflict of interest as they see it. The trust funds are the same way but not quite to that degree yet. The governmental agencies, primarily through the influence of the Securities and Exchange Commission, keeps pressuring the company to put outside directors . . . You know, up until almost now, meaning within the last five years or so, about the only people on the board of directors was the chairman of the board, the president, the vice-presidents. People that worked for the company. Or individuals who owned a large chunk of stock. And almost always on the board of directors of any sizable company was a banker, an attorney, and one or more presidents or directors of companies that were chief suppliers of raw materials or

chief buyers of the finished product of this company. That is beginning to be looked at with a great disfavor on the part of the public representative, the Securities and Exchange Commission. So they are insisting that you don't have an officer of your company or that you have only, say of a board of fifteen members, only two, three at the most be employees of the company. He can be an executive vice-president but he ought not be on the board. Get some professor someplace, or an activist in consumer affairs or an environmentalist, or this kind of thing on your board representing the "consumer" so to speak. I think this is going to handicap efficient management of middle size companies, small companies, big companies. Well, here is Ford Motor Company in Denton, a corporation. Who the heck is going to be calling the shots on the board of directors? Well, the owner of the dern company, he ought to be, but, no, he is going to get under pressure to put outsiders on his board. I don't know how big you have to be before they almost order him to do it, but he is not going to have to be a hundred million dollar a year company to do it. This is permeating the whole corporate structure. So what am I leading to say, I am beginning to suspect that the brightest people are going to move from the corporate sector into the public sector, because more and more it seems to me, we are getting away from the entrepreneur, the type of real intelligent individual who is willing to take great risks with

his financial resources. Why? Well, two or three reasons. One, I think we are getting a society more interested in what they now refer to as the "quality of life" than making a lot of money. And part of that reason backs up into our income tax structure and our estate tax structure. It is more and more difficult to keep what you earn. And it is well nigh impossible, certainly it is much, much more difficult to leave for your children and grandchildren what you have acquired in your lifetime. The estate tax is a very onerous tax. Even in my little situation, I don't know how in the heck I am going to leave what little I have accumulated without having forty percent of it taken as estate tax. Fortunately I gave all the land around this place to my children years ago, so that is out of the estate. I have given them other things, and if I gave it away fast enough I could probably leave most of it to them, but with inflation what it is, I don't know how much I can afford to give away and still survive. Well, that makes me a little pessimistic about the future of the management of our corporate structures. I think more and more they are going to be sort of patsies waiting for the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Financial Accounting Standards Board or a court or legislative committee or somebody to tell them what they can and can't do. And I think the bright, able people will not want to be chief executive officers and the real managers of our corporate affairs. So

what this boils down to saying is that we move further and further into what Norman Thomas would have called a socialist state. I mean, what else when you begin to put a guy I refer to as "outsiders" on a board of directors? They have no connection with the company, they don't work for the company. They may own . . . by requirement you have to own, oh, maybe ten shares of stock in the company to sit on the board of directors. But you just look at the meetings of the board of directors and annual meetings of stockholders from, say, the first of March until the first of May and look at the people that are being elected to boards of directors. They are outsiders. This pressure that they are putting on them to put women and blacks and other minority groups, representatives of the environmental, or the safety groups, the consumer groups on your board of directors. They are going to bug the real management to do this for their group, and it has nothing to do with the efficiency or productivity of the company.

Jenkins: Well, shifting to some of these groups now, not necessarily saying whether they are sitting on boards or not, but let's look at the consumer . . . whatever the consumer is, in whatever way you interpret the consumer movement. Respond to that if you will.

Curry: Well, all of these movements mean well, but me sitting in this room, I look at what happens. Well, you know some groups studied the way tricycles are built and got through

a regulation that they can't build a tricycle that will turn over with less than this kind of pressure. That all metal parts have to be protected some way, You look at the whole consumer sort of thing. All it does, well, it is not all it does, it might keep some kid from falling off and skinning his nose or even breaking an arm or something. That is the way you learn growing up, dern it. You can't protect an individual from every conceivable physical hazard and have him grow up with any sense of caution about what he can do and what he can't do. If you don't get skinned up once in a while doing something that is kind of dangerous, you won't know what danger is. But it will keep him from getting hurt a little bit while he is growing up, that I can see. And I am also willing to admit that manufacturers have made toys that are dangerous. Skate boards may be dangerous, I don't know. But I think the individual, the parent and the child ought to have the right to use something that is dangerous if he wants to pay the price.

Jenkins: How about such things, though, as flammability of clothing, where he may not even know it?

Curry: Well, you're gonna have accidents with fires, whether your garment is flammable or not. Is it, looking at it now as a society of the United States of America, is it worth what it costs in dollars to treat every piece of fabric to make it flame resistant up to a certain degree? To protect a 50th of 1 percent of the people who might get burned by

carelessness when using this fabric that wasn't treated. Which should you do, because the cost of making fabric flame resistant is an expensive addition to the cost of the finished garment.

Jenkins: But on the other hand, haven't there been some actually highly flammable, some things that were just unusually flammable?

Curry: Sure there have. But here's what happens. You take these excessive cases, we'll say, extraordinarily flagrant production of something that's dangerous, whether it's flammable or whatever and somebody gets ahold of it and runs to the Congress of the United States and says, "Hey, look at this. Pass a law to make all infant wear fabrics meet a very high standard of flammability." Instead of plugging a leak here for something that is obviously dangerous, well, okay, if you need to, pass a law to make something that dangerous outlawed.

Jenkins: So, like so many other things, we over . . .

Curry: Yeah, we overreact. The same thing happens in pollution control. Here you put a catalytic convertor on every automobile manufactured in the United States. Well, here's a guy who lives out at Monahans, and he goes from his house out on the ranch or drives around over the ranch, what the heck does he need a convertor on his car for? We pass a law that you cannot build an open fire anywhere in the

State of Texas. Well what am I gonna do with my papers and stuff? I take them out there and put them in my burner and burn them, that's what I do. I'm not polluting anybody's air that I know anything about. The only air I pollute would be my own right here, and once in a while if the wind's in the right direction I get a little smoke in the yard. We go to extremes. Let's see, what was it I noticed the other day they had a law up for? Well, here's another area that has the same bearing. Look at what it takes to get a new drug on the market through the Federal Drug Administration. Look at what it takes nowadays through paperwork to get a permit, say, to build any kind of a factory. You have to go through layers of governmental agencies to finally get a permit to build the dadgum factory, and they want report after report after report, and then after you get the factory built, constant inspection and reporting, all of which simply add to the cost of the product that finally gets to the consumer, and there just isn't anybody to pay for anything except the guy who consumes it. Well, now, to look back again at the question you raised, the future of the corporation, capitalist free enterprise, and I've answered it as I see it in this broad spectrum. Right now, we'll have pendulum swings part way back, part way back, you saw it in England in the election of Margaret Thatcher, you saw it in Canada yesterday in the election of what's his name Clark, threw Trudeau out of office. I

think perhaps we'll see it next year in the United States in giving Mr. Carter a rest from his duties. But, the people have gotten so accustomed to looking to government that I see no way to permanently reverse the trend. And one of the things that I see on the dark horizon out there is this constant intrusion into the management of business by the various governmental pressures, in taking people that are in the business off the management seats on the Board of Directors. So, that leads me back to the fear that your brightest minds are going to find the rewards of the extremely heavy duties and pressures that corporate executives must carry, too slender to hold them. I'd rather work for the group that puts the pressure on the corporation. In other words, I'd rather work for the government than for the private sector.

Jenkins: Part of what I was getting at while ago in terms of bigness. Now, some people feel, it doesn't make it right or wrong, that bigness itself, like one of the reasons that we've become so dependent upon government is that it has become so big, so overpowering, that there is, they feel, a natural tendency to do that. Might there be similar dangers in largeness in other institutions, whether it be General Motors or the University or a hospital. Is bigness itself potentially a problem here in losing sight of the individual's ability and willingness to look after himself?

Curry: I would say it depends on the freedom or lack of freedom of private initiative. And I've already said it becomes more and more difficult for the individual to start a business of any kind, but particularly if it is a manufacturing business. He has all kinds of trouble with the regulatory authorities. Now, I wouldn't be concerned about a General Motors getting big. I think it would greatly improve the manufacturing of transportation vehicles. If General Motors and/or Ford or both of them, acquired Chrysler and American Motors. Of course, under the present antitrust structure and the, you'd have nothing but howls of protest all over Washington if anybody even whispered that it would be a good thing for one or the other of these two companies to take over the other two. "Why, oh it's gonna reduce competition," the heck it would. You've never seen such a dog fight as there would be in competition between Ford and General Motors, and the foreign companies. This matter, anymore, I don't think it ever was true, but certainly it's not true in today's technology. The fact that you have only one or two companies producing something in the United States doesn't mean that you don't have competition. Look what's gonna happen to you in Japan and France and Italy and all over the world, Taiwan and China, Australia, the South American countries. We're one market anymore. So what we get concerned about bigness in the United States, what do you suppose is going to happen if and when Russia

gets the kind of technology that they can compete in the steel industry or any other industry that we have? They're not going to hesitate to have one company. In fact, they'll insist on it, and the economy of size may be impossible to compete against. So, the question as to how do I react to bigness in the private sector doesn't bother me, because I'm not afraid that they're not going to have competition. And even if there is no competition for that particular product. Maybe somebody gets a monopoly somehow, and they are the only company in the United States that can manufacture soap, well what do you suppose will happen? The farmers that produce the raw materials to manufacture soap will sell their products to Europeans or to Asiatics or to wherever, and they'll make a soap and send it back in competition with this company, that's what will happen. You don't have to worry about just being one and that one may be able to produce at much, much less cost than all the multitude that we have making soap now, and particularly since most of the soap is pretty good soap. So what do you do, you spend hundreds of millions of dollars to try to convince the public that this smells better than that does, or this lathers better than this does, or this detergent's better than that one is. And if you put it in fewer hands you wouldn't have to add this cost to producing it, so in the private sector, except when the minor special situations, I'm not excited about . . .

Jenkins: So the difference, then, between bigness in the private sector and government sector is, competition keeps it in line.

Curry: Yes, that's right. Now, then, in the public sector, this I think as you've indicated, is a somewhat different environment. It's true that here in the metroplex we have, what, eight or ten or fifteen degree granting institutions. There is some competition in these various institutions. I would say that on the basis of contribution to society and the region, that we would be better off if we eliminated three or four of these institutions. Well, for example, I've supported Bishop College for some years, making small financial contributions. This year, when they approached me, I simply just said what I feel. I think Bishop College and the people that it attempts to serve will be better off if it is closed, because I don't think they are viable in size, I don't think there is any way they can effectively compete with the other institutions in Dallas and the state supported institutions within fifty miles of where Bishop College is located, and that those students there will be better served to go to one of the other institutions. So, there is some competition, but I have mixed feelings about how large an institution really should become. I think you run out of economy of size in educational institutions at a lower level than you would in thinking of the private sector. For example, there is no way you can have any size

college or university without the administrative staff. Now, I grant you that it takes fewer administrators in a 4,000 size institution than it does in a 40,000 size institution. But, I doubt if it takes any more in a fifteen or eighteen thousand size institution than it does in a 6,000 size institution. Well, if an eighteen thousand student body institution has a president and three vice-presidents the tendency is for the six thousand size institution to want a president and three vice-presidents. What is it, Peter principle or something?

Jenkins: Parkinson's Law.

Curry: Parkinson's Law, yeah. That's just the way it happens. But, even if it weren't so, looking again at what the educational experience is supposed to do to the individual after individual who is on that campus for three or four years or however long the person may be there. And, on a campus of 40,000 people, well how many people do you come to know. Does it give you the same opportunity to exchange views and understand the backgrounds of the people that are in the same classroom with you on the big population campus as it does on the smaller one? I don't know, I never could see that it necessarily made all that much difference. You're gonna be in a class with twenty or thirty or some other number of people anyway. But the big difference is that when you leave the classroom, then the institution of thirty or forty thousand people almost invariably is in a

metropolitan area and unless you live in a dorm you scatter to the four winds and you never see them except when you come to the class and have no idea who the person is and don't care. So, how big should an educational institution get, well, I don't know. I can see that small ones, in particularly the small ones, tend to be church affiliated institutions. They may have an educational mission and goal that is quite different from the state supported institution, but the best I can see they attempt to do the same things that the state supported institution does. With minor variations. They may require a body at this institution to take two semesters of Bible, where it's an elective at the state institution, but beyond that, just how much difference is in what the student is free to do or required to do at the church related versus the state supported.

Jenkins: If we ever, and people are trying, even some accountants I understand are attempting to come to grips with measuring whatever this "quality of life" is, and if we ever get good measures of it and if that then makes it possible to measure things in different ways than simply size, do you view that as an improvement?

Curry: To the degree that it would be possible, yes, I would say it would be an improvement, or certainly it would be a very worthwhile adjunct to the quantitative measures that you have. The thing I see that poses an insurmountable problem of

finding a measure of "quality of life", well, whose definition of quality are you going to use? You look at my situation right here. I would say that not more than two or three percent of the people living in the United States today would look upon what I do out here as a quality of life. This would be the last thing they'd want. But, to me, damned if I'd live in that four room apartment on the third floor as long as I can enjoy this kind of life.

Jenkins: Well, part of what I was getting at, though, if we stick with the numbers game, someone is determining that that is a quality of life, also. So we've got some problems there.

Curry: Well, yes. On the other hand, you can turn that around and say by virtue of the fact that you have these numbers, people must like it that way, this must be appealing to what this sizable fraction of the population likes is a quality of life. Well, let's make an analogy. You have a motion picture that advertised and touted "this is one of the Emmy Awards or the film industry's number one movie" and I go to see it because, gee, I want to see that movie. And I'm ready to walk out after about thirty minutes. (laughs) Who in the hell ever thought that was a good movie? I took my grandchildren, Scotty and Katherine were over here when Star Wars was playing. So, they want to see Star Wars and I did, too. I mean, I'm the same. When did you ever see anything quite as built up as Star Wars? Well, they thought it was

great. I thought it was terrible. On the T.V. series, now, you know, whatever it is. And I couldn't sit and watch that to save my soul unless I got highly paid for it.

Jenkins: Well, part of the reason I asked this, again I go back to an exam that I was sitting on and a fellow had made a study out in West Texas of an attempt at this "quality of life" thing. They had asked him to do that. He brought his figures and he was defending them. On the one hand he used the amount of money spent for police protection as a plus sign, but when it came to the amount of crime he used that as a negative sign. And I simply asked him how did he reconcile that? And it was all a matter of interpretation.

Curry: Yes. Well, if you look at quality of life and look at it, how safe do you feel in the community where you live? How uneasy are you when you leave home for a few hours at night about vandalism or robbery of your home? Is this a quality of life? Well, yes it is, it definitely is. But, you go across the border into Mexico, they don't seem to bother to have any hesitation about leaving their homes at night unprotected. Why? Well, damn it, they've got bars over the windows and if need be they've built a stone wall with broken glass bottles imbedded in the cement all over the top of it. In other words, they've protected themselves against that kind of uneasiness. Well, are we going to do that or are we just going to moan and hire more policemen to look after our property?

Jenkins: This leads me right into another one which is very similar to that one. In looking back over your seventy years, starting off on a Texas farm and moving up to the big city and then coming back a little closer to the farm. In viewing, and again your own definition of the "happiness" factor, not just of you but as you view the "folks." Do you think it's improved, it's worse, it's about the same, or do you have any observations on that?

Curry: I may have to separate "happiness" from "satisfaction." I don't know whether there is any difference or not, but I have a notion that there is a greater satisfaction of what you were doing in the living process fifty years ago, sixty years ago, than there is now. And part of that, I'm convinced, comes from this kind of situation. I found in my goings and comings that it doesn't make much difference what you accomplish, what you attain, unless your family, relatives, and close friends share it with you. And here I am at the Wharton School. My mother, my father, my brothers, my sisters, my boyhood friends, there's no way for them to have any idea what the heck I'm doing, or care much, because I'm that far away. And being selected my second year there to conduct the Wharton School Seminar. Huh! What difference would it make to anybody, even my wife, because she's thirty miles from the university in the suburbs. She has met three or four of the faculty members. We've been in the homes of one or two of them once. What you attain, what you accomplish without, as I say, these people who are close to you, whom

you love, who love you, you have to be a hardhearted character to want to do that without sharing it with those whom you love. So, go back fifty years and it's pretty hard to get far enough away doing something that your folks are not pretty intimately associated with it. I look at the environment in which we live today. How many really close friends does the rank and file person have? One or two or three, maybe, that you could call friends in the sense that I called friends when I was twenty-five years old.

Jenkins: Not acquaintances.

Curry: Yes, you were acquainted, you know something about these people. But, gee, in the farm community where I grew up the guys and girls that I went to school with in this three room school, boy, we were clannish, so to speak. Two-thirds of the people in that school you'd do anything for them and they would return the favor. You just didn't have any question about it. And those who are still living, I have the same relationship with them today that I had then. But how do you make that kind of relationship today? And, as I say, to me virtually nothing is meaningful unless you share it, mutually sharing, with them. So, to answer your question, are we happier today than we were a half century ago? I doubt it. Now it's true that we have many more technological instruments to replace that intimacy between human beings, and you probably feel the need of it

less. But, I don't know, I think it's kind of difficult to rely on that television set to provide the kind of whatever it takes to make the human being satisfied and happy. That idiot box is not any good substitute for a human being. You can't carry on a conversation very well with that radio or television or home entertainment center or whatever you have.

Jenkins: With the greater number of people at least surrounding us, and the greater number of communication devises, does there appear to be more or less loneliness today than there was?

Curry: I would guess a great deal more. Because a century ago, half century ago, it's true you didn't have the entertainment, the telephone and all that sort of thing, at least a hundred years ago you didn't. But that didn't mean that you had to be lonely. If you lived in a town or a city, your neighbors knew you. You knew your neighbor, you knew everybody in the block, probably. You, after work hours, had a beer with them. You were just neighbors, that's all.

Jenkins: That was your entertainment.

Curry: Yes. If you lived in the country you had the Watkins man and the Rawley man that came by once a month or so with their condiments, flavoring and these kinds of things. In the summertime somebody in the community always had peaches or watermelons or something that he has come along to your house and visit thirty minutes or an hour, you know, whether

you knew him or whether you didn't. In the wintertime, somebody's going to be killing a beef or something or other and peddling it around over the community. Always on Sunday, that was the great social event. You met all your friends and relatives on Sunday.

Jenkins: Church was a social gathering, entertainment.

Curry: Church was a great social event, too, yes. I think the people were serious about their religion, but they couldn't help but go to church early on Sunday mornings to stand around under the shade trees and visit with everybody around them. The women would go inside and they would visit, and after church almost invariably somebody came home with you for dinner and spent the afternoon, or you went home with them and spent the remainder of the day. So, what I'm saying is there was a close relationship between one to one human beings that just doesn't seem to exist today.

Jenkins: Now, to what extent, if any, would bigness of cities, of institutions, of government, have anything to do with this lessening or individual feelings toward each other, and consequently an impact on the quality of life?

Curry: Well, if this environment in which I grew up was so great, how come they're here, let's say, and how I've lived in the great cities and so forth. The answer, I think, is one of economics and technology. The farm as a way of life in the years that I was growing up, was a brutally hard life. You

did so much work by hand. You planted cotton in a single row with horses or mules or oxen or whatever you had, and we didn't believe that cotton would make if it had more than just one stalk every foot. So you chopped that cotton by hand and weeded it with your hoe. You picked it with your little hands. The corn, you didn't believe it would make corn if you didn't pull all the suckers off the stalks, and if there's anything that was ever a meaner job than suckering corn I don't know what it is. You're down where the wind can't reach you, it's humid in there, oh man. And in order to prepare a seed bed you had to harrow the ground, and walking behind the dadgum section harrow in March, usually, with that March wind blowing sand and grit and gravel into your face and eyes, you were chapped all over, abrasions, just pecked where the wind has blown sand or dirt or dust. Physically it was a brutal, cruel life. And you had to milk by hand, you had to cook with wood, nobody had an indoor toilet or bathroom or anything of that sort. So, the sheer hard life of surviving drove many people into almost any degree to seek a better way of life. Plus the fact that a farmer had no way at all to control the rewards of his labor. Work all year from sunup to sundown and not even recover the cost of what he put into what he's trying to make. He survived, yes, simply by doing on less, and as a consequence the children looked for a better way of life. Now, if he had had, in my day,

a tractor that I could have climbed up on and ridden, a telephone--well we did get telephones in my youth--but television, radio, all the other kinds of things, entertainment centers that you think of today didn't exist. So, this drove us to seek a better way of life. As somebody put it here a while back, those cotton farms of Texas and Louisiana and Georgia and Mississippi produced more schoolteachers than anything else that ever could have been devised. And that's true.

Jenkins: So as you view it then, we have done a lot of swapping.

Curry: Yes,

Jenkins: Do you see any hope of recombining to any extent, or does it appear to be getting just farther apart?

Curry: Yes and no, I guess I would say. A great many, I say a great many, not percentage wise of the total working population but, in numbers, maybe some hundreds of thousands of people who teach at the university, who are employed by this governmental agency or that governmental agency, who work for General Motors or the local plumbing company, or is a salesman for Pontiac or Lincoln Mercury or whatever, have either rented or bought acreage up to thirty or forty miles from their place of work and they farm after hours. I don't know how serious the farming is, but they do get away from the city environment. Last night at this financial executive's meeting, this was our picnic night, and two guys asked me--they worked in Dallas, financial vice-presidents

or comptrollers or that sort of level, management people--how much land would sell for, oh, in and around fifteen, twenty, or thirty miles of Denton. They are for this kind of escape from downtown into more or less rural setting. That of course runs into the other conflict, commuting.

Jenkins: You emphasized so much the sharing with close folks. Of course getting out on the farm as a weekend thing is one thing, and it solves part of it, but what about the part of closeness and sharing?

Curry: I wonder if we might not move in the direction that, oh, they have in Europe in the great grain belt, the grape belts and so forth of Italy and France and Belgium and so forth. Here is a little village, maybe three or four hundred houses, but they are all farmers. Fifteen miles down the road here is a little building, a little hut sort of thing out in the middle of a field. What's that? Well, that is where the farmer stores his tools. You see he lives back yonder in that village, and they come out here every day to do their farming and go back to the village at night. Well that seems to me to make considerable sense in terms of quality of life. Sure, they are farmers, and the farm family gets on a wagon or some kind of vehicle and they pull it out there. It may be three or four different families ride out on the same vehicle, flat bed sort of deal, go to their own pieces of land and work through the day.

They probably have lunch together out there in the fields, and then get back home and they are still in an environment where they have a close relationships with each other. I don't see any trend toward that except in the Amish villages in Pennsylvania and some of the other-- Ohio, Indiana. But maybe we would learn something from the way they live.

Jenkins: If the fuel shortage continues we may experiment with more of that kind of thing.

Curry: Yes, it just could be. It might. And it would seem to me that that would greatly enrich the lives of those in the urban environment. One reason I didn't like living in Philadelphia, the neighbors on each side were just as friendly people as they could be. We would visit with them. They would visit with us. On occasion at night we would play games with them, but the next day you could walk to the interurban station and catch the electric train and sit down in the seat next to your neighbor, and he wouldn't have any idea who was sitting next to him. He would be sitting there reading his paper. He could look you straight in the face and show no sign of recognition. How can you do that? Well, but beyond your neighbor on each side in that block, I have no idea who lived there or anything about it. Who lived across the street? Don't ask me. I don't know. And I think it is true in Denton or any place else. **Well that seems to me, well, tragic** in terms of quality

of life. And I read in the papers, you know, so often about this person living at such and such address and has a neighbor whose dog messes up his lawn every morning or throws papers or does all kinds of things. Well, if you don't know him what the heck do you care.

Jenkins: Do you have any other points on this area that you want to touch on before we move on?

Curry: Well, getting back to this matter of can we somehow measure outcomes, quality of life, what life is supposed to mean to us human beings other than in quantitative data, I doubt it. Not in a real meaningful way. I think each individual will know whether his existence is satisfying him, but this poses another problem. If he has never experienced anything else, how does he know whether there is a more meaningful life than what he is experiencing?

Jenkins: And if we are told, as we are constantly, you read the paper or listen to the radio and watch the television, that the more goodies that you pile up that that is happiness, then there are some problems in experiencing other things.

Curry: I think so. You get back to another point that I made. If you tell him that--as many of the ads in the real estate brokers' pitches--move out here in the clean air. You will just love it. Well, some people will and some people won't, and if you buy that without experiencing it, knowing a little something about what it is he is saying, you may find those red ants in your yard an abomination, rather than the clean

air being so enjoyable.

Jenkins: Or that cow lot.

Curry: Yeah. That's right. Or the fact that you put out some daisies and the rabbits eat them up faster than you can put them out, or that you've got a wasp nest on the side of your house, and you don't know how to deal with it. I mean as simple a thing as that if you have never had one, you've got problems.

Jenkins: Anything else?

Curry: I think that is it for that.

Jenkins: Let's look at a section here where I ask something about the major joys and sorrows of an educational career both as a teacher and as a dean.

Curry: One of the joys, I guess I would call it, is the degree of attainment of success I guess you might say. I think any human being likes to look back over his life and say to himself, "Yes, I have made a contribution. I have attained a degree of success that just not everybody experiences." You start out you are not from an influential family or influential background or you are nobody, in a very real sense of the word. That doesn't mean that your forebears in their day and time weren't somewhat above average in the environment in which they lived. They owned their property. They were better educated than the most, even though it was a sixth or seventh grade education, but they kept learning all their lives and were pretty sharp people of basic

intelligence, good enough. But you came out of that cotton patch because of the harsh life and the small rewards for it, looking for something better. There just had to be a better way to live a life. And so going from grade school teacher and principal, athletic coach to a big high school, Austin High School on to the University of Michigan faculty member, to Arkansas to the Wharton School to here, was rewarding in that very real sense. A sense of accomplishment, a promotion every step of the way, with the exception of coming to North Texas. And this was a more or less not a free choice more in view of the fact that our children's health was jeopardized in the climate of Ann Arbor and Philadelphia number one, and number two, my wife's dad's problem. And number three, I never wanted to be in a dean's chair. I loved the classroom. I have wanted to be the outstanding accounting theorist in the nation rather than what I did finally do. So those are the joys of the career. In the last thirty years of it here at North Texas it was a heartbreaking sort of experience to find the lack of resources, the lack of stature that I found down here compared to Michigan and Pennsylvania particularly, and Arkansas, too, because in Arkansas the University was the only thing there is.

Jenkins: Whatever was there, they had it.

Curry: Yeah. I know at a luncheon meeting or dinner one day, one of the people was sounding off about the University having

the number one school of engineering in the nation. Well, it just had never entered my mind that Arkansas had the greatest school of engineering in the United States, but to those people maybe it was. Certainly it was the only school of engineering that they had in the state, and it was the best in the state, I would say that. Well, you come here, and it was just a little run down at the heels teacher's college, and that was depressing and heartbreaking, in a sense. But it gave you an opportunity to say, "Yeah, here is a place that whatever you do, it has got to be better than what there is." And I guess one of the most rewarding, over time, feelings and experiences was the cooperation of the faculty of the school of business. Everybody seemed to feel the same way. "By golly, we can make it better." Once again you get to this, well, to us almost a quantitative thing, but it was really a qualitative thing. It was kind of like a fantastic dream that someday we just might be in the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business, and I think any faculty that hadn't lived through the development stages to that attainment hadn't lived yet. This is a great undertaking and a sense of great accomplishment, once you are there. The delights and the pleasures of the relationship that I had with the faculty, which I think is somewhat unique in terms of dean-faculty relationships over the years. I don't think it was terribly unusual from the late twenties to World War II,

but I think it was unusual from World War II up to now to have that kind of faculty-dean relationship.

Jenkins: Actually building something from the start.

Curry: Yes. That's right. And a feeling that it was a purely cooperative venture. It wasn't my job, it wasn't my accomplishment, it was everybody's accomplishment. And I don't think you could do it otherwise. Yes, you can, too. You can be a dictator and cause it to happen. And some institutions--a good many--did. But that was not our way.

Jenkins: Now you were in the classroom all of those years.

Curry: Yes.

Jenkins: Have you heard from students over the years?

Curry: Oh, yes. Yes, I guess, hardly, certainly not a month goes by that, many weeks don't go by, that I get a telephone call and some guy is in town. Or I go to a meeting of this or that or the other and maybe a half a dozen or more will, you know, come by and say, "I was in your class at such and such a time. You got me started keeping up with current events when you were teaching that business problems course." Or, "I still remember this or that or the other that you sounded off about." And quite often I get telephone calls from some guy in California or New York or whatever, and he says, "You may or may not remember me, but I was in your such and such class in 19--whenever, and I am making an application for this job in this company, or I'm in government

service and they are making a security check on me, would you be willing to respond to a questionnaire." This, that or the other, it keeps coming. And faculty members that have been on our faculty over the years, every once in a while I see them. Caroline Currie, for example, called me the other day. You may remember the story about--She came up in the office in the old industrial arts building late one afternoon having some kind of problem. Wanted to talk to me. She was going to say, "I shudder to think," but said, "I shitter to think," about whatever it was she was going to say. So the other day the telephone rang and a voice at the other end of the line said, "I shitter to think who it is I am talking to."

Jenkins: That sounds like Caroline.

Curry: Well, these kinds of things are what you delight in, are pleasures. I enjoyed the bowling team we had. Do you remember that?

Jenkins: You bet I do.

Curry: I was thinking the other day, the Holiday Inn sent me a letter inviting retired teachers to enjoy bowling during the summer without having to go out of town for a vacation. That sort of thing. Maybe we just ought to take them up.

Jenkins: I had forgot about that. It has been a long time ago.

Curry: Yes. And on a good many occasions as you know I went to Texoma with various and sundry groups. Were you here the time Warren Caster and Roy Cooper invited our faculty up to

Texoma for a weekend? I don't know if that was before your day or not.

Jenkins: It seems familiar but I can't place it exactly, but there are a lot of things that I can't place exactly anymore. I have a vague recollection.

Curry: The whole faculty, well, all the guys we will say, in the school of business, the Southwestern Publishing Company invited us up there to spend the weekend as their guests. They rented a string of cabins there on the lake. We had a heck of a time. The only problem was a terrific windstorm and rain came up that night, and I think John Pearson had some lines set out on the lake overnight, and it washed them away.

Jenkins: Probably had turkey guts on those lines.

Curry: Yeah, something or other, I guess. I think I mentioned this before. The traumatic experiences: as we grew with the niggardly financial resources that the people who were here on the faculty and those that were recruited in the early days got started at those exceptionally low salary scales. But to go in the direction that we wanted to go, you had to bring people in with doctorates or near doctorates, and you had to pay a going, competitive market price to get them. And if you got quality at all you had to pay more than you might for lesser quality. And so the compensation between all, say equally good people, was a wide span and much greater than it should have been if there should have been

any deferential. So you had to grit your teeth and say, "There is no way we can get to where we are trying to go without making a niggardly sort of miserly contribution to this guy's salary and bring that one in at a salary that you couldn't justify between this faculty member and this one." It would keep you awake at night.

Jenkins: Did you ever have to just out and out openly fire anybody?

Curry: Yes. On two or three occasions. And on one occasion I had dismissed a faculty member, fired him, and he went over to President Kamerick's home that night and made a plea for him to intervene, which he did. But the guy should have been fired. He should have been fired two or three years before I finally did. But he, I guess, stayed on the faculty until he retired. In most cases we have had very few faculty members that we didn't want to keep over the years, surprisingly few. We lost very few that we did try to keep, but in two or three cases they just didn't, for one reason or another, seem to fit our scheme of things, for whatever the reason might have been. With all the friendliness in the world I would simply say to them, "I don't see much future for you with us here. There must be places that you had rather be yourself, and if there is tell us, and we will try to open the door for you at this other institution." Which we didn't hesitate to do. But there weren't many of those. Just three or four that I can think of off hand.

Jenkins: Let's move into what you have been doing now since you retired.

I see a tennis racket here, and I know that you have been physically active, but I have never known specifically what sports you have followed through your lifetime. How about hitting that a little bit.

Curry: Well, when I came here I had been playing handball regularly, tennis when weather would permit in Philadelphia, which was not too often, and after I got here I just didn't seem to find time, and there were virtually no tennis courts. Not virtually, but just no handball courts. And I played golf occasionally on weekends, but that seemed so very slow in terms of exercise that I soon decided that I didn't have the luxury of time to play golf. So my great joy of playing tennis and handball has just been pretty well wiped out ever since I have lived in Denton. Exercise, from the day I was in a military ROTC unit in World War I . . . I have always done sitting up exercises. It is the first thing I do when I get out of bed in the morning. And I run a great deal, or did up until, oh, just a year or two ago. I always found running terribly boring, but since I retired five years ago on this place there is never a day goes by that I don't go up and down that tank down there several . . . well, yeah, if it is pouring down rain or whatever I don't. And I have that big garden down there that I go down several times a day and I still live on the end of a hoe a good deal of the time and run my tiller tool and if you look out there at the number of square feet I have to mow with a push

mower, I get plenty of exercise, I'll put it that way. It's a power mower, but it's not a self propelled mower. And I have this big orchard out there and it was pretty well taken over with Bermuda grass and I have gone to the trouble of digging it out from around my fruit trees, and that's no small undertaking. I have the lake down there and if I could find time I'd fish more than I do. The grandchildren, from the time we moved out here twelve years ago, the boys were small and Donna was born after we moved out here. The grandchildren, you know, take whatever time you are willing to give them.

Jenkins: Let's identify these grandchildren through your children and where they are now.

Curry: Our daughter and her husband, Betty and Guy Laney, live right up the hill there from us, or with us and they have a son, now twenty-two I guess who left this past Friday to spend the summer with Tenneco in Houston. He is beginning work beyond his bachelor's. He didn't take his bachelor's degree yet, but he's working beyond his bachelor's in accounting and computer science and will get, I guess, both degrees next spring or summer, I don't know what his plans are. My guess is that, if he's as good as I think he is, Tenneco will want him to stay in Houston and finish up at the University of Houston rather than come back here. He's going to be torn with a tough decision. But this is the first time he's ever been away from home and I have a notion

he's going to be sufficiently homesick by the first of September that he'll want to come back home, I don't know what he'll do. Now, I may be mistaken, they may want him to come back, then come back down there after he finishes up. The second grandson, David, will be a junior this next year. He, too, is at North Texas majoring in accounting and computer science and he's had a four-point average the last two semesters. And then Donna, Betty's baby, is now nine years old, and she and her grandmother and I are almost inseparable. The moment she gets out of school, she's down here. And, of course, she's always hungry and frequently she stays down and eats supper with us. Every afternoon we've got to have a game of some kind. She plays soccer and baseball or something or other, and she doesn't have anybody to play with except me, so I'm it and we play and if the weather's such we can't play outside, we have a game of dominoes or whatever, that sort of thing. Now that school will soon be out, her grandmother, Mary, has been making all kinds of things to keep her busy during the summer. And she likes to fish with me and she loves to go walking over the area. So that's the setup here, our daughter, son-in-law and three grandchildren. And if I have anything really heavy to do, like change a big tractor tire or lift a big turtle trap out of the lake I get one of my grandsons to help me with it. Then our son, Jack, and his wife, Louise, live in Irving. They both work, Jack's an

attorney and Louise is an accountant. They have a daughter, eighteen, going on nineteen, who spent this past year with us here. A ballerina but headed, I guess, toward either medicine or physical therapy and right at the moment she says she wants to be a physical therapist and specialize in work with ballerinas. And, incidentally, I think it's this Saturday night that they have this recital or rehearsal or whatever you call a dance group, here in Denton.

Jenkins:

Oh, where?

Curry:

In the high school auditorium, I believe. I guess there will be some announcement about it, but that's where it's going to be. And then, Scott, our grandson finishes his sophomore year in MacArthur High over in Irving. They try to spend some time with us in the summer, I don't know that they will this summer because they're both working now. So that's the structure of our family.

Jenkins:

Now, back to what you do during retirement, we got through your exercises, what else do you do? You've got a running machine in here, too. Do you use that?

Curry:

Oh, yes, on occasion, I usually just go outside and run, but if the weather is such I can't go outside I use that. And the older I get the more I discover that it takes more warmup time to really do anything much without getting hurt, so I use that vibrator before I really start doing anything like real running or jogging or that sort of thing. I said

when I retired, that for two years I was just going to say "no" to anybody and anything that they wanted me to do. I wasn't necessarily tired, I was just to the point where I didn't want to take on anything. And we moved all the furniture out of the office there in the building one night, since we could get Laney Motors pickup truck, and moved it in here and around into various rooms and left the next morning for a tour of the Holy Land and the Greek Islands. For two years [^]when people asked me would I serve on this committee or be this or be that and "thanks, but no." The only thing I did agree to do that I wasn't already engaged in in that two years, let's see, Mr. Williams died and he was a trustee at our church and we had a building program fixing to get started and they asked me to serve as trustee. I agreed to serve as trustee of the church. Ed Williams had died and left a vacancy of three trustees and so one was gone and I served as trustee from, I don't know, about a year after I retired. But that doesn't involve a whole lot . . .

Jenkins: What church is that?

Curry: First Presbyterian. Then two years ago now, they enveigled me into becoming president of the Denton Area Retired Teachers Association, about 150 member organization. And then shortly after that I agreed to serve as a director in the Denton Chapter of the Retired Persons, and this is an organization of everybody that retires from whatever career

he may have had, if he wants to join the Retired Persons he's eligible.

Jenkins: Is this part of AARP?

Curry: Yes, that is AARP. That's the Denton Chapter, about 550 members in that group. And this past spring, early, they asked me to serve as president of the AARP. But I declined that one on the basis that it would seem improper and inappropriate for me to be serving at the same time as president of the Retired Teachers and the Retired Persons, you know, just not appropriate to be president of both organizations at the same time. So that has occurred, and then they approached me a month or six weeks ago to head up a group to raise money for athletic scholarships out at North Texas, and this week I will wind up that endeavor. So that's the kind of community activities I'm engaged in. Then, oh, I do quite a bit of reading, mostly current events, professional type reading. I've promised myself that I'm going to start reading for pleasure more than just to keep abreast of what's going on, and spend more time analyzing my stock and bond portfolio, see what all to sell and buy. Usually I just do that on a spur of the moment, sort of hunch sort of thing. Well, that's not quite true. I have my eye on something I want to buy, but I don't pay much attention to when I want to sell. That and I'm going to begin more analyzing, and I'm not a trader. I buy stuff and maybe hold it ten years. I've got some stuff I've had twenty years. But I view that

like buying a piece of land or a house. I don't spend a great deal of time, but the five or six rent houses I have, if something goes wrong like a leaking faucet or a roof leaking or need to roof a house or something or other, I just go do it. So that takes some time, particularly in the summer time, when I don't have a garden to look after or the fishing's not too good. I've got the old home place there, Highland Park house I need to repaint, at least the south and west and east rooms of that place.

Jenkins: About other traveling that you've done.

Curry: Well, I guess the second year I was retired, we spent three weeks in Madrid and environs in and around Madrid. Then the summer two years ago we took, we flew to London and spent several days there and then flew from London to Amsterdam and spent a couple or three days there and then took a brand new German-made tour bus and went all through Central Europe, I guess eight or ten countries of Europe. All through Central Europe, as I say, including Belgium, Austria, Germany, Italy, France and the two or three, they call them countries, they're just little isolated places within Italy and France and back to Paris for a couple or three days and then fly back home. We go to Mexico just about every year, spend one or two, three weeks, depending on what the circumstance is here at home. We love Mexico City, Guadalajara, Acapulco, those three places, particularly, we enjoy going time and time again. There's always something

new and different. We've been to a number of places we find delightful on the Pacific shore of Mexico and then this past Christmas we spent the week in Cancun, which is on the Caribbean side of the Yucatan peninsula. And we go up to Arkansas once or twice a year, and the Ozarks.

Jenkins: Great country.

Curry: Oh, yeah. And one of the delightful things about it, in not much more than half a day's time you can be in just a different world.

Jenkins: Almost as good as going to Europe.

Curry: Yeah, that's true. Well, Yucatan over the December, January period when they had that ice and sleet and snow here, you know, we were basking in 85, 90 degree weather, riding the waves in the Caribbean and took a plane out of Cancun, oh about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, pulled into DFW and the wind was blowing a gale, sleeting and snowing and the streets and highways were covered with ice. Fortunately, David, our grandson, picked us up in one of the big Lincolns and it didn't slide very much. I'd have hated to have been on that highway with a light car. Well, Mary has certain limitations in what she can do you know, she had an artificial knee joint put in two or three years ago and that's working real well, no real problem there, but she has arthritis pretty bad and right now she has a foot that, she just can't walk on it much. So, taking a tour, you know, where there is a lot of walking, right now

it's not practical. And, nearly every kind of tour you go on you've got stairs to climb somewhere, and that's a problem when you've got a sore instep or ankle or knee or whatever. But, we now hope that we'll be able to do a Caribbean cruise sometime before the year's out. And we'll be going to Arkansas, certainly, whether her foot gets where she can walk much or not. And we may very well go to Mexico for a week or two.

Jenkins: Are there other places in the world that you hope to get to?

Curry: Yes. Well, two or three places. I want to go to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, that area of Europe that we have not seen. I want to go through the inside passage to Alaska, the Alaskan Rockies. I've been in the Canadian Rockies but you do both, I guess, on that tour. And Mary's forebears are from Ireland and mine are from Scotland and we'd like to combine the Scandinavian peninsula tour and cut across then to Scotland and Ireland and make that one tour, and that's the last I care about going to Europe. Just for the sheer fun of it I'd like, I wouldn't mind, doing the Greek Islands again. I don't have any great desire to go back to Egypt or Morocco or Northern Africa. Southern Africa might be of some interest, but it doesn't appeal to me all that much. And I've never been to Yellowstone or the Grand Tetons, but from what I read it's kind of, you kind of wish you hadn't gone anymore due to the overcrowding in the National Parks, so I don't know.

- Jenkins: We did it before it got too crowded.
- Curry: Now they say it's just nearly impossible.
- Jenkins: But if you go, you might try one of the winter trips.
- Curry: Yeah, but seems to me that it wouldn't be all that thrilling to be there in the wintertime.
- Jenkins: That may be true. Although I think things still bubble and all that.
- Curry: Yeah, I guess they do, but for one who likes to travel by land in order to see what's growing, you know . . .
- Jenkins: Well, if you tried it just at the off season, though, before school's out or after it's gotten back going. Because I hope you do get to see the Tetons and Yellowstone.
- Curry: Well, we have friends from college days, freshman days, sophomore days in college, who live in Stirling, Idaho and we've visited them since we retired and all in and around Idaho, that area, we've seen and they said anytime we wanted to, come up and we'd drive together to Grand Tetons because it's right there. So we'll do some more traveling, I hope. Well, I know we will, but we will be limited to some degree by Mary's ability to walk.
- Jenkins: Is there anything else that you would like to add before we finish?
- Curry: Well, there's one committment I've made, and now with some regrets, is writing all of my papers and whatever for the archives and I'm finding that a bigger undertaking than I had intended for it to be. I suppose that I will now, for

whatever contribution I am able to make to the retired teachers and retired persons, the AARP, we call them the aarp group and the naarp group. I will continue to be active in those as long as I feel that I'm contributing something, and I guess in due time be willing to serve as president of the five or six hundred member group. Well, the Senior Citizens Building, you know, has all kinds of activities going on and I think it's a very wholesome thing for the retired people, and if you can contribute to their well being I think it's some obligation to do so. My feeling about what man's purpose is, I think it's to serve his fellow man. I'm a church member. I guess I am because my parents, my grandparents, my great grandparents from as far back as anybody knows were churchgoers and active in the church. And when you grow up with a family that attends church, your parents are leaders in the church, and my dad was Sunday School superintendent for years, all this kind of thing, and Mary's parents active in the church, elders and all that sort of thing, I became one, too. But, in terms of my feelings for organized religion, I have mixed feelings. My own view is that the church, as such has been an evil influence in the past forty years, certainly the last twenty years. Sponsoring all kinds of rights for individuals who are nothing but criminals. And this to me is terribly distasteful and disheartening, really, for the church and the ministers and the leaders of our church group

to have bleeding hearts for everybody that is a detriment, really, to society. And you, well you look at the two men on death row over in Florida and this cat over in California that killed two, well what was it, our equivalent of a city councilman and whatever official, the mayor, wasn't it?

Jenkins: I think so.

Curry: Got seven year maximum term. There's something wrong in this country. Well, I guess I've said more than I should have.

Jenkins: Any other comments before we close off?

Curry: Thank you, it's been an experience to go through this and I've enjoyed doing it with you. For whatever it's worth, you're welcome to it.

Jenkins: Thank you very much. I've enjoyed it and we'll get it back to you one of these days.