

UNCG CENTENNIAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Lucy Horne Leath

INTERVIEWER: Missy Foy

DATE: February 28, 1991

[Begin Side A]

MF: If you could start with a just a little bit of general information. For instance, where you were from and when you went to Woman's College [of the University of North Carolina]. Just some general information like that.

LL: I was from Wilmington, North Carolina, and I started at Wilmington—Woman's College in 1943. I—what else you want to know? Who I roomed with or—I mean, the circumstances or anything—?

MF: Sure. Just some general—

LL: Well, back then it was the thing not to room with a friend of yours. So I just was assigned a roommate, and then after about three or four weeks, I think, we had fruit basket turn over, and everybody changed. And we—I never did get—that first year was not a good year as far as a roommate was concerned. However, I got along great. I was already starting to work in the nursery school. I had a job in the nursery school. I knew what I was going to do. I was majoring in child development, and so I worked there. And I was in the choir, and I had a good background; I had to study hard. But I felt that I had an excellent background for college. Coming from Wilmington, they just had good schools there, which was not true in a lot of North Carolina at that particular time. But I was prepared, and I had lots of friends and enjoyed everything I did.

It was during the war [World War II, 1939-45 global conflict] at that particular time, but I had cousins around, and I had worked at Fort Fisher Army Post [North Carolina] my summer after high school, and some of those men came up and they wanted dates. And so we got them dates, and we went to football games and so forth, which—I guess I was fortunate because there was even rationing back then, gas rationing, but we just had a good time.

And then sophomore year I had a great roommate. Particularly enjoyed sophomore year because I was in Jamison Dormitory, and most of the Greensboro girls and—just a close-knit group stayed in that dormitory, and we had—Miss Lillian Cunningham was a counselor, and she was fantastic. She said we broke her in, and she said she got into a lot of trouble. We got her in a lot of trouble not knowing the rules and regulations, but we just had a ball. And the class that I graduated in was 1947, and that class has always been just a very close knit, come back for reunions, just to have a fabulous time. My roommate then

transferred to [University of North] Carolina [at Chapel Hill]. You couldn't start Chapel Hill. You had to go in as a junior, and she always wanted to go to Carolina, so she went over there. And then I had another roommate from Charlotte [North Carolina] and moved over to Weil [Residence Hall] and just had a delightful time there. Always enjoyed my college career. We got home—what was it?—about two or three times a year, and that was it. But on the weekends we just put on our hats and walked uptown or caught the trolley and went uptown to the movie and shopping around and had to have hat and gloves.

MF: You roommate who transferred to Carolina, does she still live in the area?

LL: She lives in Charlotte.

MF: Okay, because there seem to be quite a few who went for freshman and sophomore and then transferred. I'd like to find some that I could interview that were ones who went ahead and had transferred, so that's why I was asking. I've found one person so far that there was a transfer, but I have to set up the interview still.

LL: Yes. Well, she is in Charlotte. I'm trying to think. I don't—I didn't know too many people who transferred that year, and I don't know of anyone who's very close by. Let me see.

MF: Well, if you think of somebody, you can tell me.

LL: Okay. I'll try to think of somebody. Do you want someone in my particular class or just—?

MF: Oh, it doesn't matter.

LL: It doesn't matter. Yes. Okay.

MF: Yes. If you happen to think of somebody. Student life—I guess again, generally, there were a lot of rules and regulations.

LL: We had rules and regulations, but we didn't feel that we were—well, I mean, you just kind of followed them. At Greensboro College [Greensboro, North Carolina] and Woman's College, we seemed to know people there, and we seemed to have a knowledge of what their rules and regulations were, and they were so much greater than ours that we felt that we were privileged. [Laughs] And back then, I think everywhere there were the rules and regulations, so you didn't think too much about it. I'm—we broke some of the rules. We—not too many. We had—it was mostly—the rules that really—you had to be in at a certain time. And that was the main rule. And I don't think I ever broke that rule. And we had closed study when we were freshmen and—just freshman year. That was the only one. I was caught in the bathroom, I think, one time after closed study studying, and seems like to me I was supposed to be campused for that, and then a boyfriend was coming, and the housemother lifted it, and so it was not a difficult thing.

MF: Yes. They kind of worked with you, I guess.

LL: Well, we just didn't have—everybody seemed to have so much school spirit, and we were doing—we were in sororities—I mean, societies they called them at that particular time. We had dances and a few things that went on, and we just seemed to—we played a lot of Bridge [card game] on the weekends. We would go downtown shopping or to a movie. We'd go to church—sometimes. We didn't always go to church, but we did go to church on Sunday a lot. We—at that particular time there weren't too many men around, so you didn't have too many dates. You had dates more for special occasions than for all the time. And we—it was just a lot of fun. We got to know the girls. We were very, very close to the girls. Played a lot of tennis, rowing, walking. Didn't play much golf because they didn't have much of a golf course then.

MF: Yes. They still don't.

LL: No.

MF: That's fast eaten up by the soccer field.

LL: We had a lot of studying to do, and we studied a lot. We really did.

MF: There were Saturday classes even, weren't there?

LL: Yes, indeed. You see, you had Saturday classes until one [pm], and lots of times you'd have a twelve o'clock [noon]. I worked hard to—what was it called?—to be on the Dean's List, so you could take cuts, and you could cut your Saturday classes and go to Chapel Hill or somewhere else. I didn't go home. That was too far to go to Wilmington. I just couldn't—you couldn't make it. There was no way you could go home. It was just unheard of with Saturday classes. We did not, however, have late classes. We finished classes—class and lab—by five o'clock in the afternoon. And then I had choir practice at night. But that was the only thing afternoon, late afternoon and night.

MF: Yes. So I guess the whole schedule and everything was pretty different from the way it is now.

LL: That's right. And on Saturday afternoon, you'd do your laundry and play around a little bit, and you had Sunday off. We just didn't have the—didn't seem to have the time. I guess we had the same amount of time, but in between classes or something— but it seems to me that there's a lot more free time—

MF: Yes, I'd agree with that.

LL: —in school today. Now I don't know whether they—I don't know how they do it. We get the same number of courses. Whether they don't study as much or—

MF: I think part of that is the schedule is so different that now you can take a class, for example, that meets from six to nine pm one night a week and—

LL: That clears you.

MF: —that's a whole class done already in one evening. Yes. So you can rearrange your schedule that way, and I think also a lot of people are not going for four years, but instead going for five years.

LL: Oh, I think that's it. But we—I don't know of anybody that didn't go just four years. I mean, it was just unheard of to go five years.

MF: Five years is pretty common now.

LL: I know.

MF: Yes. Well, a lot of people work and go to school.

LL: It was four years, and it was concentrated.

MF: Well, a lot of people work and go to school at the same time now.

LL: Now, the only—if you worked, you worked on campus.

MF: Yes. See, a lot of people hold full time jobs and go to school.

LL: Yes. So it's entirely different.

MF: It's not the residential atmosphere that it was.

LL: No, it isn't. It's a concentration and study and individual—everybody has their own individual schedule, which is quite different from everybody else's.

MF: Yes. I guess it almost sounds like it's— Woman's College was not just an academic experience.

LL: Oh, yes. It was a social—wonderful social experience.

MF: And some of the social experience seems planned out by the College to introduce you to a lot more than just academics.

LL: See, we even had chapel then. We had chapel every Tuesday. I think it was every Tuesday at noon.

MF: Yes, that's right. Yes. Tuesday.

LL: And, oh, sometimes it was boring, but, by and large, it was broadening.

MF: Do you remember—?

LL: And then I remember the concerts so much. We had a good concert series, and everybody went to the concerts. Not everybody, but there was a great participation in the concerts.

MF: Do you remember at Tuesday chapel a group coming in ever called the Sedalia Singers? It was a black gospel group, and they came to Tuesday chapel, I think, once a year, but I can't figure out exactly at what period they did that.

LL: I can't specifically remember that.

MF: A couple of people have mentioned it.

LL: They might very well have, but for some reason I just can't recall that.

MF: Oh, well, just a thought. It's not terribly important or anything.

LL: [pause] I know we had one—I enjoyed being a marshal because then I was required to go, and sometimes you'd say, "Oh, I don't want to go to that," but if you had to be there, you enjoyed the concert. But I enjoy concerts anyway. I really do.

MF: Yes. I do too. So you were a marshal?

LL: Yes.

MF: And what society were you in? Do you remember?

LL: Yes. Adelphian.

MF: Adelphian. Yes. So many people—it's funny when you ask them, they say, "Gosh, I can't remember."

LL: Well, I kept saying Athenian, and I knew that wasn't right. Adelphian.

MF: Yes. What else did the societies do?

LL: Well, they had dances, and then, of course, you had class dances, and—well, they're the ones that elected the marshals or nominated the marshals. And we had officers; we had meetings. We didn't have an awful lot. It seems to me that we didn't meet a tremendous amount. It was just a few meetings a year, really. But people turned out for the meetings. And the function was more—it was definitely just social, purely social, to get—to organize the dances and the marshals, and I can't remember any other specific—well, I guess it was bringing together girls from different classes, rather than your staying in and having friends just in one particular class. And there wasn't—there weren't—there wasn't an awful lot of activity connected with the societies, as I recall.

MF: Yes. Everybody was just assigned to one, right?

LL: Yes. You were just assigned. You didn't have any choice.

MF: I get the impression that the societies were meant to sort of take the place of sororities, so that there wasn't the competitive atmosphere that a sorority has, like some can belong and some can't.

LL: That's right.

MF: What about some of the faculty and classes?

LL: Well, I remember a lot of faculty that really were just outstanding individuals, teachers. I was a child development major, and, of course, the one that meant, I guess, the most to me was Bess Ann Rosa [head of child and family department]. She was head of child development. There were only two majors at that—the year that I graduated—and how many majors do you have in child development now? Oh, gosh, they have hundreds of majors, just hundreds. It's a very popular area now, I think. But that's the reason I got to work in a nursery school even as a freshman.

MF: So there—

LL: Two majors.

MF: —two people majoring in child development?

LL: Child development in—who graduated in 1947.

MF: Okay. I get it.

LL: Only two majors for that year. There were maybe one or two the year before and one or two the year after. So—and Mrs. Rosa was—my sister [Evelyn Horne Peabody, Class of 1941], five years earlier had graduated in child development [Editor's note: Mrs. Peabody was a general home economics major.], and her best friend was Bettie Rosa [Elizabeth Rosa Williams, Class of 1941], who was Mrs. Rosa's daughter, and so she was sort of a personal friend of the family, and so that made it even—she took care of me. Well, she just had to be my advisor because she was the head of the department. So your advisor at that particular time was the—was your major professor in your field. So we were close there, and, of course, I worked in the nursery school every spare hour of the day. When I wasn't in class, I was working in the nursery school if the nursery school was open. And it was open from nine [am] to twelve [noon].

MF: Was that a paid job?

LL: Yes. I got twenty-five cents an hour for every hour I worked. And I got six dollars a month for working in—isn't that funny? But anyway, that was my spending money most of—that was my spending money for the month. Everything's relative. But I didn't feel that I had any less than anybody else either.

But then another teacher that I particularly remember was Dr. [Louise] Alexander. She was a political science professor [and Greensboro's first female lawyer]. And, oh, she just made it come alive, and I've always been interested in politics ever since I took that. And she was, incidentally, the first recipient [1949] of the O. Max Gardner Award in excellence for the greater University [of North Carolina System].

MF: Oh, I didn't know that.

LL: Yes. And let's see. There were other home economics professors that were—I felt close to. I particular enjoyed psychology. But I don't—I didn't feel that at that particular time that of the courses that I took, and I took practically every course in psychology, except the coordinating course—and I had enough to have a major, except for the coordinating course. But I didn't feel that they had outstanding teachers in that area, and why—I love psychology, but I didn't feel at that particular time that the teachers were outstanding. Now Dr. [James A.] Highsmith [professor and department head] was there at the time, but he was not a great teacher, I didn't think. But psychology just came very, very easy to me. Let's see. History was terribly hard, as it still is, I think, at Woman's College. I never did have Dr. [Richard] Bardolph. Sorry that I didn't have him, but I didn't have him. In the English department—oh, I had a love in the English department. It was Dr.—and he was not a doctor. He made it very plain that he did not have his PhD, and he wanted everybody to know that he didn't have his PhD. It was George P. Wilson. He taught me Freshman English, and maybe I took Sophomore English under him also because I liked him so much, and I worked my schedule so I could get him. He—his particular interest was words, and he'd written a couple of dictionaries in origin of language, that type thing. And just English sentence structure. Well, of course, we had literature and everything too. But he just was—just an interesting, short, stubby little guy that I just adored. I liked him very much. And he always recognized me wherever I saw him. In fact, I even had a boyfriend that came up for one of the dances, and he stayed at his house because he couldn't get another place or something like that. I even felt that I could ask him if he could stay there. That's how close I felt to him. And he was just an—his children still live here. Alice [Wilson] Pearce [Class of 1942] is his daughter, and she's very involved in symphony and a lot of those things, but I just adored him. He lived on Rolling Road. And let's see—somebody else that I particularly liked. I was in the choir, and I had George Thompson [music professor]. He was a character, but he was a perfectionist, and he—we had a good choir.

MF: Yes. I've heard a lot about George Thompson.

LL: And let's see. Sociology. We had—I had Mereb Mossman [sociology and anthropology faculty, dean of the College, dean of instruction, dean of faculty, vice chancellor for academic affairs]—I had Miss Mossman, and what's the other one's name? Starts with an L. I can't—

MF: [Vera] Largent [history professor]?

LL: No. Not Largent. Lyda [Gordon Shivers, sociology faculty]. Let's see. Mossman and—Oh,

what was her name? I can see her right now. I should have gotten out my annual before you came so I'd be prepared, but I didn't know what you were going to ask me.

MF: That's okay. That's okay.

LL: Community is what she taught. Community and—oh, gosh.

MF: You'll think of it.

LL: I won't unless I get my annual, I don't believe. It's right there.

MF: Oh, okay.

LL: What is that lady's name? [pause] [John Paul] Givler [biology professor]. If that wasn't something. He was a mess. Oh, and the chemistry—oh, gosh. We used to—Miss [Elva] Barrow—oh, in the chemistry department. We used to put on these things in—we would—we had chapel programs, and we had a—now where in the world is it? And one time I was—I imitated Miss Barrow, and she never did like me before and after that, oh, she just [laughs]—I was scared to death of her. And somebody said, "You wouldn't dare imitate her. You'll flunk." I said, "I'm going to do it," or something like that. I said, "I don't think I will." And after that, she liked me. She didn't make it any easier for me, but at least she knew who I was, and she liked me. Oh, where's political—well, I can't even find it. Here it is. Shivers. Lyda Gordon Shivers. Mereb Mossman and Lyda Gordon Shivers. Yes. She taught me community, and I loved that. I enjoyed that. Dr. Givler in biology was something. He told me I had "wonderful latent ability." I never opened a book [laughs] because I had had two years of biology in high school. And really, I didn't have time to study that. I had to study these other things that I had difficulty with. He used—I got so tickled at him one day. He used—I was sort of upset with him. He used my—every time I'd write in a paper, he'd use it as—and go right by it, and I could see it was my paper that he was going by, and I thought, "Oh, boy, I got an A." He gave me a C+ and said, "You have wonderful latent ability." [laughs] Oh, Miss Margaret Edwards was head of the home economics department, and she got real upset with me one time. Very, very upset.

MF: Why was that?

LL: Well, I was chosen to be the—well, it was chosen, but they didn't have much of a choice—to be the—what do you call it? Well, we didn't call it the nanny back then. We called it the—gosh, anyway, I was supposed to take care of her children. It was a North Carolina senator, and she lived in—way back up in the sticks. What do you call it when you take care of somebody's—?

MF: Babysitter? I don't know.

LL: No. It wasn't babysitter. It was supposed to be a little bit—actually, what it was, it was a babysitter. But she always had somebody from the home economics department or child development to take care of her two little children during the summer when they were little.

And she was head of the Home Economics Foundation. Miss Sue Ramsey Taylor [Editor's note: Sue Ramsey Johnston Ferguson, Class of 1918, North Carolina legislator, trustee of the University of North Carolina, member of North Carolina State Board of Education]. Well, I went up there to—I said, "Well, I wasn't going to get myself into anything for—commit myself for a whole summer, if it would just be something that I would be miserable." So I went over there on the bus, got on the bus early one morning. Taylorsville, North Carolina was where she lived. She lived out in the country from Taylorsville. And I don't mind the country because I was a country girl myself. Well, we went in and everything was fine, except I was so—it was so hot when I got there travelling on the bus. I got—I left about seven-thirty or eight [am], and I got up there about three thirty or four [pm], transfers and all this stuff. And it was hot. Nothing was air conditioned at that particular time and went in, and she asked me if I was hungry, and I said, "Yes." I hadn't had anything to eat and hadn't had an opportunity to get anything to eat. And she had a great big country ham that was just beautiful on the table, and she herself sliced the country ham paper thin. Well, I know it's better paper thin, but she didn't put but one slice on it with a piece of bread, and that's what I had with something else. Well, that was the first thing. I thought—well, as hungry as I was, I thought she could give me more than one little paper-thin slice. And then my room was in the attic. Well, that was all right, too, except that it did get pretty hot up there in the summertime. But then, when I noticed the way the children reacted to her, and—it was just not—I knew that we might have problems between me and her and the children because I didn't feel that a child should be neglected or lied to or this, that, and the other. And it was just a situation that I just thought was very unfair. So she had a secretary there, too, who went around with her and drove her and all this stuff. So I finally asked the secretary, I said, "How do you feel about this situation?" She says, "I'm getting out of it just as soon as I can." She said, "I thought it would be glamorous and nice," and she said, "But I am treated as a servant." She said, "I have to clean out her dirty drawers." And she said, "The way she treats the children," and so forth. It was just—so I came back, and I told Mrs. Rosa that I wouldn't be taking the job, and Mrs. Edwards was very—they were very upset because this was one person that you had to play politics with. If you got donation from Home Economics Foundation and so forth. But I couldn't help it. I could not go—I mean, I just—even the yard man or the—well, she called everybody a fancy name. She used finger bowls and all this stuff when—and she had had about twenty-five or thirty cooks in the kitchen. She couldn't keep any help. It was just an intolerable situation. And I hated to do it, but I just had to do it, so I went back home—went back home and got another job.

[recording paused]

MF: Anyway, what we were talking about was some of the classes and so forth. Also, one other thing that I'd like to talk about a little bit that you mentioned—well, it wasn't—we hadn't gotten to that point on my list of topics yet, but was—with the war going on and how that affected life on campus?

LL: Well, they had ORD [Overseas Replacement Depot] out in—well, it's off of Bessemer

[Avenue, Greensboro, North Carolina].

MF: Right.

LL: East Bessemer. And they brought the soldiers in on Friday nights, and we had dormitory dances some. They did some of that. And that was interesting, and I know some folks who met people from—in that capacity. And I don't know of anyone who actually became a—they ended up marrying them or anything of the sort. But they dated them, and there were some very nice folks from there. I never dated anybody that I met there. But now that was—we enjoyed it. We enjoyed those dances. And let's see. There were V12s and V5s [United States Navy College Training Programs to grant bachelor's degrees to future officers] and all over at Duke [University, Durham, North Carolina] and Chapel Hill, and sometimes they would come over. There would be a special dance or something. They would bring them over. Or we met them somewhere or other. I can't exactly remember how we met them, but there was some camaraderie. I know we would when we got on the bus or the train to go home, most often there would be a lot of service men on the train. Most of them would be V12s or V5s or something from Chapel Hill and you'd talk to them, but that was about it.

MF: What seemed to be sort of the attitude, the atmosphere, on campus? Like, for example, now just about any time you're walking around on campus, you hear students talking about the [Gulf] War [waged by a United Nations-authorized coalition force led by the United States, against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait]. During World War II, how was that? Was it—?

LL: Well, people had brothers in service. They wrote them. They had boyfriends in service. I don't know of anybody who had a father in service that I knew particularly. It—they—of course, very interested—I knew a girl across the ways, her brother was killed while she was a good friend of mine, a very good friend of mine. In fact, she later became a roommate. And it was just—well, it was a bad time, and yet life went on. No one seemed to drop out or take it—I mean, life went on. That was the main thing because there was so much of this. You sympathized, and you were there for support, but life went on because that's just—everybody had somebody who was over there or knew somebody very, very close. And the whole nation—everything was just mobilized. I remember where I was and—when they said that [President Franklin D.] Roosevelt [32nd President of the United States] was killed [Editor's note: He died of a stroke on April 12, 1945]. It was my sophomore year. And it was not too long before—just a very short time before we went to dinner. And see, we had dinner—we ate dinner at a certain time, and you had assigned tables. And we—it was just very, very quiet. You listened to the radio. You got all the information you could. You were just completely stunned. I think that was the—other than somebody in your immediate family being killed, that was the—it was just unbelievable. Something that you just didn't see—

MF: His train came through Greensboro, didn't it? After he died?

LL: I don't remember that.

MF: Oh, because there were a couple of people who told me they went to the train station to watch it.

LL: Well, I guess it did, but I did not go to the train station. I did not go to the train station. I know that it should have because he was in Georgia. But I can't specifically—I did not go, and I don't remember that happening. I do remember it, but I guess I didn't go and didn't remember it as a big thing. And I don't remember any of my particular friends going.

MF: I think it came through like eleven or eleven-thirty [pm] at night, but they let some of the girls go down.

LL: I didn't know that. I'd forgotten about that.

MF: I may be wrong, but I think that's—yes.

LL: Probably upperclassmen who went. [laughs]

MF: Yes, probably. I guess also during that time, didn't you have to do some cafeteria duty?

LL: Yes. I think you—let's see, I can't remember how often it was, whether it was once a week or once a month.

MF: I don't know.

LL: I can't remember, but I know we did. Everybody had to serve tables or serve food in the cafeteria line. But it seems that we served tables, and I can't remember whether it was once a month or once a week. It didn't seem to be any big deal because everybody was doing it. You just took your turn. There were people worked in the cafeteria to make money. And if you worked in the cafeteria, that was the—quite a large self-help job. You made more money that way, I think, than any other—you could get more hours or you made more money in that respect than you did any other way. And [pause] that's a—I can't seem to say what it is.

MF: I think it was a little finch. He flew away.

LL: People that worked in the library. I guess each department probably had someone working.

MF: Yes. There are a couple of, I guess, more recent questions also that I wanted to make sure I asked you about. One is with—when Woman's College was WC and it was a girls' school, it held this really great reputation nationally.

LL: High academic standing.

MF: Yes. And now it's a university, it's coeducational, and shortly after that change occurred, it didn't hold the same status anymore, and I just wondered what your impression was on that.

LL: Well, it was about—when I was there, I heard—I didn't know specifically—but I heard that it was third scholastically in the nation.

MF: I've heard somebody say that. Yes.

LL: And I think it was, what, Smith [College, Northampton, Massachusetts; Wellesley [College, Wellesley, Massachusetts; Vassar [College, Poughkeepsie, New York]; Woman's College. Somewhere in there—and I think they used to sort of vacillate. I think those were the top ones. I'm not positive. But the trend was coeducational, and you meet the community needs and—but it does not have the standing that it used to have, and yet I still think it has the—an excellent educational background. I mean, I don't think—now, for instance, history was so difficult and so hard and if you got through that history, you did very well. You went over to Chapel Hill, and Chapel Hill was supposed to have had a much better history department. You didn't do—you didn't open your book hardly, you went over there. I mean, if you had done—if you had had history at Woman's College and you majored in history over there, you didn't have to work very hard at all. And I mean there was no—it was just—Woman's College was tough. And you got what you worked for is what you got. And I've often thought about that—that they don't have the rating that they used to have. I still think that Carolina in some areas and Woman's College—I mean, UNCG [The University of North Carolina at Greensboro]—have—as far as the greater university—now I know [North Carolina] State [University, Raleigh, North Carolina] in some areas can't be beat as far as some—when it comes to math, probably, or, I don't know, maybe engineering or some of those areas that the other two schools don't have. I do know that it's so much easier—it seems to me that State used to take students with less preparation or background or lower SATs [Scholastic Aptitude Tests] and grade standing than Chapel Hill. Now, I don't know about Greensboro. If they took—I think that Greensboro became more of a college where more—not a resident college, but students who just came in from the whole area.

MF: Sort of a commuting student.

LL: A commuting—a community. It met the needs of the community, which I think is excellent. But when they did this, I think people would take one or two courses. They would go at a slower pace, and maybe—anytime you're educating people, I think it's wonderful in any way you can do it. But I do think that they accepted students, probably, that were not as academically prepared as they did when they were going, and most of the students were residents and they finished in four years, and they went right straight through. And I think that's where you had the cohesiveness and school spirit and high academic standing, but I don't know.

[End Side A—Begin Side B]

MF: Having gone to a women's college, having gone to WC, an all-girls' school, do you feel there was some type of education that you received there that you would not have

received—some type of benefit that you would not have received at a coeducational institution?

LL: [pause] Well, I think that we were very, very close, and we weren't worrying about the opposite sex, I don't guess, and therefore we concentrated more on—I concentrated on my studies. And when I look back, I'm trying to think if that would have been a diversion. It could have been that I'd have done the same thing had there been boys or girls or whatever in class with me. I never particularly wanted to go to a coed school at that particular time. I never had any desire to transfer to Chapel Hill. And the majority of us felt that way. I really think we just—I don't know why we felt that way. I think today if I were in school I'd probably—although I'm not—I don't go along with the people. I'm usually different. I mean, if you've got—I'm normally am a person who thinks for himself, or think for myself, and I don't usually go along with the group. But I think today that I would think that I was missing something if I was not in a coeducational college because you just don't see many all-girl schools anymore. And I certainly wouldn't want to be cloistered and so different. So I think times have changed, and I don't know why everybody felt that they needed to go—to be coed. I don't know whether it was economics or they felt that—I know in nursery school we always had the boys and the girls together, and we let them go to the bathroom together and this, that, and the other. And there wasn't a thing in the world—you didn't think anything about it, and maybe that was the way to learn, and, of course, high school and everywhere else. So I don't know why you should separate the sexes when you get to college. So I guess it would be very abnormal to do it at this point unless you wanted them to go to a finishing school. And there again, I think maybe there is something to be said for this, but I haven't found it. I don't know what it is. I mean, I didn't go to a finishing school. I didn't go to St. Mary's [School, Raleigh, North Carolina] or Salem [School and College, Winston Salem, North Carolina]. So I don't know what I would—I don't know exactly how I feel about that.

MF: Finally also, I wanted to ask you about—I don't know how active you've been in the Alumni Association, but seems like we're on the tail end now of quite a rift between the Alumni Association and Chancellor [William] Moran.

LL: I never did quite understand all of that. I was active in the—in fact, I was on the Alumni Board some years ago, about ten, fifteen years ago, or something like that, maybe fifteen years ago. And I enjoyed it, and I have—I am somewhat active. I am not extremely active. I did go down to Raleigh the other day for the anniversary [100th anniversary of founding of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro].

MF: Did you ride the train?

LL: Yes. Thoroughly enjoyed it. And I know—I knew what went on, but I didn't know why. I mean, well, I do. I had tried to read and see, and I had—I had a strong opinion, and yet, maybe there was another side. Maybe the University had a side that—maybe it had been swept under the rug or something. Maybe the University had a side that I couldn't see, so I try to keep an open mind because I do know that funds are hard to come by now, and I do think that it was unfortunate that it occurred because of fundraising because we do need so

many funds right now because of the slack off in state funds and so forth. I do think that [North Carolina] Governor [James G.] Martin—did you hear about that? I mean, we were not allowed to go through the mansion when we went on that trip.

MF: Oh, no. I didn't hear that.

LL: Well, two hundred seventy-two people that didn't get to go through the mansion, and his—well, he just sent back word that it would rush him or push him too much. I think he had a luncheon or something or was going to have a luncheon, and it would push him. I do think that he should have apologized. But there didn't seem to be a real apology. It just seemed that when we were told that we would not be allowed to go through the mansion, they said that the Governor's Mansion had three functions—it served as a private residence for the governor, as the—because the governor was the executive—the executor, or the executive, as it served as an executive function, and then it served for the—it was for the people of North Carolina. And they said they thought that the first two took precedence. I thought that that was really unfortunate that that many alumni were gathered and that we were treated that way. And I really felt that somebody should have written a letter to the editor or to the *Raleigh News and Observer* or the Greensboro [*News & Record*] or something, but I didn't. I—but I felt that it should have been handled a little better. And they had about two hours' notice, and they prepared some slides and so forth of the mansion and gave us that, but a lot of people on that trip were very disappointed. Some people said they went on the trip—that was one reason they went on the trip, that they thought it would just be a nice day. We could also do that. And—but I think that was certainly not the college. That was the governor, and I said, "Well, he was a lame duck. We wouldn't have to—he didn't have to worry about our votes. If he hadn't have been a lame duck, maybe he wouldn't have done it." It could have been for economic reasons and more pressing reasons in the State, but I think that he certainly should have sent an emissary or somebody over and made a special—more of a special effort to have apologized. I thought it was in very poor taste.

MF: Yes. Well, I can see what you're saying. Yes. I also want to give you the chance, if there's anything that I've missed—I know you'll probably think of about a hundred things tonight.

LL: Probably.

MF: But if there's anything that I've missed that is important or that you maybe expected me to get to and I didn't?

LL: No. I didn't know what you were going to ask. I thought you were going—I didn't even know you were going to ask about college life as such. I was thinking it was after and how college had shaped my life, my later life, or something of the sort. I do know this—that I certainly have always been thankful to the University of North Carolina—I mean to Woman's College—because I felt that I got an excellent education. I feel that in many ways I almost feel privileged. I feel—because I was in every department, practically, on that campus while I was there because of my major. I was a science major—I minored in science. I was in the home economics area, I was certainly in education, had an awful lot of educational courses. I had psychology and sociology, and I elected music and political science. And a lot of my electives were in other areas that—in fact, I got in every

department on campus. Phys[ical] ed[ucation] and every department but one, and that was math. And I was more prepared in the math field than any other field when I came to college. I have since been in the math department and taken graduate work and have taken—I was a graduate assistant when I came back to Greensboro in the nursery school and never completed my master's.

But I feel that because of Woman's College that I look at life a lot different from a lot of my friends. And I think it was my school and my education. I think it was extremely broadening, and I was taught to think. And it was not rote memory. I wish that I had gotten more rote memory, so that I would remember things, but I always felt that it was important to be an independent thinker, and I really feel that—maybe I got it somewhat in secondary education—I mean, in high school, but I really believe that when I went to college that that was the main thing that I got out of college was to think for yourself and not to take somebody else's word for anything. I'm not the disciplined person that I should be, but I feel that if I have the need to find out something, I know where to go and I can think for myself. That's what I feel that I got out of school more than anything else.

And, of course, in raising a family, I feel that I was way up on a lot of people when it came to—because of my background. A lot of people say, "Well, nobody knew that. We weren't interested in that." Well, I was. I knew that, and I was interested in that. In fact, I tried natural childbirth. I mean—how old am I? Sixty-five. And I had read the book and all this stuff and I mean a lot of people are just discovering this. Well, I discovered it back when I was in school, and I read the book. I didn't have a coach, and I didn't have a special course or anything, but I was awake when my babies were born. And a lot of things, it was the education that I got.

And my children—my daughter has her PhD in clinical psychology, and she—in her study and so forth—and she didn't know what she was interested in, and she went down to Carolina, and I said, "Take a course in everything, a basic course, to find out what your interests were." She didn't listen. And finally, when she was a junior she took a course in psychology, and she said, "Well, this is it." And I said, "Well, if you'd have taken—" She wasn't going to take those easy—any of those things. But anyway, when she finally got it, now she's turned on to child clinical psychology and is an excellent—is in that field, has her own practice and is—she—for one of the first courses or some special weekend seminar that she took over at Duke, she called up, and she said, "I just realized now what a wonderful background I had, and what's wrong with all these people?" Said, "You know, all of the adults, the doctors and so forth that had come from all over the United States to find out what was wrong with them." And she said, in just sitting around discussing people, said, "Well, you're the most together person I've ever known." And she said, "I think it was from my background. And I didn't realize what good parents I had and how much I—the problems that I didn't have, and it was because of my background."

MF: She did her PhD work at Carolina also?

LL: No. She did that at the University of Louisville [Kentucky]. She was living in Louisville. So she did it at the University of Louisville. But I do think that I—all of it was—an awful lot—of course, I came from—I guess maybe it was my own background, and we were interested in education and my family and so forth. But I don't think you can put too much emphasis on education.

MF: Yes. I want to thank you for the time and for the interview.

LL: Well, you're so welcome.

[End of Interview]