

UNCG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEES: Olive Chandley Crawford and Hermene Warlick Eichhorn

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[Editor's note: This was a conversation between the interviewees.]

HE: I am Hermene Warlick Eichhorn, and I graduated in piano in 1926 and 1927. Since that time, I have been in and out of the School of Music fairly regularly on this, that and the other. And so, to that end, they asked me if I would start—probably because I'm not bashful, and some of the others are. So now, I've said my piece, and you can say yours.

OC: Well, I'm Olive Chandley Crawford, and I finished in the Class of '22. We dearly loved Mr. [Dr. Wade R.] Brown [head of the music department], and we certainly have some rich memories of his being with him. I was fortunate enough, since I entered sophomore piano in '18, to have had him four years instead of the customary three, which I value very highly to this day.

HE: You had him in piano for four years?

OC: Yes.

HE: By the time I got here in 1922, Dr. Brown was teaching only the seniors. And so, you would have had him four years, and I had him as teacher, piano teacher, only one year. But he taught me so much of so many things about music, about art, about travel, about reaching out beyond where I am to where I would like to be and where I have no idea it is at all, but I know it's there. This was Dr. Brown. He was an inspiring teacher. He was more than a teacher. He was—we called him—in our time we call him Pa Brown because he assumed some of the prerogatives of a father to his students. You remember that?

OC: Yes indeed, very clearly. And his impact was not only great on the students but on the whole state. He was known as "Mr. Music" of North Carolina and really put North Carolina in the music field. And, of course, locally he was widely known because he had such an impact organizing the civic music group, the chorus, to sing the *Messiah* every year. And I remember one year he brought out an unknown called the Philadelphia Orchestra led by—

HE: I don't remember.

OC: Yes, you do. He's great today. Eugene Ormandy [Hungarian-born conductor and violinist].

HE: Oh, my gosh, but that was much later.

OC: Yes, but I played for the chorus.

HE: You did?

OC: Yes, until he died.

HE: I thought Alleine Minor [professor of piano] played for some of the early choruses.

OC: Well, she did.

HE: And, then, you did it, too.

OC: Yes. And Eugene Ormandy was an unknown then.

HE: Yes.

OC: Of course, now he's great.

HE: But in the earlier days, wasn't Thaddeus Rich the conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra? Because I have a picture from Dr. Brown's collection and I think—you see, Dr. Brown started these music festivals in Greensboro. About what time, Olive?

OC: I don't know.

HE: Would you say '22?

OC: At least then, I think. I think it is.

HE: Because civic music was started in the fall of '27.

OC: Yes.

HE: And that was after the music festivals which were held—the main music festivals about which you are talking.

OC: Yes.

HE: Bringing the Philadelphia Orchestra and the choruses. They had proved to be such a financial boo-boo that they had to devise some means of paying for the things in advance.

OC: As I remember it, Hermene, this was not a festival that Eugene Ormandy came. It was to accompany the *Messiah* at Christmas, the chorus.

HE: Well, you see, you remember that, and I don't.

OC: Eugene Ormandy came with the Philadelphia Orchestra later on the civic music which was started in fall of '20—I'm looking at the book, so I'll get this right. Fall of '27 is what the book shows when the civic music started.

HE: Of course, he was better known by then.

OC: Yeah, yeah. But the picture which I have from Dr. Brown goes back earlier than that. And I think—I'll have to check that with you later. However, we were talking about Dr. Brown as a teacher. Let's talk about what he looked like, okay?

HE: All right. Now, he looked exactly like he was—just a great big, old, lovable somebody.

OC: And he had a goatee of a beard, and his hair began to thin. He wasn't bald, but his hair was thin. And it was usually in wisps on his forehead. And he had large very intelligent—what color were his eyes?

HE: Brown.

OC: Now, let's also say something else about Dr. Brown. He was Wade R. Brown, but he wasn't baptized Wade R. Brown. He was baptized Wade Brown.

HE: I didn't know that.

OC: And I think I'm pretty sure about this. He didn't have a middle name. So he decided that the letter R was a beautiful letter and very impressive looking and sounding. So he became—he added that to his name, and became Wade R. Brown.

HE: So, it stood for nothing?

OC: Nothing. Now he was of a little over average height, would you say?

HE: Yes, and weight.

OC: And weight—particularly around the middle. He had a good “German stomach,” German-looking stomach if you know what I mean.

HE: Yes, I do.

OC: Yes, well, it was a good German-looking stomach. And he always was neatly dressed, never foppishly dressed, but always neatly dressed and insisted on his pupils being neatly dressed. But do you remember how the room where he taught us was? It had a little platform or a little stage.

HE: Now, that was over in old building—

OC: Yes.

HE: —before they moved it into the School of Music.

OC: Yes, and he was forever, we thought, standing up there pulling up his pants over that German stomach because we were so afraid he might lose a garment there.

HE: Well, now this would have been the end of the world if he had done it like that. [laughing] You didn't see what Olive said there. No, quite seriously, I remember so well one day I had on a jersey dress. And if you've worn a jersey dress, you know it will split easily at the seams. So I came to piano lesson this particular day in a jersey dress with a split in one of the important seams. And I sat down at the piano, and Dr. Brown sat down at the chair beside me. And he leaned over and poked his finger through the hole in the seam. Said, "Go back to your room. Sew up that hole and come back for your piano lesson after the hole is sewed up."

OC: Wonderful.

HE: He says, "You do not come to a piano lesson or appear in public in that condition." And I was truly very neatly dressed.

OC: I never had that sort of experience.

HE: With him?

OC: No.

HE: Well, he and Mrs. B [Grace Brown, wife]. Now Mrs. B. is another subject, a wonderful subject.

OC: Grace is a wonderful subject. One of the highlights that I remember about Grace was accompanying us to New York, the senior class. She took along a little steamer trunk for the sole purpose of bringing back those delicious hard rolls that she could get only to satisfy her taste in New York.

HE: I'm going to tell you one better than that.

OC: All right.

HE: But I'm going to do it after we describe Mrs. Brown.

OC: All right.

HE: Now, Dr. Brown was fairly large.

OC: Yes.

HE: Mrs. Brown was short.

OC: About five feet two inches, wouldn't you say?

HE: Yeah, I would say so. But she made up for it in other directions. She was built on the style of [Ernestine] Schumann-Heink [Austrian-American operatic contralto]. If you remember Schuman-Heink, she had rather generous proportions. If she leaned over too far to pick up something like that, I don't think she could have gotten back up. The weight would have pulled her down, if you know what I mean. She was very—a small waist, small hips, and a very large bust. Also, a generous derrière as I recall. It protruded slightly.

OC: That's right.

HE: Because this is some slight deduction you know, a large chest and then—but always very, very neatly groomed.

OC: But I think she was the forerunner of the sweater. She always wore a sweater.

HE: Always a sweater. Now they went to Europe, along towards the last. They went to Europe each summer to refresh their souls, I think.

OC: Was he not trained in Germany some too?

HE: Now, this I don't know.

OC: I had the idea he was.

HE: Well, we'll come back to that.

OC: Dr. Brown not only gave his students a wonderful education in music, a very broad one, but he saw to it that we got to New York as seniors during our stay here.

HE: It was during the examination week. Seniors didn't have to stand exams.

OC: That's right. And we went up there. And Gracie chaperoned. And we had a ball. We went by train. And as I remember we changed in Washington, and it was quite a group to herd around. But Gracie and Wade were up to it. We got to New York, and there again, he saw that we heard all of the good concerts, the opera, the orchestras—

HE: And the pianists. We were taken to museums.

OC: And we were also taken to see how people lived. I remember once in an Italian place we had told ghost stories in our rooms until I got so scared I had to leave because it was one of these peeping places. But we had a very broad education in that respect.

HE: Now Mrs. Brown initiated us on how to eat spaghetti. I mean—

OC: Yes, this is true.

HE: That's part of the training.

OC: True.

HE: And I vividly remember her very carefully backing her—winding the spaghetti around the fork against the serving spoon, which she held in her left hand.

OC: I remember that vividly.

HE: Now this showed us how to do—I mean this is typical of the many things that we—education that we received. We were taken to the Metropolitan Museum and told all kind of things to see, and it was an education in itself.

OC: It really was, because so many of us had never been to New York or had this opportunity.

HE: And the trips that I made to Europe and throughout the world, each time I paid tribute to Dr. and Mrs. Brown and their initiation of us in New York—how you go about doing these things.

OC: Yes.

HE: And this, again, is typical of the Browns—their attitude as teachers and trainers and preparing you for you didn't know what, but it must always be the best which you were capable.

OC: As you said in the beginning, Hermene, he was like a father. They adopted, truly adopted, their students.

HE: They had no children of their own. But—in my time he was called “Pa Brown.”

OC: Yes, we did, too.

HE: But now to come back—let's talk a little bit about his teaching since we're back to that.

OC: Yes.

HE: You had him for four years?

OC: Yes.

HE: And I had him—well, I had him for two.

OC: At that time we could not take organ if you remember until the second year. So—

HE: I don't remember that.

OC: Well, we couldn't—you had freshman piano.

HE: You had George Scott Hunter, then?

OC: Yes.

HE: How many years?

OC: I had him three years.

HE: Well now, this must have been about the time that—I mean that Mr. Scott Hunter came in.

OC: I'm sorry. I had George Scott Hunter four years because I did enter sophomore and that qualified me to start organ, you see, the first year.

HE: Yes.

OC: I did not get to give my graduating recital; however, because he left town in February after I had it all prepared.

HE: Then George Thompson [professor of organ] came in under; again, this is still under Dr. Brown—

OC: Yes.

HE: Part of Dr. Brown. Then George Thompson came in.

OC: Yes.

HE: And I had George in my sophomore year in teaching organ. And then I graduated in piano in '26 and organ in '27.

OC: Yes.

HE: After I was married and, somewhat Dr. Brown's great disappointment, was looking forward to an addition to the family. Again, in those years this wasn't done. Students were not permitted to get married on campus. It was a shipping offense, much less to increase the family. This was just absolutely unheard of. But I was married, and working, and going to school and graduating, again all in the same year. And Dr. Brown still was telling me what to do about a number of things. [laughing]

OC: Including pregnancy.

HE: Yes. I don't know what he knew about that, but he knew about everything else.

OC: Yes, I suspect he knew right much.

HE: But he was a superb teacher. The European—not maestro. That's not the word that I want. What would you say a teacher was—a European teacher?

OC: I don't know. We called him Herr Brown.

HE: But Mrs. Brown insisted that he be called Herr Professor Doctor Brown.

OC: He didn't get his doctorate until later, did he?

HE: Now, he got it from what—Wake Forest?

OC: I think so. But it was later than I was here. He was not Dr. Brown then.

HE: He was Mr. Brown?

OC: Yes.

HE: I didn't know he was—I thought he was born Dr. Brown.

OC: Well, I may be wrong, but that's what I thought.

HE: No, I'm joking. He was Mr. Brown when I was here.

OC: Now, in the voice department under Dr. Brown there was Benjamin Bates [professor of voice].

HE: Right.

OC: And it was a very strong department really for the time, I thought.

HE: Yeah. Benny Bates was the voice department, wasn't he?

OC: That's right.

HE: And Alleine—

OC: Tight pants and all.

HE: And cut-away coat.

OC: Yes.

HE: And he, again, was—well, he was from, I guess, Boston. Benny was.

OC: I think so.

HE: But—and the Browns had been to the New England Conservatory [of Music] in Boston.

OC: Yes.

HE: Again, this is part of the background as well as Dr. Brown's European training.

OC: Yes.

HE: Well now, the head of the department, the first teacher was who—Miss Salsley?

OC: Yes. Gertrude Salsley.

HE: Did you ever have any contacts with her?

OC: Yes, I did. I had—I don't know whether it was one lesson a week with Ms. Salsley or not that first year.

HE: Yes.

OC: She and Miss Minor were the other members of the department.

HE: Now, Miss Salsley, I think, had departed just before I came in the fall of '22. And Mary Lois Ferrell [professor or piano], who had studied with Dr. Brown at Meredith [College] came to teach here. And so, I was assigned to her.

OC: I never had her.

HE: It was my great fortune to have had Mary Lois Ferrell for three years. But now, Alleine was the head of the piano department under Dr. Brown—

OC: Yes.

HE: —as when I was here.

OC: Yes.

HE: And Sue Kyle Southwick [?] came in, I think, in my junior year. And oh, Claire [Henley] Atkisson [Class of 1916, professor of music], of course, was here.

OC: Yes. But she taught in the training school, did she not, with the younger groups?

HE: No.

OC: At Curry [demonstration/laboratory school on campus]?

HE: She taught freshmen when I was here.

OC: Did she?

HE: Now, she was a pupil of Dr. Brown's?

OC: Yes.

HE: See, we're bringing this up because of the close relationship between Dr. Brown, the teachers who taught under him and the students. There was a very close—well, family relationship, wouldn't you say?

OC: Yes, indeed.

HE: It was closer even than teacher and pupils.

OC: Advisor.

HE: Yeah. He advised us on everything. He knew about everything. He advised us about everything. Now whether or not you agreed with it didn't make any difference.

OC: I know when he asked me to go play at the Holy Trinity Church for him, I said, "No, I'm going to play at my own church." And he said, "That's the biggest mistake, daughter, you ever made." And I said, "Well—." He says, "No, don't answer me. You think about it a few days, and I'll ask you again." He asked me again, and I said, "I'm staying here." He said, "That's wrong. It will never be a business relationship."

HE: Well, the greatest mistake that I ever made in his estimation was getting married. He was determined—I don't know what, but he was determined that I was going on to New York to be a concert pianist.

OC: Yes.

HE: And I had absolutely no idea at that stage of the game of doing anything but marrying my George, which I did. And we've been married nearly fifty years.

OC: And aren't you glad?

HE: Oh, but he told me it was the greatest mistake I would ever make was giving up my music for him.

OC: He was very frank in telling you.

HE: Oh, he made no—took no bones about it. Now, let's talk about Dr. Brown's sense of humor. Now, we've talked about his—he was a dictator.

OC: Yes, he was. But we loved it.

HE: We loved him. Now, let's talk a little bit about the chicken stealing incident of which may or may not be known to some of you who are listening.

OC: You tell that because it's foggy in my mind.

HE: Well, this is the way I heard it. Marjorie Hood [Class of 1926, head of circulation at Jackson Library], who is in the UNC [University of North Carolina]—. What's the official name of this institution now?

OC: Woman's College of University of North Carolina.

HE: No, now it's UNCG [The University of North Carolina at Greensboro]?

OC: It's the University of—

HE: You're talking about the married name. Now, back in our day it was the married name. But now we're talking about—we're just one sex now. We're just the University of North Carolina.

OC: At Greensboro.

HE: Greensboro. Marjorie is in the library. And she asked me one day—did I know that Dr. Brown had been arrested for stealing chickens. And I know I looked at her with, "Are you crazy or what?" Look.

OC: I would not have been surprised, I believe.

HE: That he had stolen chickens?

OC: Well, just for humor, yes.

HE: Oh well now, I don't think he would have gone that far. I still don't think so.

OC: I don't know. He could have.

HE: But we have before us a clipping from the Asheville—what is it, *Citizen*? Well, be that as it may, it's an Asheville paper of the date of March 10, 1921, with the headline, "Large Number Cried before M. A. Creaseman." And one of them was a Mr. and Mrs. Wade Brown who were charged with three charges of alleged chicken stealing. Well now, this was passed on to Dr. Brown from a Mr. James B. Sill of Fletcher, North Carolina, with the comment, "Your Asheville friends are very much disturbed by the enclosed." Now,

let's parenthetically say that the Browns had been going to Asheville for the summer months for some time.

OC: Yes, they had.

HE: And everywhere they went, they drew around them a warm core of friends who were interested in all the good things in life.

OC: Yes.

HE: Well, the friends in Asheville said, "They will, however, stand behind you and the madam." And Mrs. Brown—he referred to Mrs. Brown as "the madam" sometimes. You remember that, Olive?

OC: I do.

HE: Yes, all right. "We will stand behind you and the madam to a man. Let us into the game if the stealing is good." Now, here is Dr. Brown's reply: "Dear Father Sill, I received your letter of recent date. I'm very sorry that the matter got into the press because the chickens were really very good. We enjoyed them very much. As soon as I hear the findings of the court, I will probably call on you to come to our assistance." I think this was a grand joke is the only thing. Knowing Dr. Brown's almost—excuse me for saying it—almost country sense of humor. This would be his idea that he had been accused of stealing anything is absolutely beyond me.

OC: But nobody would believe it.

HE: No, no. So, we insert this in what we're saying here just to say that we think this was Dr. Brown's idea of a joke—which both in Asheville and his friends there, and Dr. Brown's reply.

OC: It also shows what a well-rounded person he had. He wasn't only a wonderful musician, but he had this great sense of humor too. Which endeared us to him even more.

HE: We loved him—well, we loved him even more than say, dearly. It amounted to—well, he was just our father.

OC: Well, with me it was my parents, God, Wade R. Brown, and R. Murphy Williams.

HE: Now, that shows how he is. Now, that brings us to the church, doesn't it, Olive?

OC: Yes, it does.

HE: Because your church was R. Murphy Williams.

OC: Right.

HE: He was the head of your Presbyterian Church of the Covenant.

OC: Dictator, too.

HE: And so, I, as a self-taught organist before George Thompson got a hold of me, had taken a job without Dr. Brown's knowledge, be it said. I had been going to the job for some time before Dr. Brown found out about it. And there was a merry how-do-you-do when he found out that I had taken a job as an organist, and he knew nothing about it. He raised Cain, shall we say? And finally cleared me. And I held the job for two years, at which time they found a member of their congregation who was there in the summertime. And I was not there in the summertime. So she got the job, and I lost the job, which made me very angry. And so, I later became a member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church where Dr. Brown was choirmaster because he was in the—I was going to stay—the market. You said, "You turned him down." Now, let's say why he was in the market was because George Scott Hunter had left.

OC: No, George Scott Hunter was at the Catholic Church on North Elm.

HE: He left Holy Trinity.

OC: I never knew he was there because I went every Christmas Eve and sat up in the balcony while he played.

HE: Where, at St. Benedict's [Catholic Church]?

OC: Yes.

HE: Well, I'm pretty sure he was at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.

OC: Well, he could have been.

HE: Now, [Lillian] Grey Fetter [Class of 1926] had been the organist at Holy Trinity—

OC: Yes.

HE: —before me. She was a Greensboro girl, who was an organ major and a member of Holy Trinity parish. When I was married on August 2, 1926—I didn't get married on August 1 because that fell on Sunday, and in that day and age people didn't get married on Sunday.

OC: Never. Friday was the day.

HE: Well, the first of August fell on Sunday. So, therefore, we were married on Monday, August 2. On the first Sunday in September, I began my tenure as organist at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and stayed there for over twenty-five years. But I'm in detail saying this because Dr. Brown took me over to train me in churchmanship. And this he did with as—

OC: He was dedicated there too.

HE: Even more so. If there was any place to which he was more dedicated than his music, it was his church. And the training which I had as both a church musician and as what he called churchman, he was very emphatic in his training in churchmanship. And so, I know that my years as—I succeeded him then as choirmaster at Holy Trinity. And the years when I built up the choir, and we had a capacity choir waiting list of people wanting to come into the choir and the feeling that we had that every member in that choir was a singing churchman. This goes back to Dr. Brown. We were not there to sing the hymns or to sing anthems. We were there to lead the worship of almighty God. And almighty God was a very—he was there. I mean it.

OC: Very real to him.

HE: He didn't just happen to be there that particular Sunday. He was there all the time. This was his house. When you went to the altar, this is Dr. Brown's training. When you went to the altar to receive communion, you actually came in contact with God. This was his training. I emphasize this because this is Dr. Brown—the intensity, the carefulness, the warmth with which he insisted and the slightest details in everything.

All right. Now, let's talk about Dr. Brown and the community and Dr. Brown and the state. Let's move first to the festivals which he headed. Now, Olive, you remember, you were here—oh, I'm not going to say how long. It might have been fifty years; it might have been six months ahead of me. So now you tell them how long you were here ahead of me.

OC: I was here four years ahead.

HE: All right. Now, you were here during these festivals. Now, you take the ball and go with that.

OC: Well, let me suppose I tell about the *Messiah* choruses.

HE: Right.

OC: Which were city-wide. They started in September training, and they always had at least—I'd say 150 people from the community.

HE: Well now, were the women in this, or was this the men from the community?

OC: Both, both. Entire college.

HE: By the time I got here, it was the men of the community and the girls from the college. But now back when—I think you're right because my husband's father and mother were in the choruses.

OC: In the early days.

HE: And they both sang. And I know I have dad's copies of the *Messiah* now in my library.

OC: Yes.

HE: Now, you were saying that they had these—but what I wanted to say that they did include the women from the community, and Greensboro at that time was what? 25,000?

OC: Oh, I wouldn't think over that surely. But this was a great educational thing for people in Greensboro. I know this one gentleman, Mr. Bolton, came from England. And he was amazed that this was available here for him. Because he said, "Oh, I didn't expect anything like that in Greensboro." Said, "Dr. Wade Brown is terrific." And as I said earlier, he did bring down—Dr. Brown brought down Eugene Ormandy as an unknown and his little Philadelphia orchestra one Christmas to put on this *Messiah* performance. It was a yearly thing, this performance was.

HE: Well now, by my time the *Messiah* at Christmastime was the chorus and soloists. He imported soloists very oftentimes.

OC: Yes, he did.

HE: He brought in the name soloists.

OC: Yes.

HE: And the chorus was made up of the men from the community and the college girls. There were enough of us by that time. There were what—four hundred college girls at that time?

OC: Well, I don't know. When I was here there were four hundred and fifty. I can remember Mr. Scott Hunter made the remark that this college is going to grow so big and so rapidly that the girls will come to class on bicycles.

HE: Now, he was a bit of prophet, wasn't he?

OC: Yes, he was. It has truly come to pass.

HE: Sober and otherwise.

OC: Well, yes. Anyway.

HE: But quite—I mean quite a musician, and quite a man of learning and an artist too.

OC: Well, I think that's why Dr. Brown employed him.

HE: Oh, yes.

OC: He was a teacher not in harmony and history and so forth related subjects, not only from a book. In fact, he rarely used a book. It was—he knew. He just knew.

HE: He just knew.

OC: It was innate.

HE: Now, this was the *Messiah* choruses.

OC: That's right.

HE: Now, in the summertime in May—the May Festivals. You talk about that.

OC: You talk about that.

HE: I don't know anything about that.

OC: Well, he did bring, as you said before, name soloists here to partake in these things. And they were quite good. I really don't remember them as vividly as I do the choruses because that was so unheard of here.

HE: Well, someone was telling me the other day—we were talking about coming to do this talking by Dr. Brown.

OC: Yes.

HE: And if I'm not mistaken, the records in the library in the Brown collection will show correspondence with these soloists, and some of the—shall we say interesting events which happened in connection with some of these soloists. About this I know nothing. I'm only bringing it—inserting it here so that you can check it if you want. But they were all fascinating people, people who were names in the concert—

OC: They were.

HE: And excellent musicians. And Dr. Brown was a great believer in not only the best, but exposing students and everyone to the best. And also, he understood the business of attraction of names. Nonentities were not looked down upon. It was just simply that he understood that people were interested in names that they knew, names which they were familiar. Again, this is part of the concert world. And to that end, let's talk a little bit about the beginning of the civic music.

OC: Well, you see, Hermene, he had a great job to perform here. Because North Carolina was not known as a musical state. And he put it right on the map as a very musical state. And he thought a good beginning would be the civic music program—bringing the best of every field like a singer or a violinist.

HE: North Carolina was the what? The veil of humiliation between the two twin mountains of conceit [Editor's note: valley of humility between two mountains of conceit]. Isn't that what it was called for awhile?

OC: I think that's right. I think that's right.

HE: Dr. Brown was determined to do something about that in the music area. And he started with pianos. The first high school music contest was held in—. Go ahead and tell me when it was?

OC: I have no idea—1919, I believe.

HE: 1920, what the books says here. Dr. [Julius I.] Foust [president], who was then the—now, maybe we better talk just a moment about Dr. Foust and his influence on all this whole situation because the atmosphere at the college was very conducive to expansion and growth and the responsibility of the college to both the local scene and the state.

OC: And also for the addition of the cultural things of life.

HE: Dr. Foust had a very, very strong feeling about this.

OC: Yes.

HE: And that was one of the reasons he brought Dr. Brown from Raleigh—Meredith College at Raleigh—was because he knew that Dr. Brown's interest was in expanding the influence of art, music, that is, musical art through various sources. And, so, Dr. Foust gave him every encouragement, every support that he could. And I think we must recognize the contribution which Dr. Foust made through Dr. Brown in this area in backing him up and putting at his disposal—

OC: Well, there is no doubt that he made it possible.

HE: And I think that so often in talks like what we're doing, we concentrate on one person and forget that they must operate in an atmosphere conducive to support and expansion if they're going to do what their mission is.

OC: Like the good book says, "The seed must fall on fertile ground."

HE: Fertile ground. Well, it did. Dr. Foust provided this. And Dr. Brown had great support from Dr. Foust. Now, I don't know that they always agreed about everything because I don't think Dr. Brown ever agreed with anybody about everything.

OC: Well, do you know anybody who does?

HE: No, not very few people. Possibly you do, but I don't. But—

OC: Don't make me—

HE: Now, to come back to Dr. Brown and the high school music contest. I'm sorry about that. [laughter] The first high school music contest was held in May 1920. The invitation—Dr. Brown wrote letters of invitation, as I recall, to piano teachers. Is that right, do you remember it? Was this how it started?

OC: I think so, yes.

HE: Well, they were all piano teachers, weren't they? I mean all piano—

OC: Oh, yes.

HE: Only pianists?

OC: Yes.

HE: Well, why was that?

OC: I don't know.

HE: There wasn't any other thing else available.

OC: You have to start off somewhere.

HE: There wasn't anything else available except piano, was there?

OC: Yes, violin.

HE: In where—schools?

OC: I don't know.

HE: Now, let me say here just for the record.

OC: Chorus.

HE: In connection, I want to explore at some time the personnel of teaching music here at the college before the coming of Dr. Brown. There was a German singer who also sang in—I have come into this in connection with some work I've done with the history of the School of Music. This has come to my attention since the publication of that. So, I must look into it later. But Dr. Brown wrote to the piano teachers of whom he knew asking them to send their best student to a contest. And there were how many? Thirteen, wasn't it?

OC: I don't know.

HE: Thirteen pianists came, and that gradually expanded to more pianists and more pianists. And then, the expansion was voice and violin and small vocal ensembles. No instrumental ensembles because there were no instrumental ensembles. There was no music in the schools as such back in the time we're talking about.

OC: Not with the program?

HE: No. Individual schools would have had a piano teacher and possibly someone who directed the choruses, if they had more than one person.

OC: Or plays or commencements.

HE: Usually for commencement and possibly a Christmas program. But there was no organized—

OC: —program.

HE: —program in the schools.

OC: No.

HE: This was a high school music contest which Dr. Brown started with these thirteen pianists. And that ultimately grew until it involved orchestras and bands, great choruses and—until it was no longer the veil of humiliation particularly in regard to music. But this took time and the contest ultimately took over the entire college campus in the days when this was being held.

OC: Yeah, it took Dr. Brown, too, didn't it?

HE: Yes, it did. It did.

OC: At the right time.

HE: He was the right man, in the right place, at the right time.

OC: Right.

HE: Now, let's go back, Olive, to the festivals. Before Aycock was opened up—before Aycock Auditorium was opened up, and before the other—the civic music was opened up and—. We'll come into that later on; let's talk a little about the summer festivals. You remember getting on the streetcar, the open streetcars which were great trains of them. In other words, one street car was hitched on behind another one, and these open streetcars were filled with eager young things who were taken all the way downtown to a concert. And these concerts—some of them were held in the Grand Theatre, which was where?

OC: Where Schiffman's [Jewelers] is now, along in there.

HE: And before that?

OC: Before that in what we call the Opera House.

HE: Which was where?

OC: That was where Wachovia Bank is now.

HE: That would be at the corner of North Elm [Street] and what used to be Gaston [Street]—is now Friendly [Avenue]. And it was the city hall. And it contained the fire department. But upstairs was given over to an auditorium. And we saw opera there. We heard music concerts there. I saw *Blossom Time* there. I remember that quite vividly. But to get there, we didn't get in a car to go. We got on the street car and journeyed in fair weather and foul under any given conditions. We were taken down there properly chaperoned, of course. Were you always chaperoned?

OC: Always chaperoned. And my mother insisted on it at least three in my overshoes.
[laughter]

HE: In dry weather, Olive?

OC: Anything.

HE: All right. So, we went down to the Grand Theatre, and the National Theater was the one that was next to Schiffman's.

OC: National.

HE: The Grand was the one that was on top of city hall, wasn't it?

OC: We called it the Opera House in Greensboro. I don't know. I don't know it by another name. At any rate, we had at least two operas a year. I think we called it the Opera House.

HE: And it was quite an occasion. We also—let's say that this business of going on streetcars—we went out to Cone Park to the annual Virginia-Carolina baseball game. Do you remember going on those?

OC: Yes, indeed.

HE: Which was the social event of the year.

OC: Oh, yes.

HE: Everybody had to go to the baseball game. And these open trolley cars.

OC: That's right.

HE: The tracks ran all the way to the neighboring town of Pomona.

OC: And turned around and then came back.

HE: Came back.

OC: Of course, they went to Lindley Park.

HE: Now, I don't remember Lindley Park.

OC: Oh, that was the thing then. That's when we had boxing bats [?] there and everywhere.

HE: Now, you see so much of this I don't know.

OC: Well, you weren't raised in Greensboro.

HE: Oh, no. I was raised in Hickory.

OC: NC?

HE: Yes, NC. Now—but these culture events and Mrs. [C.] Richard Wharton [Lessie Lindsey Wharton], Mrs. C. Richard Wharton [Richard Wharton was prominent attorney.] also had a series which was held in the Grand Theatre.

OC: Right.

HE: Now, she brought the big headliners of the concert world, [Ignacy] Paderewski [Polish pianist, composer], [Josef] Hofmann [Polish-American pianist, composer, music teacher, inventor], Schumann-Heink, Frances, Alda [operatic soprano], I believe was one of them.

OC: The two of them that sang—

HE: *Whispering Hope*.

OC: You know, the duet.

HE: Soft as a voice of an angel.

OC: Both of them great.

HE: It was Schumann-Heink and Frances Alda, wasn't it?

OC: No.

HE: Well, you think about that for a minute. Dr. Brown took us by Pullman car to Raleigh to hear—

OC: To hear her.

HE: To hear Paderewski.

OC: Yes, he did.

HE: But did he, Paderewski, play in the Grand Theatre?

OC: No.

HE: I may be wrong on the story about that.

OC: No, he went to Raleigh, I think.

HE: I remember quite vividly going to Raleigh to hear him.

OC: I remember it vividly because my class had to sit on the stage, my group. And one person up there, a man, fainted. He got so overcome with this wonderful playing.

HE: Well, now, [Sergei] Rachmaninoff [Russian pianist, composer, conductor]—

OC: He came here, didn't he?

HE: With the Civic [Music Association].

OC: I think so.

HE: You see, Dr. Brown—

OC: Brilovich [?].

HE: Brilovich came. Dr. Brown (I'm getting very raspy.) believed in bringing in these names which meant something.

OC: The people had known through the press.

HE: Yes, he believed in building on what you already have, expand from there. This is one of the things about education. Don't you always start from what you already know? Isn't this one of the main premises or whatever you would call it, fundamentals?

OC: Well, he was introducing us to what we had read about.

HE: Yes.

OC: And it became a reality in that way.

HE: Yes. So when these summer festivals didn't prove successful financially, Mrs. Wharton picked up some of it with her series. She had the backing, I believe, of her husband's cousin, Ed Wharton, the banker and financier. And then gradually, this we needed another series. So when Aycock Auditorium was opened in the fall of '27, I think.

OC: I don't know.

HE: Then the Civic Music Association began.

OC: We thought we'd never want the space again, but we quickly filled it, didn't we?

HE: Oh, yes. And the audience was composed of the students at what was then the North Carolina College for Women.

OC: Woman's College, I think.

HE: No, North Carolina College for Women was first.

OC: Was that first?

HE: Yes, because we added several other adjectives in there. Yes we did, but we won't go in that right now. But the students from the college, plus what town people had bought seats; and in those days the students lined up a good half hour before the concerts to get into the concerts. They were so eager to get into the concerts. Nowadays when I see the handfuls, shall we say, of students, who can take it or leave it in concerts, I look back to the days, forty-five years ago, when we were so eager for concerts—anything that was available to us.

OC: And Dr. Brown had us prepared to hear that concert. We studied it.

HE: How did you do that?

OC: Well, he would present the people, the performers, the stars, and tell us something about their lives, and their—what they had accomplished. And also discussed the program just as they do the orchestral concerts for the city school children now. They prepare them. So, we went off feeling like we, you know, could digest it well.

HE: Now, we—were you in the days of the bobbed hair, when the bobbed hair came in, or was that before your time?

OC: No, I had bobbed hair. I was late bobbing mine on account of parental.

HE: Well, what about rouge, were you permitted to wear rouge?

OC: Oh, heavens, no.

HE: Were you permitted—what length were your skirts?

OC: Uh, I have a picture of when I was over here eating a Hershey bar, and it had a shawl that I had knitted down to here. The shawl came to here, and my dress was ankle length almost.

HE: Now, let's just say since our recording won't show where "here" is, how far down was that?

OC: Well, about almost to the ankle.

HE: Yes.

OC: Halfway to the ankle.

HE: Now, it went from the ankle to—

OC: To above the knee.

HE: —above the knee in one beautiful operation.

OC: And I loved it.

HE: And we, of course, were going straight to perdition.

OC: We had gone.

HE: Yes, we had gone. We went from ankle-length skirts to skirts—

OC: Above the knee.

HE: And the waistlines were at the hips.

OC: Are you kidding? Mine was down to here.

HE: Again, you can't see where she's pointing. But I'll leave that to your imagination.

OC: I came back for commencement and war barred Sally Tucker's dress. And it was down to there, beaded and shaking.

HE: Yes, beaded, beaded, beaded, beaded. And, oh horrors, we had nothing on our arms.

OC: Oh, no. And fairly low cut.

HE: Yes.

OC: You could see our collarbone.

HE: Yes, that's right. And we were no longer allowed to wear cotton stockings. Everybody wore silk stockings, which came up above the shoes.

OC: May I qualify that. We wore glove silk stockings.

HE: All right. We wore glove silk stockings. And the latest styles—you see, we were in the flapper era. We were not flappers you and I.

OC: You know, those hose cost \$2.50 a pair.

HE: Yes. They were very—but they were silk.

OC: That thick.

HE: But they were silk.

OC: Real silk. Yes.

HE: And the female—the female clothing changed with the attitude about the—what a girl could do. Smoking, as I recall, was a shipping offense.

OC: It was if they caught you.

HE: Yes.

OC: There were many cigarette lit in Old Spencer [dormitory] that weren't caught up with though.

HE: But you went to the bathroom usually to do it, too, didn't you?

OC: Or under the bed.

HE: Yes. There's a lot more we could say, but I think probably we better bring this to a stop now.

OC: I think it's time. And I think we've proved to ourselves, and those who—if anyone ever plays this, that Wade R. Brown was really a magnificent person. And that we all—everybody truly loved him.

HE: And he influenced so many people.

OC: Right.

HE: In so many different ways. And his influence is felt today. You may not be—

OC: They're building on his influence.

HE: Yes.

[End of Interview]