

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO
INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Alice Joyner Irby

INTERVIEWER: Hermann Trojanowski

DATE: June 28, 2012

[Begin CD 1]

HT: Today is June 28, 2012, and my name is Hermann Trojanowski. I'm at the Alumni House with Alice Joyner Irby, Class of 1954, and we're here to conduct an oral history interview for the UNCG Institutional Memory Collection. Thank you so much for driving all the way from Pinehurst, [North Carolina] this morning.

AI: My pleasure.

HT: I'd like to start the interview by asking you something about your background, about when and where you were born, and your family.

AI: Okay. I was born in 1932 in a little town in Halifax County by the name of Weldon, North Carolina. It's on the Roanoke River. I'm the oldest of three children. My mother graduated from Woman's College in 1926. [Editor's note: at that time the name of the school was North Carolina College for Women] That town was about twenty-five hundred in population. It was a farming community. The people that lived in the town were actually farmers in the surrounding area and the three big crops were tobacco, cotton, and peanuts. I suppose northeastern North Carolina probably grows more peanuts than almost anywhere in the country. So that's how I got my start; I went to kindergarten and went to public school through grade twelve. It was a small public school, almost like a little private school. There were a hundred and fifty students and we didn't have a lot of frills but we had the basics and very good teachers in the basics. And we had requirements in terms of curriculum or course requirements, so we had to have four years of English, four years of math (even for the farm boys), [laughter] two years of a foreign language, two years of history—and that was history, not social studies at that time—and either two years of science or one year of science and a year of home economics.

HT: Well, what was your favorite subject?

AI: I would say English, probably, and French. I almost majored in French when I came to the Woman's College [of the University of North Carolina] because I really enjoyed that and my mother taught French. As a matter of fact, my mother taught me, which was

sometimes difficult for each of us to maintain that separation. To this day, I think she was a little tougher on me than she was of anybody else. [laughter]

HT: Just so she wouldn't show you any favoritism, I guess.

AI: I'm sure that was the case. My brother was two years younger than I so he and I grew up very close both in age and activities and with school. Our sister was eight years younger than I so when I went off to college, she was just eight years old and so I never did really know her as well as I knew my brother growing up. So I came to the Woman's College and you probably want to know how I chose that.

HT: Yes, that would be wonderful.

AI: My English teacher wanted me to go to one of the Seven Sisters [colleges in the Northeast] and I really didn't know a lot about that. I knew they were very good institutions but I thought I could stay in North Carolina and get a very good education and I did not want to be a financial burden on my father, who was a furniture dealer. He told me, "Go anywhere you want to, Alice. I will make that possible." So he never put any restrictions on it but, at the same time, I felt that North Carolina offered institutions that would give me just as good an education as I could get out of state. I did want to go to a larger institution, a larger college, than my high school because I grew up in a small town of twenty-five hundred; went to a school with a hundred and fifty; and I wanted to get broader exposure so I narrowed it down to two—Duke [University] and the Woman's College—and I had a hard time choosing. Do you want to know why I chose Woman's College?

HT: Yes, please.

AI: I think there were several factors: one was that I had been to Girls State after my junior year and Girls State was run by Mr. Charlie Phillips. I'm sure you know about Uncle Charlie or Mr. Charlie.

HT: Yes, I've heard of him many times.

AI: A great man, great friend of mine and at Girls State I had a wonderful week; ended up being elected the governor that week and we all went to Raleigh and I got to stand in the podium where the governor gives a speech. I was really excited and exhilarated about that, but I also got to know something about the Woman's College because Mr. Phillips made sure that you got some exposure to what—not just the campus—but what Woman's College could offer. Then my mother, of course, came here, but she did not put pressure on me to come here. But, of course, I grew up hearing stories about her experience here and how much she loved the place. Finally, I think it was because it was large enough to offer a variety of courses and majors and I didn't know what I wanted to study. So I thought, well, with that kind of variety, I would have an opportunity to experiment and then could choose what I wanted.

Regarding Duke, it was then—It still had a couple of ties with the Methodist church, largely through the Divinity School, I think, and we grew up Methodists so I knew a good bit about Duke by virtue of having grown up in a Methodist church. And I ended up getting a scholarship to Duke, not a full scholarship. In those days there wasn't a lot of financial aid. Certainly wasn't any federal financial aid and very, very little, almost none, at Woman's College. And at Duke, they had an endowment that would provide some scholarships but it wasn't a full scholarship so it still would have been more expensive for me to go to Duke than it would to Woman's College. Quite frankly, I was afraid that I would be diverted by the co-educational nature of Duke and spend more time socializing than in the library so I thought, in terms of my own self-discipline, I should come to the Woman's College. So I did and I was really happy that I came.

HT: If we might backtrack just a minute: Do you have any recollections of World War II?

AI: Yes.

HT: What events or what stands out in your mind about the Second World War?

AI: I remember the newsreels when we would go to the movies. We were allowed to go to movies on Saturday; that's when you saw the cowboys. We weren't allowed to go to any other movies except musicals. They always had the news, fifteen minutes of news—I remember that—so I saw a lot of the battles, especially in the Pacific. Then we listened to the news on radio every night: my mother, father, and I. Then I remember when some of the people from my hometown were being drafted and going to war. One was a flyer and he was killed. They were distant cousins: [i.e.] the family were distant cousins. And then I remember one of the sons of the superintendent of the school (who was also our math teacher), Mr. Thomas, was in the Normandy Invasion and [was] reported missing in action. It turned out that he lived; he was severely wounded emotionally from that and suffered from depression, I think, most of his life. So it really hit my hometown. I remember the air raids. We had to close—we had to have dark shades on our windows; close our windows; and people were designated in the town to go around and make sure everybody's windows were—Weldon was also on Route 301 and on the major railway, north and south, so we had guards at the bridge of the river because there was some concern that there might be some kind of sabotage on the highway and, similarly, on the train track. The train track had what they called the "high track" over the river. It was quite high. And I remember seeing trains come through; it seemed like, every ten minutes, full of soldiers going to disembark, probably up to New Jersey. They were almost hanging out the windows. The train track was not too far from my house and we would run down and watch them go through. Then, finally, I remember Franklin Roosevelt's death and how the nation mourned over that. We didn't have TV then; we had radio. And of course everybody in town was in mourning. You didn't need a TV to tell you; you just knew and so everybody in Weldon mourned along with everybody around the country.

Then I remember Harry Truman coming in as president and, in a way, Harry Truman was my president. I feel that I grew up with Harry Truman. And I actually met him because when I was going to Girls State, I got to go to Girls Nation. The governor

and lieutenant governor of each of the Girls States went to Washington, [DC] for a week. And that was a terrific experience and we had the opportunity to go up to the White House and President Truman spoke to us and I remember to this day what he said. He was a friendly man, very down to earth, and he said, "When you get in this room and this house, you're no longer a Democrat or Republican or anything else. You have to be concerned about all the people. I'm the lobby for all the people; nobody else in Washington is the lobby for all the people." I thought that was a most appropriate thing for him to say and I've remembered it all my life. That is the function of the president: to be the lobby for all the people. So then I [unclear] the Second World War and a little beyond.

HT: I suppose you started school here at Woman's College here in 1950, the fall of 1950, because you graduated in 1954. Now the Korean War had just started.

AI: Absolutely.

HT: Do you have any memories about that?

AI: Yes, I do. That was the war that affected my generation, the young people in my generation. In the summertime I was a life guard, one of the life guards at our local pool, which was about the only activity that young kids had. There were a couple of tennis courts in the town but the men wouldn't let the young people on them. They monopolized them so we had the swimming pool. We were not allowed to swim in the river because the river was very dangerous, a lot of rapids, so I remember being at the pool and hearing about the war and the fellows—my classmates and friends there—were talking about they'd probably get drafted and, of course, that's what happened. One of my friends who was older ended up being a helicopter pilot in Korea and ended up serving in the Navy as a career officer. He lives in Hawaii now and has several sons who went in the Navy. He lost a son in Granada; he was a Navy Seal. But Tay—Tay Tilgham was his name—was a really good helicopter pilot. Several of the others were drafted. One of my good friends chose to join the Navy so he wouldn't be drafted. He was also flunking out of Chapel Hill [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill]. [laughter] He's still alive and he's still a good friend of mine. Actually he was a groomsman in my wedding so we still stay in touch. And he ended up going down to GITMO in Guantanamo Bay [Naval Base, Cuba] because that was the big naval base there and he was in the—what do you call it?—the Medical Corps.

And another friend of mine, who happened to marry one of my good friends, also went with him. There were several of them that were either drafted or went into the Navy in order to avoid being drafted, which is what my former husband did. My former husband ended up in OCS [Officer Candidate School] up in Newport, Rhode Island. But he had an accident with his knee and they didn't want him anymore so they gave him a discharge and he came home. So that's what I remember in terms of how the war affected me in my daily life. Of course, I kept up with it in terms of what was happening and the political dimension of it. But also I married early; I married before I graduated from college and one of the reasons was that my husband was going to be drafted or he had to make a decision to go into the Navy and so it was one of those marriages that come about

because you're not going to be together so you get married. I'm not sure that was wise but it was what we did. And it lasted for a good time.

HT: So how did that work out?

AI: I stayed in school and he went to Newport, Rhode Island. [The College had a policy of not permitting married students to live on campus. I appealed to the Dean of Students since my husband was going into the Navy and I would be living alone. She permitted me to live in the dormitory since my husband would be in the United States Armed Services. I stayed in the dormitory for several months until my husband returned due to a medical discharge. Then the two of us moved into an apartment on West Market Street.]

HT: So you stayed in school. So you stayed on campus at that time?

AI: They didn't like married people on campus so, no, I didn't.

HT: I guess they were afraid you might influence the other girls.

AI: I think that's right. I think that's exactly right. So I was a town student. That turned out to be really good for me though because I—

HT: Where did you stay?

AI: I had a little apartment first on Market Street and then when my husband, Claude, came back, we lived in a little apartment over on Elm Street right across from the Presbyterian Church. It was a home that had been converted into several apartments.

HT: Well, tell me about your first days on campus. Do you have any interesting recollections of those first days?

AI: Well, I remember my father complaining about making twenty-seven trips up three flights of stairs because I was on the third floor of Cotten [Residence Hall]. [laughter] He said, "I've never seen so many shoes in my life."

HT: Now, I would imagine the trip from Weldon to Greensboro took quite a long time in those days.

AI: It was a hundred and fifty miles so—

HT: And no interstates.

AI: Oh, no. You came on [Highway] 70. Well, first we went through the country and then we hit 70 east of Raleigh and then came up 70.

HT: Was that an all-day trip practically?

AI: No, not that long but you had to plan a day. My parents came and went back in the same day but it was a long day; I would say four to five hours, something like that. Because now a hundred and fifty miles is about three hours, I guess. So everybody was scurrying around, you know. There were cars all over the lawn. We were unpacking and there was a lot of excitement. Of course, in those days you were expected to bring linens and drapes and spreads that matched and—I don't know. Today I think they're much more casual about their rooms but in those days you had to be neat and tidy and appropriately decorated. I did not know my roommate before I came. She was a girl from Virginia and we had very different interests. We got along okay but we decided not to room together the second year. I think after her second year, she transferred. I've lost contact with her, but I did make some very good friends in my freshman year who continue to be my friends. One of them was in the dorm and one was in the dorm behind cotton [Residence Hall]: Nancy Benson and Margaret Crawford and Mary Alspaugh [unclear]. Mary was not in—I forget what dormitory she was in. But anyway, I met them either through classes or extracurricular activities. I remember two or three things about being in Cotten, which—I really am fond of the dormitory and I'm delighted to see that it's being renovated. One was my housemother, Mrs. Carter, and she was very proper, a nice-looking woman, always well-groomed. We were really scared of her at first. I think we came to—we certainly came to respect her—but came to be willing to knock on her door every now and then and talk with her. I remember at Christmas time she asked me to read something for—We all gathered in the parlor and that's where we had all of our house meetings and she would call house meetings—but at Christmas time we had readings and she asked me to read and I was scared to death. But I did and then I got this nice little note from her—handwritten note—complimenting me on how well I read. So that sort of broke the ice for me. I didn't mind approaching her after that. But she always reminded us of all the rules of civility.

HT: And I'm sure there were many of those rules.

AI: Yes, and very strict about signing out and you couldn't go home for six weeks. I've forgotten all those rules now but we did abide by them; most of us abided by them. One of the other things that I remember was that she gave us this lecture one time on courtesy because we had been playing too many jokes on each other and she thought we were not—She thought we were a little rough, perhaps. But anyway, some of the girls in the dorm behind, including Margaret Crawford, and some of the girls in Cotten, dressed up after hours—This was after eleven o'clock when lights had to be out. You not only had to be in your room; you had to have your lights out so everybody had these little flashlights, which they'd use to study, you know. After lights out, we all put sheets on us and came out in the Quad and we—We didn't actually dig holes but we had shovels. We were burying courtesy and so we had a little ceremony to bury courtesy. We didn't know whether we were going to be punished or not but I think Mrs. Carter thought it was so funny that nothing happened to us. So there were things like that every now and then. It was a happy time. I discovered the library that year because while I had done well in high school, it was nevertheless a challenge when I came here. I did very well in English and French but the reading in the history courses was more than I was accustomed to, so I actually got into the habit of spending most of my evenings in the library.

HT: Now Jackson Library had just opened when you came so—

AI: Yes, as a matter of fact that had just opened and the Home Economics—I think it was the Home Economics Building—but they had not put the sidewalks in so it was muddy. I mean we really traipsed through that mud all fall. As a matter of fact, I think they ended up putting the sidewalks sort of the way we walked; you know, crossways.

HT: Probably so.

AI: Yes, but it was a good library. It was a comfortable library; I could sleep there as well as study. I did a lot of sleeping there but I also met my friends there because they had some nice little nooks and places that you could gather. Now they have even more. I think it's a wonderful place now.

HT: Well, what was your favorite subject?

AI: Here? Economics, I ended up majoring in economics. I had never taken economics until my sophomore year and, as I said earlier, I didn't know what I was going to major in. My academic advisor used to call me in and say, "Alice, what are you doing now?" I said, "I don't know. I said I would like not to major in anything. And she said, "Well, you can't do that." So at the end of my sophomore year she said, "You must declare a major." I was interested in political science and economics. I was interested in the social sciences, not sociology so much but I took some sociology, psychology, and economics. I liked the economics so much that I decided to major in that. I liked the professors and I thought that economics was sort of a foundation curriculum of the others. It was easy to branch into the others with that kind of base or foundation; so I was glad I did.

Albert Keister was the head of the department and Eleanor Craig was there and she became a kind of role model for me because it had never occurred to me, until I saw that she was there, that someone—a woman—would be a professor of economics. So I said, Okay, if she can do it then I can do it; then I can go into that field. It (economics) was sort of considered, in my mind anyway until then, kind of a man's thing. So, because of her and because I liked the classes, that's what I decided to do.

And then my senior year, Dr. Keister suggested that I do independent study. They had a program here to do independent study, a thesis and an oral exam so it was good preparation for graduate school. They were encouraging me to go to graduate school. So I did and I enjoyed it. That put me in the library even more. And when I became a town student, I would come over early, because I had eight o'clock classes most of my life. I don't know whether anybody has eight o'clock classes anymore; but I had eight o'clock classes and I had Saturday classes. We had classes until noon on Saturday so when you signed up, it was Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. So, I would come early in the morning for my classes and then eat lunch in the Soda Shop and then go to the library and I'd stay there a long time, sometimes until nine o'clock like at night. So the library was sort of the center of my activity: the library and Elliott Hall.

HT: Since you were a town student the last two years, did you get involved in any of the campus activities?

AI: Oh yes, I did. I got involved in—Well, let me back up a little bit. I was asked my sophomore year to be on the Judicial Board. I declined that opportunity. I'm not sure it was wise, but I think I just didn't want to sit in judgment of my peers. You know, we had an honor code and the penalties for breaking that were really severe, including expulsion—suspension and expulsion—and I just didn't feel comfortable so I declined. But then I participated in other kinds of stuff. I was on the Student Council, in the Legislature. I was president of the Y [YWCA] my last year. [There was a big curriculum study, initiated by either the faculty and Edward Kidder Graham, Jr. or the Consolidated University System.] There was a faculty committee appointed to examine the curriculum, overhaul it, make recommendations and there was a student committee, a parallel student committee, and I was on that. That was really time-consuming, but really informational—I learned a lot about college curricula; I learned about how the faculty interacted and behaved and disagreed and debated each other. I became friends with a couple of the faculty members, especially Warren Ashby [psychology professor].

And in those days a number of the faculty invited students to their homes. Eugene Pfaff [history professor] used to meet my fellow students in his house as did Warren Ashby. They were the two that I remember the most. But I don't really know what happened finally as a result of that study. The big debate was about general education; that was a big thing in those days. And the core curriculum. We were all, we—My little student committee—We were all in favor of keeping the core curriculum. To this day, I believe in it, which parenthetically is one of the reasons my daughter went to the University of Virginia. It was one of the few colleges and universities, at that time, which kept the core curriculum and had an honor code, so that's where she ended up.

Back here, the *Coraddi* was the literary magazine and it was a bit controversial from time to time because they were avant-garde. The newspaper was, I think, well-respected. Pat Thomas was the editor when I was a senior. I helped with that a little bit. So I pitched in. The main thing I remember, when I was president of the Y, was bringing Frank Graham to the campus to speak.

HT: We actually have several—Let me backtrack some: we're in the process of digitizing 244 scrapbooks and we have quite a number of the Y scrapbooks.

AI: Oh, good. Good.

HT: From the thirties and forties.

AI: Ruth Clark was the faculty advisor at the time. The office was in Elliott Hall. Elvira—Was that her name?

HT: Elvira [Prondecki].

AI: One of the nice things I remember about Elliott Hall was the two lounges. When I was a student, they were open for people just to go in and sit down. They would bring paintings from the Cone collection down and those paintings would be hanging in there: you know, just open. Later I think they started locking the doors for the security of the paintings. But they were great meeting places, gathering places for different activities. I was a member

of Golden Chain [Honor Society] and I want to tell you something about that. In my senior year, Golden Chain was an honorary society, recognition for contributions to the college, and the members inducted new members each year—usually seniors, occasionally juniors as well as seniors. In my senior year, a person on the *Coraddi* staff was recommended and there was great debate—You had to have a unanimous vote—there was great debate about admitting—I won't give the name and I don't want to give the position, because she was lesbian and it was not generally known. It was known—You know the grapevine. And that was quite a difficult decision for the young women in the Golden Chain because I think there was unanimous consent that she had made a contribution to the campus, but she was very much a loner, too. She did not socialize; she just spent her time on the literary aspect of things and writing for the *Coraddi*. There was a question about how broad her contribution had been. I think there was also a question of, you know, what standard do you have in terms of personal conduct because in those days, you didn't talk about being gay or being lesbian. There was a question about how well-accepted that decision would be by some of the higher-ups if we did that. We met until midnight dealing with that issue. We admitted her; we inducted her. So that's a memory that stands out; that's an incident that stands out in my memory.

HT: And you had no problems with that decision from the administration?

AI: No, we didn't. I think that speaks well of our group and I think it speaks well of the College. So what else can I tell you?

HT: Well, you mentioned Edward Kidder Graham, Jr. earlier and there was quite a bit of controversy probably after you left. But do you have any recollection of some of that controversy?

AI: Yes, most of it happened after I left. He came in as a freshman my freshman year and he was a very friendly guy. His office had a bay window in it—

HT: Yes, probably in the Foust Building.

AI: Of course. You'd walk by there and he'd open the window and chat and whenever he would speak to us—You know, we had a required Tuesday assembly in Aycock [Auditorium]; all twenty-five hundred of us. We didn't know if the University was limited to twenty-five hundred because that's all Aycock would seat or that Aycock was built to house twenty-five hundred because that's how big we were. Anyway we had to go over there every Tuesday and he'd come and talk to us sometimes: tell us things about goings-on in the University. So the students liked him and I think maybe that curriculum study was one of the things that created some of the controversy. But then after I left, he became quite controversial in several ways, one of which had to do with his personal life. I was not here—that was the interim—I was not here when he left. That was the interim between my leaving, graduating, and then my coming back. I think he went to Hampton Institute [Hampton, Virginia].

HT: I cannot remember where he went after he left here. He went to several institutions.

AI: Yes, he did. I don't know where he went right after that either, but he was quite a divisive figure and I think the institution suffered as a result of that.

HT: That was during the late fifties and early sixties. There seemed to be a lot of interim chancellors.

AI: [Chancellor William] Whatley Pierson came back.

HT: Then Blackwell—

AI: And then [Chancellor] Gordon Blackwell. Both Whatley and Gordon Blackwell and then Otis Singletary came. And I left when he—I mean, I was here a year, I think. I was director of admissions at the time. I was here when he came but then I left in '62 to go to Princeton [New Jersey]. So, yes, between my coming back in '58, '59 and '62 there were three. So there was not much stability during that time.

HT: What about other administrators? Do you have any memories of [Dean] Katherine Taylor and [Dean] Mereb Mossman?

AI: I remember Katherine well and I remember Mereb Mossman well, and I remember the doctor in the health center.

HT: Ruth Collings.

AI: Yes. She was an amazing woman. Laura Anderton [counselor, acting dean, and professor of biology] I had as a housemother and I knew Laura well. But in the administration, it was mainly Mereb and Katherine. They came from different worlds and, while they always treated each other with real respect in my presence anyway, I sometimes had to deal with their different approaches as director of admissions. When there would be questionable cases, either in admitting freshmen or transfers or readmitting students—that's how I got to know Dr. Collings well because a number of the students that would be readmitted had had medical problems at one time or another. Those applications would be reviewed by both Katherine and Mereb and sometimes they did not agree. Mereb had the final say because she was the dean of instruction and the vice chancellor of academic affairs. But I could see different approaches. Mereb and Ruth Collings would lean toward giving the student the benefit of the doubt and the chance. So I would say they were a bit more lenient. Katherine, with her military background, was much more: "It's like this. This is the rule," and I'd see trouble ahead. As a matter of fact one time Katherine told me that she watched—What was that program? Sergeant Friday? There was a program on TV on the weekend about this detective and solving problems, so she liked things like that. She was what I would call a law-and-order dean and Mereb was a social worker. She was a professor of sociology and Ruth Collings was an MD [medical doctor]. You can see that those backgrounds were different and would sometimes lead to different conclusions.

HT: Well, tell me about your time as director of admissions on campus. That was in the late fifties.

AI: Yes, I'll go back—I came back to campus. I had gone to graduate school at Duke and turned down an opportunity to remain there as an assistant to the head of the department because my husband was here. I had thought that he was going to do different things and that we probably would be in Chapel Hill or Durham together. That did not work out; so he ended up here and it was a lot of commuting, a lot of stress on me to try to maintain a marriage and commute. The doctoral program was really demanding so I came back here and worked for Merrill Lynch [financial management company]. That was a good experience for a couple of years.

HT: I imagine that was very unusual in that period of time for a woman to work at Merrill Lynch.

AI: Yes, it was. I was the—[laughter] I was the only one (woman) there other than the clerks. That was when they used to have the ticker tape going across the top of the board and you'd go in in the morning; and before the ticker tape would display an average you'd read the ticker tape. You were expected to know whether the market was up or down because clients would start calling you. "What's happening to the market?" And then these guys, retired guys, would sit around in a semi-circle. It was a gathering place, you know, watching the tape, talking. They found out that I was from Eastern North Carolina so they started calling me "Peanuts." [laughter] That was my nickname. Anyway, I can't remember whether it was Mereb or Charlie Phillips, but one of them asked me if I would like to come back and work part time. Charlie Phillips was responsible for PR [public relations] but also recruiting students and representing the University, I would say, around the state. He'd ride around the state in his little Ford, talking about the Woman's College. So he asked me if I would be interested in working part time doing that and then Mereb and John Kennedy—I think John Kennedy was head of the economics department at the time—asked if I wanted to teach part time, So I ended up teaching a couple of classes as an instructor and working with Charlie Phillips to represent the University around the state.

It was about that time that the University System decided to require the Scholastic Aptitude Test and to have a selective admissions policy. It was also true at that time, I think, that we had—at Woman's College—students from every county in the state. There are a hundred counties so we tried then to cover most of the state in our recruiting and our public relations. I went to a lot of high school college days. I don't know whether they have those anymore or not, but you'd go to a place like Raleigh in one of the high schools and be in a gym; and representatives of all the colleges that participated—usually there were fifteen or twenty—would have tables and would talk to students about the Woman's College or Queen's College [Charlotte, North Carolina] or Chapel Hill. So I got to know my colleagues in all of these other colleges, which was really fun. While I was doing that—I think I did that for a couple of years—one time I went to my hometown area, Halifax and Northampton County, to give a presentation—a speech, really it was a speech—to, I guess it was a parent-teachers association but it was open to the public. It was at the request of one of the trustees. Her name was Burgwyn. So

Charlie Phillips sent me there to make that presentation. I did and, you know, it was just in the normal in the course of things. Well, it was about that time that Mildred Newton decided she wanted to retire; she was retiring early. Until Mildred Newton set up this little admissions office, all of the admissions had been handled through the registrar's office and she worked in the registrar's office, but then she set up this little admissions office. That was also the time that we started admitting minority students so Mildred Newton decided to retire and I was still doing my little teaching and my running around the state and I got this request or call, inquiry, as to whether I would be interested in the position in the admissions office. It was quite a surprise to me; I didn't expect anything like that. I hadn't even thought about it. It turns out that Mrs. Burgwyn had heard me give that presentation and had called either Whatley or whoever the chancellor was then, or Mereb and said, "You'd better make use of that young woman. Don't let her get away." So, long story short, I ended up taking that job, not knowing what I was going to be doing other than going around the state. So it really meant that I had to build an admissions office because Mrs. Newton had been there with, I think, one secretary; and we were getting many more applications, as was the whole University. We were not expanding; we were still a residential college and you couldn't live off-campus unless you lived with your parents or were married. We didn't have many older students. I mean it was an undergraduate, residential teaching university. We had a few graduate programs but not even many of those. So we were faced with increasing applications, no more spaces, and a university admissions standard that was set university-wide.

At that time there were three branches of the [Consolidated] University: Woman's College, [University of North Carolina at] Chapel Hill, and [North Carolina] State [College, Raleigh, North Carolina]. Admissions policy was set uniformly across the three; and it included minimum scores on the SAT and high school record. That was also the time, as I said, that we were admitting minority students. We wanted to be sure that those minority students could do the work because they were observed closely by the public, by people on campus. They were accepted, I think, well-accepted here. As you know there were two initially and they were segregated in terms of their living accommodations. But my job was to find well-qualified black women.

HT: I personally have interviewed several of them and they've all done very well. I know JoAnne Smart Drane came in '56 and she graduated in '60 and was just an outstanding leader [unclear, both talking].

AI: I did not admit her but I admitted most of them that came after that.

HT: How did that process work exactly? Did you go to the high schools?

AI: I went to schools, high schools, yes. I went to black high schools because most of the high schools in the state were still segregated at that time. So yes, I went in and I asked to talk about the Woman's College and said we were interested in having young black women apply. We got some good applications; we didn't get a lot but we got good ones. So it wasn't a matter of showing favoritism or disregarding the admissions criteria. We were able to gradually increase the population and they met the standards. I was really proud of that: [i.e.] that we were able to do that and that they were so good.

We had lots of complaints because we had to reject a number of students; and people throughout the state were not accustomed to that. The same thing was happening at Chapel Hill and at NC State. So it was—We had a process by which we reviewed the applications if they were questionable. Again, they would go to Mereb because she was my boss so that they would go to her—I would always consult with her. I would not make an arbitrary decision.

HT: Was there a concern at that time about how parents of white students would react? Do you have any recollection of that?

AI: No, I didn't get involved in that a lot because once they were admitted, they were handled up through the chain of command to Katherine because she was the dean of students. So anything I would say about that is only hearsay. I don't of any cases myself. I know of the admissions cases.

I know a little bit about the [Greensboro] Sit-ins because I was director of admissions at the time of the Sit-ins I didn't have any responsibility for the residence halls or the students in the residence halls, Some of the students had either failed to sign out or signed out and indicated they were going somewhere other than that designated. Several of the upperclassmen got in trouble because they participated in one way or another in the Sit-ins—not necessarily sitting at the counter at Woolworth's [store], but they would meet with students from [North Carolina] A&T [State College] and Bennett [College]. So several of them were threatened with suspension or expulsion because they had broken a rule. I got involved because one of the young women I had taught earlier came to me. Several of them went to either Warren Ashby or a man who was a sociology professor at the time. So somehow we three faculty got involved with several of these students.

HT: I interviewed Marilyn Lott [Woman's College student who participated in the 1960 Greensboro Sit-ins] a couple of years ago and she said she was actually expelled but she was reinstated.

AI: Okay, well, you know the story then. That was a big issue. The young woman that came to me was the daughter of a military captain or officer and she was scared to death because they had told her that she was going to be expelled, and I think she would have run away had she been expelled.

[End CD 1—Begin CD 2]

AI: Anyway, it ended up—I think Gordon Blackwell was chancellor at the time.

HT: There was an assembly of some sort at Aycock related to the Greensboro Sit-ins.

AI: Yes, but what I'm telling you had to do with these several students because they were scheduled to be suspended or expelled. I remember very clearly the three faculty

members meeting with Gordon. I felt so strongly about that that I said, "If these young women are expelled from this University or this college because of a permission slip when something major is going on, I just don't feel that I can remain here." Well, anyway, they stayed, or the one that was expelled came back. So that was a big issue for me in my growing up. I think things worked out in the long run okay. They did have that meeting in Aycock.

Another thing about Aycock I want to tell you. I want to go back to the time I was a student because Billy Graham was scheduled to come to Greensboro for one of his revivals, and Billy Graham was a controversial figure at that time. He was seen as a way-out evangelist, not in the mainstream at all. And they wanted to use Aycock Auditorium. He was not sponsored by anybody on campus. I don't know who was sponsoring him; maybe his own organization. That became a big issue, both in the college and in town and the final decision was not to let him use Aycock. That was when Edward Kidder Graham, [Jr.] was here. I don't know the ins and outs of how that decision finally got made, but it was divisive on campus as well as in the community. So I think he (Billy Graham) went—there was no Coliseum then—I think he went and pitched a tent. He had the revival but he was not able to use Aycock Auditorium. You know the Sit-ins were a big, big thing, as you know, looking back. They were a big thing in this town and on this campus. When you go back to my days here, there were some other things that were big things; there were the McCarthy hearings [series of hearings by the United State Senate's Subcommittee on Investigations held between April and June 1954] when I was a senior.

HT: That's right.

AI: I remember going to Warren Ashby's house to watch. We didn't have TV, you know. TV came in when I was a student; so we didn't have TV on campus. The only place we could see TV was in somebody's house and several of us would go to Warren's house—Warren and Helen [Ashby]—and watch those hearings. That whole thing of Communism, the Communist party, anti-American activities: that was a huge issue when I was in college.

HT: That was very divisive, I understand.

AI: Right, and I think it was a year or so after that, I was out of school—I was living here, of course, but it was before I was director of admissions—there was a big case here, a legal case, a trial, and McNeill Smith, local lawyer, was the lawyer for the defense.

HT: Was that the [Junius] Scales trial?

AI: Yes, and Telford Taylor, I think, was the New York civil rights lawyer. I went to the courthouse and listened every day because I don't think I was working at the time or if I was working, then I went from the time I got off. So that whole thing occupied this city as well as the University. They were growing-up times for me.

HT: They were, weren't they? I'd like to backtrack to your school days as well. Do you have any recollections of campus traditions like class jacket—?

AI: Oh, yes.

HT: —Rat Day?

AI: Oh, yes, I don't remember Rat Days so much, but I remember the rings, of course—we all got rings—and the Junior Show was a big thing. They had Senior Shows but that wasn't nearly as big. When we had a Junior Show, I was in the chorus because I didn't have time—given the fact that I was married and I was studying—I didn't have time to try-out for a part but I was in the chorus and I enjoyed that. And Mike O'Hearn, I think that was her name, did a lot of the show. She was from New York—a little Jewish gal from New York, just as cute and funny as she could be. So she brought a lot of the songs from New York musicals down and wrote words that fit the campus. So we had good music. We had lots of fun.

HT: How do you spell her name?

AI: I think her first name was a male name, M-I-K-E. I don't know what her real name was but that was her nickname. I think it was O'-H-E-A-R-N or H-E-R-N. I think she has passed away. She was about this high [demonstrates], just a live-wire. She was sort of the honcho, you know. She put it all together and that was a big thing. It filled Aycock Auditorium. It was a spoof. I think the tradition was sort of the tradition of the McCarter Theater at Princeton. You know how the Ivies [Ivy League schools] have these shows and in Princeton—it was all-male at the time and they would dress up as women and have this spoof. I think it was very much in [that tradition]. I don't know if it started here as a result of that, but it was done on more than one campus, I'll put it that way.

HT: The Junior Show: Was that performed just one time?

AI: Yes.

HT: Wow. That's a lot of effort and time.

AI: Right. So that was a big event.

HT: What about dances and social events on campus? Do you have any recollections of that?

AI: Not a lot because, you know, I got married early and my husband didn't like to dance. We came—They had them in Elliott Hall ballroom and I remember several there. You know, when I was a freshman, they would dance some in the freshman parlor. Every now and then they would have some music there and you and your date could dance a little bit; but it was quite informal.

HT: Before you got married, did you ever go to Chapel Hill for dates, or NC State?

AI: Oh, yes. My husband was at Chapel Hill. I went a lot. We would go to football games and go to his fraternity. And, of course, they (the guys) came over here. We couldn't go out except on weekends.

HT: And I've heard that they would actually hire busses to take the girls down to Chapel Hill and NC State on some weekends for dances and things like that.

AI: Yes, and then you'd stay in somebody's house and the fellows would get together. Whoever had the car, you know, carried people around. They were fun days, lively because you were limited to those weekends. I think early on there were only so many weekends you could leave campus. I don't remember what the rules were but I know you could not leave campus every weekend. That's why the Boar's Head was so popular then—I mean the Boar and Castle [drive-in restaurant]—was very popular. There was the Plantation Club; that was a supper club. You had to be twenty-one to get in there and most of us couldn't go. Some of the girls here would go anyway and lie about their age and get in. We were so envious. And our dates would never take us there because it was too expensive. The fellows we dated just didn't have much money, so we didn't go to the topnotch restaurants in Greensboro. We went to the—I remember going to the Chinese restaurant a lot.

HT: Because they gave you plenty of food, probably.

AI: Plenty of food and it wasn't expensive. You were lucky to get to the movie and the Chinese restaurant.

HT: Even though the school did not become coeducational until 1963, were there any hints during the fifties that it was going to be happening?

AI: Oh Lord, yes. Who was president of the [Consolidated] University then? Gray, Gordon Gray? Was it Gordon Gray?

HT: He was a former army officer, I think. Yes.

AI: Yes, it was Gray.

HT: Now Friday became president in '56, William Friday, so Gray must have been it before him.

AI: Oh, Gray was the president when they did the co-education study and then Friday was president, right. But somebody headed that study; I'm trying to remember who that was because I remember he came over here and interviewed a lot of people. I remember spending an hour or so with him because I was the director of admissions at the time. He was trying to assess not only the views of the people here, but also the impact it would have on Woman's College.

I remember Charlie Phillips being totally opposed to it. He thought it would really destroy the uniqueness of the Woman's College because, of course, it was the largest

single-sex women's college in the country: that and Douglas College in New Jersey, which was part of Rutgers at the time. I ended up going to Rutgers University, too. Isn't that interesting; two big women's colleges. I remember telling him what my view was; I thought it was inevitable. I didn't see how the state could have a single-sex college here in Greensboro and no university to serve men. One of the options, as I remember it, was to build another campus. If this one was going to remain single-sex for women, then they had to find some way to serve this population—you know, Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem—so I didn't see any alternative. And so they asked me what I thought the effect would be on the admissions. I thought it would change it drastically. And it did. I thought it would be difficult to get high quality men that would seek this institution. The same thing happened that happened to other women's colleges that went coed. They had difficulty bringing in the men of the same quality as the women. I don't know what the proportion is here now but you had two totally separate populations and I think that's what—That's what I expected to happen. I also felt that it would become much more of an urban university than a state-wide university that reached out to all hundred counties; and I think that's sort of what happened.

HT: That's exactly what happened. We're seventy-thirty; 70% women, 30% men.

AI: Oh, I thought it was more men than that.

HT: And we have about eighteen thousand students and most of them are commuting students.

AI: That's what happened, but I still, looking back, I don't see that the state had any alternative. I mean you've got this great physical plant sitting right here in the middle of a population center. So anyway, I'm pleased with the chancellors—I got to know [Chancellor] Pat Sullivan when I came back; I didn't know [Chancellor James S.] Ferguson, or the one that preceded Pat.

HT: Chancellor [William] Moran.

AI: [Chancellor] Moran: I've met him several times but I didn't know him. I didn't know him but I got to know Pat. I was pleased that the emphasis was still on pedagogy and the arts, [i.e.] the liberal arts, and that there is still a core of that here. And I think that's what is very important to the alums, certainly those of my generation. The other thing that we had when I was a student and I think it continued for a couple of years—I don't know how many—was a Fine Arts Forum for the arts and humanities and a Social Science Forum every year. They lasted two or three days and we were able to bring—I don't know who did this, the faculty? [They were] outstanding people, absolutely outstanding people. That was a wonderful thing for the undergraduates to experience. I mean we all—[i.e.] my friends and I—just looked forward to that. I served on one of the committees for one or two years.

HT: It's always amazing to the people who work in the University archives about the caliber of the artists and people that were brought in, in the thirties, forties, and fifties when—

We assume it wasn't that terribly expensive to bring somebody in as it would be today but—

AI: Yes, Randall Jarrell was here. I got to know him, not well but I knew him.

HT: Eleanor Roosevelt would come; Robert Frost came—It's just—

AI: Robie Macauley was here.

HT: Musicians, artists; it's just amazing.

AI: Yes, we had poets. It was incredible. Greg Ivy headed the art department and he got people like Hans Hoffman here. I remember in the freshman art lab, there was a de Kooning [painting] hanging up there, just right there. Of course they protect it now. It (Woman's College) was an institution that really enabled intellectual growth. It encouraged that; it nurtured that in many different ways. It wasn't just the classroom; it was the whole environment that I found myself in. I'm sure there were students in other fields that had very different experiences if they were in a professional field. But being in the liberal arts, it was a great place to be because the faculty enjoyed teaching. They opened their doors to the students. It was very much a mentor-student relationship. It was a great environment. It changed my life.

HT: I was just going to ask you: how did it change your life, coming to Woman's College.

AI: Well, I grew up here. I really grew up, and I became aware of some interests that I hadn't had before. I became aware of some abilities that I hadn't realized I had before; and I developed life-long friendships with faculty and students. I still am in touch with Helen Ashby every now and then. Warren became one of my closest friends. I stayed in touch with Mereb Mossman until she died. Every time I'd come to Greensboro, I'd go see Mereb and I'd see Warren. As a matter of fact, I presided at Warren's memorial service right here in this building in the Virginia Dare Room. He and I were very close. That's one of the reasons, when I came back to North Carolina and I found out that the Residential College had been created, I became active in trying to name it for Warren. Warren and I used to talk about that kind of college when I was a student and then when I was on the staff and faculty. It was his dream because he knew, with the University growing, becoming coed, that if it (the University) didn't have some relatively small learning centers that it would become just another big state university.

HT: I think they're planning to have more of those. It seems to work very well because retention is not the best for many students. They come here for a year or two and then they leave.

AI: Well, that's true throughout the University System. And it's true throughout higher education now, unfortunately, except in some of the Ivies. But they had made Mary Foust [Residence Hall] into a residential college. I said that the College ought to be named for Warren Ashby but then I found out that you had to raise a good bit of money to get

anything named. Walter Beale was dean of [College of] Arts and Sciences at the time and I remember talking to him about it. I said, "We ought to raise a couple of hundred thousand." But then I found out that the University System had come up with these criteria and levels of giving and we had to raise a half million dollars to name it. But the people in the Advancement Office did it. The family was reluctant at first; they were so modest. They wanted it named for him and, at the same time, they didn't want to appear as if they were pushing it. So they were quite reluctant until near the end and I think they came forward. You know, you've got to step forward, so they did. And Warren's sister, Frances [Ashby Wright], became one of my best friends. I met Frances through Warren long after I had left here. She lived in Accokeek, Maryland in the Washington area. Actually it was at the time of Warren's death that I got to know her. I followed up and we started going to Arena Stage together. Then we went to London together and traveled together quite a bit. She passed away a couple of years ago. She and I were just dear friends.

HT: What was her last name?

AI: Frances Wright, W-R-I-G-H-T. And of course they all grew up in Newport News, [Virginia], which was not too far from where I grew up. Weldon is about ninety miles from Newport News and I had relatives in that area. I had an uncle that lived up there in Fox Hill so I knew that area a little bit.

HT: Well, tell me a little bit about what you did after you left the Woman's College as director of admission.

AI: I went to Princeton, [New Jersey] to be associated with Educational Testing Service [ETS], and I got that job by virtue of being a director of admissions and going to meetings of the College Board and ETS (because we used their tests). They would have regional meetings and national meetings and I would represent the University. So I got to know people. I got to know people at ETS. I was invited up for an interview. So I went up there and stayed several years. Then, when Otis Singletary left to become the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington—that was the Lyndon Johnson poverty program, Mereb suggested to him that I—he was looking for an assistant—Mereb suggested to him that I might be able to take a leave of absence to work for him. He was in charge of the Job Corps and had to get that started. ETS had never given anybody a leave of absence. Henry Chauncey was the president. Henry founded ETS and he was the president [who] hired me. When I went, there were about five hundred staff there; now I think they have several thousand. I went and asked Henry if I could have a year's leave of absence and he said, "No, I've never done anything like that." Then he thought about it and he said, "Well, it really is a good cause." The poverty program is a good cause and the Job Corps is an educational organization." It was to train and educate disadvantaged youth, so he said, "I'll do it." So he gave me a leave. I went to Washington for a year and then I went back to ETS and was still working on what we called the "College Board Programs—you know, the SAT, the PSAT, things associated with admissions.

A colleague of mine was on the board of Rutgers University and she recommended me for [vice president]. They had a new president, Ed Bloustein, following Mason Gross, and the University faced a number of big problems. Ed created a whole new structure for the University System. The University System was the governing authority of the whole university. The University had branches in New Brunswick, Camden, and Newark [New Jersey]. Ed Bloustein was the president of the entire system. Then they had provosts and deans in each of the separate areas. So he was looking for a vice president for what he called “student services” and it included admissions, financial aid, registration, space allocation, and those things that were university-wide like health services.

So this colleague of mine recommended me for that job. So I went to talk to Ed about the job and I was hired. That was in 1972. The first day I was on the job, there was a sit-in—You’ll remember Kent State was 1970. The times were turbulent from ’68 until ’72, ’73. So my very first day there was a sit-in in the president’s office of about two hundred students complaining about registration, classes—you know, no guidance, no help—complaining about everything. Well, somebody came down the hall to my office and said, “The president would like you in his office.” I think I had been there two hours. I walked down and there were all these students and he said, have a seat. After about ten minutes, he said, “This is your new vice president for student services. She will work with you.” So what do you do [in a situation like that]? There was this fellow named Steve [DeMico] that was the leader. I said, “Well, I’m new. I need to learn what’s going on; so why don’t you set up a committee and I’ll set up a committee and we will investigate all these issues that concern you.” That’s what we did. The students left and we had those committees. We found out that the problem was not so much in the registrar’s office—because that was mainly a clerical function. Of course, it was still paper based at that time. We didn’t have all these computers, but it turned out that it was pretty efficient. They had a really good registrar, Harold Hirshman.

The problem was in the deans’ offices, the deans of instruction. They were not providing counseling to the students. They were not opening the courses; they would close the courses before some students had a chance to get in them. The University had eighteen—twenty-some colleges including the professional colleges. The deans of each one of these colleges wanted the students to take their courses because, at that time there was this coordinating board at the state level. Ralph Dungan headed the Coordinating Board and the Coordinating Board was imposing on the University certain ways of doing its budgeting. I don’t know whether you’ve heard of this, but we called them “equalized credit hours.” They were like credits for so many hours including the hours that you taught a lab so they equalized the credit hours. A college got funded on that. If they got more credit hours, they could hire more faculty, right, so they wanted the students to take their classes. The colleges set up these barriers—it was like the Balkans, you know, barriers between the colleges in terms of students being able to take classes in colleges other than their home colleges. There was this University with a fine faculty but the students couldn’t get access to the faculty across the University. There was no arts and sciences faculty for the entire University. After my days there, gradually the University created an arts and sciences faculty and the colleges remained as residential colleges but they didn’t have the academic authority that they had. Anyway that’s a long story about my first day on the job. That was a baptism of fire. [laughter]

HT: I bet so.

AI: It all went up from there. All kinds of things happened then. That was the year of Title IX, 1972, so universities had to decide whether they were going to integrate their colleges. And at that time, I told you, there were these separate colleges. Douglas College was a separate college; it had its own budget from the legislature until Ed came in. Twenty-five hundred women; Rutgers College was all men—I think about five thousand men—and there were some schools—the Agriculture School which was Cook College, all men. What do you do? Rutgers College didn't want—their alums didn't want any women going to Rutgers College. Well the law permitted you to plan for it and actually integrate over a period of—I think—five years. Ed and his Administrative Counsel decided—we decided to do it right away; no point in waiting. Let's just start right now. Well, [whoosh], fortunately my experience at the Woman's College stood me in good stead. I was accustomed to standing up to people that were hostile to me from time to time. [laughter] Some of those faculties and alums went berserk but we did it. We integrated [i.e.] we started admitting women to Rutgers College. The problem was that we could not grow fast enough to admit the women and keep as many men as we had. We did expand Rutgers College and eventually expanded to about nine thousand, I think. The women's credentials were better, on the whole, than the men. You know, very able women were applying to Rutgers College. We ended up having to admit the able women so that meant that we couldn't have five thousand men. So, they felt they lost. I went and talked to every faculty, every alum group. It was not easy.

HT: Now, what happened to Douglas College—with the women's college?

AI They did remain mostly a women's college; in terms of its residential facility, but their classes were opened to men. They had to be open to men. And if men applied, they had to be considered. One of my jobs was to consolidate University Admissions. It was no longer college-based. A student could apply and rank, "my preference is Rutgers College; my second is Douglas," so they would be admitted based on what room was available. They were tough times. I remember.

Have you ever heard of Sam Proctor who was the president of A&T? Well, Sam Proctor was the president, I think, of A&T when the Sit-ins occurred. You need to check that. Anyway, he was down at A&T when I was over here. I did not know him well but I had, you know, met him at official functions. Well, he then moved up [to New Jersey] to be on the Rutgers faculty and he also took Adam Clayton Powell's position at the Abyssinian—Wasn't it the Abyssinian Church in Harlem? So he was a minister up there, and he was on the faculty at Rutgers. I remember that I had to go to the Faculty Senate and present this reorganization [of University Student Services]—you know, what we were going to do. There was no University catalogue, so we created a University catalogue over the objections of the deans. So I had to go into the Faculty Senate and present my reorganization. I was more frightened then that I was of Mrs. Carter here or Katherine Taylor. I gave the presentation—and, there was silence—not a sound! All of a sudden [clapping sound], somebody started clapping. I looked back and Sam Proctor was standing in the back clapping. Then, everybody started clapping. Sam Proctor saved my life that day. I went up and hugged him.

So, we got it through. That was a tough time for all of us because we were really changing the University from being these little colleges—Balkanized colleges—to being a University. The University administration and the board were sort of caught between the old and the new. And we had this new Coordinating Board looking over our shoulder. The governing board was eleven people; six appointed by the governor and five by the University, so we had to be concerned about the governor as well. I spent a lot of my time with the Coordinating Board, the legislative committees and with the governor's office because I was responsible for admissions and enrollment and our budgets were based on that. Our funding was based on that. I would have to go and defend our budgets. I was responsible for our space allocation; and we were building new buildings. I had to justify all the new buildings to the Coordinating Board. I spent about forty percent of my time dealing with the legislature and the Coordinating Board.

HT: It must have been a lot of fun.

AI: It was an education! *It was an education!* I said after my experience at Rutgers University, that I am not afraid of any administrative job you can throw my way. [laughter] My blood is still on the streets of New Brunswick, but it was a good experience. As in the other places I lived, I still have very dear friends there and two of my dearest friends just passed away. One was Dick McCormick who was the Dean of Rutgers College and Katherine McCormick, his wife, who ended up being on my staff. She was a Woman's College graduate. She had a twin sister; both of them came here. They were here during the war [World War II]; and Katherine was a math major, a mathematician. [We] remained friends; I used to visit with them, but Katherine passed away a year ago. Her son, Dick—they used to call him Dickie; they call him Richard now—became the provost of Chapel Hill. He is a historian—then the president of the University of Washington, [i.e.] the State of Washington, and ended up the president of Rutgers University. He just retired and his sister lives in Raleigh. She and I are very good friends. I still have lots of good friends from that experience.

Then I went back to ETS because I got a call. I think they knew about my legislative bruises. I got a call about establishing a Washington [DC] presence for them because, while they had had a Washington office, it was mainly to process SAT applications and things like that. They'd never had a real presence there. They felt that they needed some eyes and ears in terms of what was going on, because at that time the Feds [United States Federal Government] were getting more involved in education. It was about that time that Congressman Green from Oregon, I believe—about that time that the Pell Grants—were being funded and ETS processed all—a lot of financial aid applications for colleges. That's now done by the Federal Government but at that time it was a big activity. So things were beginning to happen in higher education that affected ETS. There were these bills and authorizations so they wanted somebody there to cover all that. I then went to Washington for a few years.

HT: Did you do lobbying?

AI: Well, we were not technically lobbyists. [I started work in Washington in September and was there a year when my daughter graduated from high school in Princeton. That

summer, I took my mother and daughter to Europe. My mother was a French teacher, and my daughter had spent a summer in Switzerland studying French. So we went back to visit the family she lived with. I got home and learned that Congressman Theodore S. Weiss from New York had introduced bill into the United States House of Representatives to force ETS to release all of the items on the SAT. Well, the SAT is a secure exam, right? So if you release the items, then people could practice, and you would no longer have a secure exam. So I got this call, “Alice, Congressman Weiss from New York introduced this bill. We’ve got to educate the Committee House Education and Labor Committee and the members about the impact of that.” I mean, it would really destroy the security of the exam. It wasn’t just the SAT that the Bill covered, but that was the aim. They were aiming it at the SAT, but if they had been successful—the bill was broadly crafted—it would have affected the Graduate Record Exam, the ACT, any other admissions exams.

Carl Perkins was the Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee and that’s where it was referred. Well, I learned what “representation” was in that next month! There were several other organizations in Washington whose members were affected. There was the American Council on Education. We mobilized an effort to educate the members of the Committee. Carl Perkins had already promised Congressman Weiss of New York what they call a *mark-up*. If you get a mark-up and it goes through your committee, (whoosh), it goes to the floor of the House for a vote. I mean, it sails through the House; so we had to stop it in the Committee. Well, we stopped it in the Committee. One of the key people—there were several college presidents that knew people on the Committee—was Al Shanker—. Labor always made a point of being friendly with the House Education and Labor Committee members; and Al Shanker was with the American Federation of Teachers. Al Shanker had come out in favor of it [the bill] when Congressman Weiss first approached him (Carl Perkins, the Chair). Mr. Shanker changed his mind and he testified in a hearing that he had indeed changed his mind. And I think that Otis Singletary—I don’t know this—but he knew Carl Perkins. He was then in Kentucky, I believe, and somebody else knew Carl’s chief of staff. Oh, and George Miller was on that Committee. He’s a California guy. He was a very big Labor guy. I think he may chair that Committee now [or when the Democrats control the House]. I’ve forgotten who knew him, but different people in the education community came forward. Or, in the case of Al Shanker, somebody at ETS knew him. We tried to say. “This will—in the short run—it will be destructive; in the long run, ETS can find some accommodation to release some of the test questions; but, that means you’ve got to have time to build enough tests so that you can release one form. Jokingly. Behind the scenes we used to call it the full employment act for ETS because the more tests we had to develop, the more money we made, right? We should have been for the thing. I guess; but it was not good educational policy; it was bad educational policy.]

So what happened was that it was defeated. But within months, in twenty-two states, that same bill was introduced. I was then responsible for federal and state relationships [for ETS], so we had that kind of bill to deal with in twenty-two different states. The most problematic turned out to be California, as you would expect; California and New York. In New York that bill got introduced for I don’t know how many years. Senator LaValle was the guy who was so much in favor of it. I think he finally gave up, left the state senate, the New York Senate.

That was a fascinating time in my life. I ended up doing a lot more legislative activity than I ever expected. I went to Washington to be eyes and ears; and I ended up learning how to deal with legislation. And in some of the states, we did hire a lobbyist. You really had to in order to deal with—Nobody in the legislatures would deal with you except through lobbyists. I won't name those states, and it has probably changed now.

But I did that for ten years, ten or eleven, and then my final job at ETS was to set up a subsidiary for Educational Testing Service. [ETS] is a not-for-profit organization and, as such, there is an unspoken and unwritten limit on the amount of unrelated business income that an organization like that can have. And the IRS won't tell you what that limit is. So you might think, oh, it might be five percent or it might be ten percent; we guessed that it was probably fifteen percent. ETS had a conference center which was unrelated business income and we were doing more with licensing exams than we had done before; so in order to be safe and in order to be able to continue to do those exams, we set up a subsidiary, a for-profit subsidiary. I did that and became its president. I did that the last three years I was there. And that was fun; I enjoyed that a lot.

We computerized some exams. The first computer-based exam we did was for the nurses; and that's a big exam. We computerized that in the early nineties and then did the architects' exam, which is a tough exam. It was a four-day exam and to computerize all of that, especially the design part, was really tricky because you really needed to have some—to use artificial intelligence in terms of grading those exams. That was fascinating, and I enjoyed working with the professional groups. I really respect them. We did some medical specialties and things like that.

I knew that I was going to retire to North Carolina and had always thought I might go to Chapel Hill because Chapel Hill seemed to me to be much like Princeton where I had lived. Even though I had lived in Washington, I commuted to Princeton when I was doing all that legislative work and then I went back to Princeton when I headed up the professional area. So I'd always thought that Chapel Hill was much like Princeton. But then I came down and saw all the traffic from Chapel Hill and I said, "Not for me. It's changed too much. I'd rather have the memory than the reality now." So I then looked for a place to retire. I had a sister in Southern Pines [North Carolina] and a brother in Morehead City [North Carolina]. My brother had moved from Maryland down to Morehead City; so I looked at Beaufort [North Carolina] because I loved the water. I looked at Pinehurst [North Carolina] because I didn't know Pinehurst had changed [since I was a girl]. I remembered it as a hotel and two or three golf courses. I called it a rinky-dink town. I said to my sister, "I wouldn't think of retiring in that rinky-dink town" but I went there and it had totally changed. I found the lake in Pinehurst; so I ended up moving there. It was not too far from Greensboro. Sometimes I think that I should have retired here, because I really do like Greensboro and I love the association with the University. And I like the presence of a university where I live. I'd always lived in a place that had a university and I had been associated with a University much of my life. Pinehurst is lacking in that regard.

HT: It's not too far away.

AI: It's not too far away but it's too far to really go up for the day and use the library. I mean, I can come for things like this, but I don't drive at night anymore. So I can't get up to

events at night. It's very different having a university, and especially a good library, where you live. So sometimes I think I should have come here; and I think I would have loved it here. But I like Pinehurst.

HT: Well, I don't have any more formal questions. Is there anything you'd like to add about your time here at Woman's College or your connection to UNCG?

AI: Let me look over your [questions]. I told you about Mereb. I didn't know Betty Brown Jester [Class of 1931 and secretary of the Alumnae Association]; I knew Barbara Parrish [Class of 1948 and secretary of the Alumni Association] because that's why I asked you when Barbara came. She came in '55 and the undergraduates didn't have anything to do with the alumni except one orientation meeting, I think, that we had right here in the Virginia Dare Room. So—Albert Keister; I told you about Virgil Lindsey taught me accounting; I don't remember much about him except that accounting class. I remember [Vance] Littlejohn quite well. I took one or two courses with him, but there wasn't much of a—there wasn't a business school here at the time. It was mainly a high-level secretarial/administrative [program]. I don't know what the degree was: it's Secretarial Administration, I think. That's it: Bachelor of Science in Secretarial Administration, BSSA. And then they had a small economics department. It's really changed and much for the better, because now you have a real, legitimate business school and economics department. So I think John Kennedy—he became graduate dean, too—so I think he did a lot to build it. And [pause] I think I've told you just about everything.

HT: Well, we've covered quite a bit this morning.

AI: When I came back, I decided that I wanted to renew my association with the Woman's College and the University. I had not been able to do that when I was working because I was working full-time; I was rearing a child; traveling; so I didn't do much. I did go to church, you know, but I didn't have a lot of—And I had good friends. But I didn't participate in any organization formally, because I didn't have the time and my schedule was such that I couldn't. I ended up travelling internationally because one of my responsibilities was some of our international programs. One of the biggest programs at ETS is the test of English International Commerce. People in this country don't know about it but hundreds of thousands of students and—well, not students; adults—[take it]. I went to Japan, Korea, China. I spent my time somewhere else, you know.

So I decided I wanted to renew my association here. I got to know Pat Sullivan and that's when I said we really ought to name the residential college for Warren Ashby. So I got involved in doing that. And then I became a member of the Excellence Foundation. I was here quite a bit for eight or nine years—or seven, and I've enjoyed that. I don't have any official link now but I see people every now and then and I come when I can to events like the Alumni House party. You can turn that off.

HT: Oh, well thank you so much.

AI: My pleasure. I forgot to talk about my going to graduate school and the one thing I want to put in the record is my gratitude for the scholarship that I got to go to graduate school.

It was the Weil Scholarship from the Woman's College and that, along with an assistantship that I got from Duke, enabled me to pay my way through graduate school. So I want to recognize that scholarship. I don't know whether it still exists but it made a difference in my ability to go to graduate school. I was determined to go on my own and not be indebted to either my husband or my father anymore. So I want to say thanks for that scholarship.

HT: That's a nice story to add. Thank you.

[End of Interview]