

**UNION CHURCH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
INTERVIEW OF DR. CHARLES HARRIS  
RECORDED BY HARRY RICE  
MARCH 28, 2002**

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H: Harry Rice for the Union Church Oral History Project, and I'm talking to Dr. Charles Harris at his home in Berea, 401 Jackson Street, March the 28<sup>th</sup>, I think, 2002. Dr. Harris, of course, we want to talk about Union Church, but I think it would help us a bit just for you to identify yourself and talk a bit about how you ... the road so to speak or literally that you set out on that got you to Berea.

C: Uhuh. Well, first of all, my genealogy, as far as I know, goes back to 1840 when my great-grandfather went to Burma as one of the missionaries when they called for eight good men or whatever it was. And his wife died the first year there, and he remarried. And my grandfather was born there in 1850, and he came back to this country and went to Madison University where his father, my great grandfather, had gotten both of his undergraduate and divinity degree. My grandfather then went through undergraduate school and got his divinity degree and went back to India where he was for 35 years. Madison University, of course, is now Colgate and was renamed when they got a million dollars when that was some money from the soap people. My grandfather translated the New Testament into Assamese which is like Sanskrit. He was a Phi Bet, excellent tennis player. My mother was born there in 1881, I think, lived there nine years and lived the kind of difficult life of a missionary child and was sent to live with people in Gloversville, New York, and then went to Northfield which was part of the Mount Hermon Schools combination. She met my father in medical when she was deciding to be a medical missionary and love overtook that. So she never practiced medicine.

H: What were your mother and father's names?

C: My father's name was Roland Harris and my mother's was Clara. And her original name was Moore, her maiden name. My mother died in '24 from rheumatic fever after having caught scarlet fever from my brother.

My earliest memories of Berea was that we went to the Congregational Church, and there's a lot of Congregational Church history in Union Church. And I must have been five or six when we were sending, I think as I remember, barrels of clothing to

Berea. Then, there's a little lapse, grew up, went through high school, college, medical school. When I finished medical school, summers when the Student Christian Union Association would have its yearly student meeting in Silver Bay, I was the camp doctor.

H: Silver Bay?

C: New York. It's an association that goes back over a hundred years. In fact, my mother when she was in Northfield to earn money being a waitress there. There we met Ray Sweetman, and he was head of Student Christian, the Y movement in the colleges throughout New York State.

H: YMCA?

C: Yah. He always stayed with us when he was making calls at the University of Rochester and of course we knew him summers because for five or six years I was the camp doctor. When he retired from the Student Christian Movement, he came to work for Francis Hutchins. They had known each other in China. And this was my first knowledge of the Hutchins, other than the flamboyant brother Robert. So, when we came here on Memorial Day weekend in '66 ...

H: 1966?

C: They had a terrible frost, and they had no heat in the tavern. That's when I first met with one of the world's most wonderful people—Francis Hutchins and his wife.

H: If we could just stop there for a second. Mr. Sweetman had come to work here at Berea.

C: He worked for the development, and he raised millions. He got over a million dollars out of Rochester between Xerox and a friend of our family's—a maiden lady. So, he was a wonderful donor.

H: So, when did you finish medical school?

C: 1940.

H: Could you say just a bit about what you had been up to between 1940 and 1966?

C: Yep, OK. In '40, I graduated from medical school. There were 45 in the class, and I was the second youngest one and I was 23<sup>rd</sup> out of 45, which was good enough for me.

H: How old were you then?

C: I was 24 when I graduated from medical school. I went through college in three years and got my degree. I did four years work and then I got my degree when I got through my first year in medical school. Then I interned in Albany for two years. I signed up for the draft—that was from '40 to '42. I was up all night in the delivery room when I came down on Sunday morning and heard the news about Pearl Harbor because I came down about 8 or 9

o'clock and it wasn't even dawn yet ... the attack, it was just occurring when I heard about it. After 2 years there, I got married to Justine who I've known since she was 6 years old. We had summer homes less than a mile apart. When she was 6, she came to our house and I met her. I thought she was terrible. She had Buster Brown patent leather shoes and yellow cotton stockings and I chased her all over the house with a sword, but I did let her play with my electric train and made a few brownie points there. Then, I had an essential position ... was a resident for a small hospital in Rochester—Park General Hospital. The night we left on our honeymoon, I put my volunteer papers in to the Navy, but I had this essential thing. So, in July of '43, I went on active duty. You got a uniform in 24 hours. The sleeves were here and the collar was here, but I got there. I was a couple of months in Sampson Naval Base, then down to preparation area for people who were embarking to the Pacific, but we were out on Long Island. Sailed out of Oxstarred, Port Yuneme, on Christmas Eve '43 in a merchant marine ship carrying equipment for the air base. I wasn't on the troop ship where the other men were—probably 800 on a troop ship, but we went over alone. It took three weeks to get to New Caledonia and then we had two months in Melanie Bay, sitting at anchor while they invaded the Admiralty Islands. And that was on the Admiralty Islands with air bases, for the year in their dispensary. And then ... my memory's a little rough here ... I guess it was October or November, let's see ... I was there ... no, it was later on ... I was there Christmas Eve of '44 and my cousin flew in, one of my closest friends, and we celebrated the night together, slept in the dispensary which was a quanset hut. And then, in April, when the Philippine invasion started, I got transferred to a cardinal attack ship, which was a ship kind of like Mr. Roberts. We could attack any island if the Red Cross girls and nurses would have left. We hauled everything from toilet paper and toothpaste to aerial mines. We were loaded with munitions at the time of the Philippine thing because they were going to mine all the shores of Japan. And I was in Zambuanga the night the war ended. That's where the monkeys have no tail. The Japs zero hanging there with its tail shot off and a big sign Zambuange, where the monkeys have no tail. They call the pilots monkeys, the Jap pilots.

H: You didn't know it at the time but you were in the same island where John King?

C: Oh, yeah. We were ... sometimes we weren't more than ten miles apart. And he went in the same time I did. They were still littered with Japanese bodies when we went in. Nothing but palm trees, and in two weeks we had quanset huts up and cots and stacks

of supplies, but that was very peaceful. Actually war is so unfortunate because for everybody at the front, there are five or six people in the background. Actually, I can't imagine being in the service and having a more agreeable time with wonderful shipmates and traveling back and forth between Australia and the Philippines. I was in Australia about five times. The war ended and then they sort of lost track of our ship, and so by then we were hauling bags of cement from Brisbane ... am I boring you with this?... from Brisbane to Subic Bay and we moved a whole submarine repair base up there. Finally in December, the captain had had it. This was one of the early merchant marine ships, and they didn't have enough steel for the booms so they were wooden ... you know, the cargo booms, so he ordered to overload three of them and broke them. He wrote to the Bureau of Ships and they said, "Well, it's time you came home." And we did. So I got back to San Diego. Justine had driven out there in March, thinking I'd get relieved in 18 months. It was two years, almost to the day. So I got back there in December 16<sup>th</sup>, '45. And then I went to practice and practiced in Justine's hometown for twenty years.

H: And that was ... which town?

C: That was from '46 to '66.

H: Which town?

C: East Rochester, New York, it was a railroad town. They made refrigerator cars there for the New York Central. Terribly hit by the depression, and the town's gone downhill since then, too. But anyway, I delivered the GI babies for \$60 apiece when they got paid.

H: Was this general practice?

C: Yeah, from womb to tomb. I made thousands of house calls, could make three a day. That's about as many as you're able. I wouldn't dare make a house call now 'cause of malpractice or if it were with a stranger, you wouldn't know whether you were getting into a drug den. And the people, they expect you to do an EKG and a CAT scan or they'd have their lawyer after you, which is unfortunate.

But anyway, the first time we came in May, Scotty Cowan, who was a charismatic minister, was giving his last sermon so we heard that. And then that was followed, of course, by I guess Don Johnson?

H: Ahuh, let me remind myself here, yes.

C: Which was an unfortunate thing because he was almost as bad as the Catholic priests have been.

H: Oh, dear.

C: He was gay, and he had a wonderful wife. I wouldn't say this but the church then went into the dark ages. And I think he was followed by Dale Crockett.

H: Ahuh. Well, actually ...

C: Oh, no, Harley Patterson.

H: Harley Patterson was in there.

C: Harley Patterson was a fine man with a wonderful wife. He was very austere, and, you know, we find Union Church is a very friendly place. He just didn't fit in. He was a good man. Dale Crockett was a ten-year disaster which we don't even need to discuss.

H: Well, first could we step back just a bit, and could you talk in terms of sort of your first impressions of Union Church? You heard Scotty Cowan, you heard that last sermon, but I wonder more generally who was doing what?

C: Well, it's known in our family as a community church, a power unto itself. I was raised in a Congregational Church so the sermons, the scriptures, ... I can't think of the word, the ambiance anyway was very much a Congregational, and Oberlin College is tied into that, too. My wife started working in Woman's Industrial and worked for over 20 years and did all the laundry for it and got the people together to take care of the nursery. And so she ... and the funny thing was that the first day we came here almost, Dr. Louise Hutchins saw Justine. She didn't waste words. She said, "You get yourself over into Woman's Industrial and get to work." And so, Justine went there, and that's been a wonderful thing.

H: I was wondering what you can tell me about ... what your wife's experiences with that particular program were or who was the director of it?

C: Well, she wasn't really the director. The overall director was Dr. Martin's wife, and she was head of the Industrial. Justine did several things. First, she was a fulltime worker there from the time the nursery opened in the morning until it closed after the lunch hour. But, she ...

H: It was a weekly ...

C: Yes, except when schools were closed, it was closed. One of her busiest jobs was keeping a supply of volunteers, and she had many wonderful people who worked there. She could tell you more about that, but ... She got to know a lot of people in the community. She also got to know the people from Clover Bottom and Slate Lick.

H: The families ... the women who came.

C: She got to know the mountain people, the Appalachian people, and she had great regard for them. For a while we did pediatric

examinations once a year, checked on their immunizations. One of the funny stories, we had a Smith family—a husband who was delightful, played the five-string guitar, but he was highly allergic to work. So they had very little money. They had four or five children and the little girl got puny and looked anemic. So Justine and I bought some vitamins and iron supplements. First bottle ran out and Mrs. Smith says, “Do you really think she needs more? I can’t keep up with her now.” And so, those are the little vignettes of the people. And, of course, Carl Eschbach did a wonderful job with those people—leading the devotions.

H: Oh, OK. I was going to ask you.

C: And some of the other ministers did. And the Martins—Ira Martin was in the Philosophy and Religion—they would find some of these families in trouble and they’d take them food or get them medical care.

H: So, there was a bit more involvement than just on that day?

C: It was an outreach program. I think it’s less so because a lot of these mountain people—sure they’re poor but not by world standards. They all have automobiles; they all have televisions. At that time those people didn’t have those things. They’re better off than they were. I’m not saying they’re in great shape, but anybody coming from Afghanistan or someplace would think they were wealthy.

H: So, you came to work for the college health service.

C: Yeah.

H: And did pretty much was it Francis Hutchins who hired you?

C: Yes.

H: And were you the only doctor at the time?

C: No. Dr. Gates ... that’s a great story. Dr. Gates was a year ahead of me interning in Albany. That was ... she left in ’41 and I left in ’42. We came down here in ’66, so that was 24 years later. And I didn’t recognize her, and she didn’t recognize me. We got talking and were so many common threads—she had gone to Case Western and then interned in Albany where I did. Then she had gone to Burma as a missionary, and when that was overthrown, she went to China. And when she went to China during the war, I think ... and went on a ... I think she went on a liberty ship. I don’t know how she got there. And, of course, then things in China blew up, and she came back here, and she started working in ’65, the year before I did. She worked with Dr. Henderson who was John Cook’s father-in-law.

H: What was Dr. Gates’ first name?

C: Dorothy. She’s down in St. Petersburg and we hear from her regularly. I always felt good about it because my mother suffered

as being a missionary child and I felt like I'd been with her about a month and Dorothy said, "I suppose you want me to return?" And I said, "No way!" She was an excellent doctor, much better than people realized, a good clinician and an old maid but she could hear any raunchy details of the students' sexual encounters when it was a medical problem and not lecture to them; a wonderful person.

Dr. Hutchins retired after my first year here, but it was wonderful. You know, you could sit down on the rock wall by the CPO and talk with him and a bunch of students every noon.

H: I was hoping you would say something about Francis Hutchins, at least the short time you knew him as president and as, of course, you knew him at Union Church.

C: Well, then we were very close friends all the time. They went to Hong Kong for two or three years. He didn't want to be here and second-guess the new president. And then Willis Weatherford came and he was wonderful to me. So, I ...

H: What role did Francis Hutchins play in Union Church? Was he a church officer at various times?

C: Well, first of all, his grandfather was one of the first ministers there—you knew that. And secondly, of course, the college required, before we came, that the students attend church. I don't know, a Sunday School, and the faculty were expected to teach in Sunday School. It was much more like a Christian Institute than a Christian college. I shouldn't say it but a Christian college is a contradiction to me when you get the fundamentalists raising Cain and all. That's what Churchill said when he asked one of his friends who's a Catholic. They said she was going to a Catholic university. He said, "That's a contradiction." [laugh] And he was, I'm sure, he was chairman of the board of trustees, and there was some large S tool that the college paid the church ... I don't know ... a thousand dollars a year or so. Of course, often ... they still have ... used the church as an auditorium for the students, but that all stopped. I think that stopped just about the time we came here. And so the tie was cut between them. I think both he and Louise and I guess their family, too—I don't know them too well—are two of the finest people I've ever known, Christian or otherwise. And, of course, Louise could accomplish things ... there was no health department here, there was no pasteurization of the milk. You know, she came in here and got a grant from the Seaburys for pasteurizing the college milk. She spearheaded the ... here she was a Wellesley graduate, not a Yankee, but a Wellesley graduate, born in China ... and she manhandled this

whole area into building a health department that we have now. She was in public health and where I treated one patient at a time, she was treating hundreds of them by what she did. And then, she started the Mountain Maternal Health League and whether you agree with it or not, they do a wonderful job. And what those people accomplished ... and Francis Hutchins was not a Ph.D. He wanted to be known as Mr. Hutchins; he always called Louise, Dr. Hutchins. There're two meanings to humble. One is not \_\_\_\_\_, but one is true acceptance. He was a very humble man.

And I know Union Church is not a Quaker Church. But to me it's a society of friends. And I don't know how you express that other than copying that term from the Quakers. To me, I get more from the support of the people, the friendships, and the interaction among people. Justine's in the nursing home, as you know. And the number of church members that visit her and write to her is just unbelievable. That's one thing when the church was almost down and out, that didn't stop. A lot of people—when the going gets rough financially or they don't like the minister, they jump bail and go to one church. And pretty soon they jump to another, you know. But there are an awful lot of people there who have stuck with it through thick or thin. One time there were something like fourteen ordained ministers in the audience. Now that number may be big; it might have been twelve, but it was an unbelievable number which was kind of rough on the minister. I notice now, I think, the number of younger people coming in is increasing, isn't it? Have you noticed that?

H: Some, I think so.

C: Well, I've rambled on ...

H: Well, I wonder were you or your wife involved in Sunday School or choirs or ...?

C: We taught Sunday School for several years. I was chairman of the board or trustees.

H: Both of you taught Sunday School?

C: Well, no, Justine and I taught it together.

H: Which class was that?

C: They were teenagers—14, 15, 16.

H: Would that be in the late '60's or '70's?

C: Yeah. It was early on. We asked them if they knew what the eternal triangle was. They said, "God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit." That kind of got to me. I didn't quite know how to explain what it really was so I said, "That's a case with two women and one man or two men and one woman." But that was kind of funny. That's how naïve they were.

H: Do you remember any of the kids that were in your classes by name?

C: Yeah, Chip Hamilton, the Osolnik daughter ... that's 35 years ago, I can't go much farther than that. Chip Hamilton, the Osolnik ... I think, I can't think of her name ... she lives over right next, I think, to the Burnside's. Hersham was in the class—his father came, I think, as a potter but he died early on of pancreas ... One thing when you're in the health service, you get to know a lot of the town people 'cause you take care of the employees and their families, the faculty and their employees. So I couldn't commit a crime in this town. Everybody knows I used to look like Fred MacMurray, and I drive a 60-year-old Packard. You've never seen my Packard, have you?

H: Yes, I have. Yeah.

C: So, I have to sneak around the corner if I don't want ... 'Course when the people would want my autograph, I'd say, "How do you spell MacMurray—Mc or Mac?"

H: So, you were also on the board of trustees?

C: Yes, I was president. This doesn't go into print but we had to have a separation of Dale Crockett and the church. It was really falling apart. He would take no part in stewardship. He was a poorly educated southern Baptist, really. It was unfortunate.

H: Dale Crockett was here for quite a while ...

C: Ten years!

H: Would you talk a bit about his contribution or lack thereof? Was there some positives for him or were there more negatives?

C: Many more negatives. He was an unfortunate soul; I mean, completely impractical, no sense of maintaining property of the church, no interest in stewardship. The only thing he liked to do was preach, and he was ill equipped to do that. It was a bad choice. And those were dark ages. I think you're going to have to editorialize some of ...

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H: But Harley Patterson was there for about five years, I think.

C: Ahuh.

H: What, in a few words maybe, were some characteristics or some hallmarks of his time here?

C: It's kind of interesting; he went to Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Colgate had the university, but they ... when I was ten or fifteen, they split off the seminary and joined with the Rochester

Seminary, which had split off from the University of Rochester. Both of them were church, Baptist-oriented things, but lost the trail, so to speak. The original Rochester Seminary was closer to our house than I am to the hospital right now. And then they built a beautiful new campus. He also went to the Christian Church in Rochester—Disciples. There was only one of those churches there. Of course, it split off from the Presbyterians. They had a big old Victorian house two blocks from where I lived, but I knew nothing of him then. He ... well, he wanted a house and we had a lot with an old house on it—the Schafers live there now. He and I tore the house down, and I was talking with him. You could be with him all day, and there was no conversation—that sort of person. He was doctrinaire, meant well, had a wonderful wife and daughter, but the church was slipping under him, too. So, there were three ministers there who were not good moves for the church. There was Johnson, Patterson, and Crockett. And then Charlie Murray came. Charlie Murray did a lot for the church, and sometimes I wonder if he isn't appreciated. I mean things like getting the roof fixed and going through the troubles of putting in a new heating system. I don't know, were you here when the college redid their steam pipes under the church and they kept leaking? And the steam went up under the narthex and took all the plaster off.

H: Yeah, I don't think so.

C: So, Charlie Murray had to deal with the university, and while Charlie's father had married the Stephensons, Charlie Murray went the base and got the university, the college, Berea College, to help pay for the damage that was done by that. Now he was a good minister, but not the kind that attracts people. I mean, I think some of the best ministers unfortunately you don't get the most parishioners, you know what I mean. Charlie had a good sense of humor.

H: Would it be maybe right to say that he had some administrative ability?

C: Yes. Yeah. Off the record, he was very sensitive, and he would hire a church member to do a job—Bob McCulloch. They had the wreck of a parsonage down here. I don't know if you remember that.

H: No.

C: And when the Crocketts left, I took two trailer loads of clothes out to the dump. I think they were taking clothes from Woman's Industrial. They had a \$500 Frigidaire stove that had never been cleaned. I just had to haul it off to the dump. The trap under the kitchen sink had been draining into the basement with no connection to the sewer. That was the kind of makeshift thing ... So that was ... I'm telling you the truth, but I don't know how

much of it you want to know. You can know it, but I don't want to hurt anybody.

H: As president of the trustees, the time you were president, would you say the trustees were mainly concerned with financial matters, annual giving programs, that kind of thing?

C: The finances were just keeping afloat. They had a mortgage on that house that was the ... Actually, the Ambroses built that house. Do you know where it is?

H: No.

C: As you come down the hill from Union Church, it's the big brick house. It's a nice looking house from the outside. It's before you get to the end of the dip. It's about the only big, brick house there. It's a fine house, but it was in terrible disrepair. So, one of the things was that I got an appraisal on it. I got an appraisal for \$50 thousand. And so often, you find the new president, the first thing is opposition. You don't mean anything. So, they had it reappraised and got it up to \$51 thousand. So, I was perfectly happy. So, they sold that and cancelled the mortgage which was a big advantage because it was a .... Of course, if they had been willing to keep it, but it never should have sold for much more than that in the state it was in. But I imagine it's up for sale now for \$125 thousand. It's a terrible location as far as the driveway—you pour right out into the worst part of the traffic there, zooming down the hill. It's on the far side. So, we got that out of the way.

We were having discussions about the roof. A slate roof is good for about 70 years and this church was .... When was it built?

H: '20 something, I can't remember.

C: Yeah. It was almost up to 70 years and ... Rich Bellando's brother-in-law is in Princeton, and he's a roofer and he does the roofing for Princeton University, slate roofs. He came down here and they patched the roof and then what they did that was wonderful—put in all copper gutters and new, bigger downspouts. At the time I raised the question, "Why not scrap the slate roof and put on a modern asphalt roof?" People were against that, but as it came out, that's what they did 10 years later because you couldn't afford to have a slate roof. And they're harder to maintain. There was a time when you couldn't walk by there in the wind 'cause those slates came raining down on you. So, we engineered that with a ... and the greatest help in all of these things has been Lawson Hamilton.

H: What ways was he ... was he here when you came in '66 or did he come ...

C: Yes, yeah. He was just beginning to be successful, although he had a great deal to do with the low-cost housing in the Glades thing. But, I think, off the record, I think he gave \$40 thousand towards the roof. He came here when Dale Crockett was having one of his usual poor sermons, and Lawson sang in the choir. When he was leaving, he said, "I know you want a new roof. But (he said) if you don't get rid of that minister, you aren't going to have any roof." [laugh] And he also paved the way so that Dale got a year's salary after he left to take up counseling.

H: Oh, really.

C: One of the biggest benevolences of the church was when two of the Crockett kids went through college here. That's quite a gift if you compare it with if they had to go to another private school with the tuition being such. And I think he met the Dalai Lama and people like that, so he was ... I'm not sure it was Dalai Lama but somebody of that ilk who came here. I think it was the black bishop from South Africa—Tutu—'cause his daughter was here. So, that's part of the divine comedy.

H: So, Lawson Hamilton was financially quite important for the church, is that right?

C: He paid every cent for the Cowan Chapel. He sold his mining rights. The lowest estimate I've heard is 40 million; the highest is 80 million.

H: Here at the ...

C: Not here, over in West Virginia. He has his own helicopter, even his own plane.

H: Was the Sunday School building or educational building built?

C: That was built before I came.

H: I wonder how you may have observed any change in the college's role in the church over the time you have been here. Has that been obvious or is it ...?

C: Well, the college ... my daughter's in donors, and she's somewhat concerned about the college. The first business card they gave her—she's in major giving—had a cross on it and she says, "And so I go to New York and some Jewish business man, I hand this to his secretary. You know, I'm not going to get to see him." And so the college has moved away from it a lot—no compulsory chapel, you know, but it still clings to the fact that it considers itself a Christian college which is not a Christian institute, you know what I mean, like Billy Sunday's and Dwight Moody's. I think Dwight Moody, you probably never heard of him, but he was an evangelist. I think he started in Mt. Hermon in Northfield where my mother went. But the whole thing about

religion is changing. I, strangely enough, I don't consider myself primarily a Christian. Religions are bad; religion is good. But look at all the wars over religious differences now. We can't all be right, you know. I'd almost be a, not an ethical culturalist, but almost a sun worshipper—not in terms of the sun, but you know the poetry by Rudyard Kipling? “There is no east, there is no west, and there is no breed of people.” And the sun-worshippers don't have any sex to God. The women's right people go crazy about taking the word “men” out of the thing for the logo of the college. Larry Shinn says that in the original Greek the word was people so they've gone back to that. But you see, now the students are up in arms because they're going to spread the health benefits to college workers and to possibly gay couples and perhaps cohorts living together of different sexes who aren't married, and these largely young women from the Bible belt are getting petitions signed and raising Hell over it, but they've never read Timothy if you believe the Bible is devoid of falsehood and is the word inerrancy? They better read Timothy: “The woman must subject to the wills of the man.” So, when they start reading scripture, why don't you ask them what their interpretation of that is. I can do it, but a college president couldn't because it would just anger them, you know. So, I think the Christian faith is wonderful. I think it would have been better if going throughout the world teaching it. It would be better if we'd gone out doing Christian service. I mean, what right have we to go in and say to Muslims or the Hindus, “You're wrong.” There are great things in those religions. In fact, many of them incorporate the same welfare programs as Christianity does. So, while I come from a missionary family and my grandparents were wonderful—my other grandparents. My grandfather on my father's side was born in England in 1852. He went to school two years. He taught himself decimals and fractions. He wrote with a good hand, read the newspaper every day, started to work at 7 in the brickyards, 363 days a year, twelve hours a day, passing out beer with he was seven, and he came to this country in '69—1869—and ended up with twenty-seven cents in his pocket when he got off the ship. He had a rocky farm and he worked hard and then when shipping came along so great, he built a dry house—they called them an evaporator—and dried apples and shipped them to Germany for apple strudel. First thing you know, he was one of the founders of the bank in town. He was never wealthy, but he had \$10 thousand worth of stock. My brother went to work in the bank for \$12 a week in the Depression and ... I hope you're not going to read all of this, but anyway I think it's an interesting story. And so, when my father died, rather than to divide the bank stock among the three of us ... my brother was making more than \$12 a week then ... took the stock and Manufacturer's Hanover,

bought it out. And, of course, when they divided the surplus, my brother got the most handsome retirement plan you can imagine. From my grandmother always saying, “What’s he ever going to amount to; it took him six years to get through college.” He is now 93 and I called the other day. Oh, he’s under the car, fixing up a bracket on the exhaust pipe down in Venice, Florida.

H: Well, you mentioned your ideas about religion, I wonder if it’s been ... is it impressive that there seems to be such a wide ... is there a wide variety of belief among folks who come to Union Church? Some who, like you, might not ... couldn’t be exactly sure they were Christian maybe, even?

C: Well, I think just to be labeled by a religion is not really a good thing. Mac Williamson, you didn’t know him, I guess.

H: I know that name.

C: He worked for the United Nations, in the forestry, and he had been in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, he had been in Korea, and they did the cataract operations, but rather than the lens replacements, and he was in bed for two weeks with lead weights on his eyes and so forth. He could see all right, but it was an unfortunate thing. And he had great respect for the Buddhists and the other religions, the Hindus and the people he met. And he said, “You know, when it comes to eternal life, matter and energy can neither be created nor destroyed. We believe that in physics.” I believe strongly in the afterlife. First of all, nobody knows what time is. If you tell somebody a thousand light years away from here—it takes thousand years for the light from that planet to get here—well, you know, it’s four o’clock. How do you know? Well, look at the sun. Mister, that’s ten thousand light years from here. We have our own kind of time. Time and distance are the same, but they’re different. That’s like matter and energy; they’re the same thing, but they’re different. You know, you measure energy and power, matter and weight, one becomes the other. When you break the sugar cube, you separate electrons and you see a spark and that’s a fultron. You can do the same thing with old-fashioned friction tape, not this plastic stuff. Remember the old stuff that was kind of like woven linen and gasket cement on it? You unroll that in the dark and it will light up. And, you know, if there is such a thing in the middle of the universe and there was a flash of light, it would travel ... it could fill the whole globe of the universe if it was powerful enough. Also, if you were on one of these expanding planets that they’re picking up, going back to the big bang if that’s right, if you ... say that thing is going a hundred thousand miles an hour, the light goes out at that speed per second and it doesn’t make any difference whether that light is sent from a negative ... from an unmoving thing or not. The reason for that is

that the resting photon has no mass. [laugh] There's one fellow that's just written a thing in Discover magazine that the whole creation came from nothing.

H: Oh, dear.

C: But you can't imagine nothing so it's kind of hard to argue about it. But, you see what I mean about the label? I'm not ashamed to say I'm a Christian, it's not that. But, well take the Crusades, you know. In the Presbyterian times, people would stake until the ... Proving that you're always right is a sin. I read the other day in an argument or any altercation, if you wouldn't be still, if you lose, be even quieter. Do I shock you when I say that about the Christian church?

H: No.

C: I would like to see ... I know it wouldn't work ... but a college that would go into a Philosophy and Religion course and an ambiance that was all inclusive, starting with some of the things I mentioned in the sun worshippers. After all, what are the primary forces in the world? Nuclear reactions, the sun, the radiation, our heat and light, the weak forests, radium used to treat cancer—all three of those will unify. Strangely enough the weakest one is gravity. And I asked the professors of chemistry to line this out and he put gravity first and it's the weakest force. And of course as we sit here, millions of neutrinos are streaming through our bodies. So, it's a fascinating world. It's awfully hard for me not to be depressed with these times when I see how far downhill we've gone in even the 36 years I came here. The population of the world has tripled since I was born, you know. Two million, four million, billion, six billion. Everything that's in Wal-Marts is junk. Just a matter of years until it'll be in a landfill. I don't know whether you drive an SUV.

H: No.

C: But that's about the most inefficient sort of vehicle that you can imagine. They're dangerous, they use gas like mad, most of them are trucks, and they're way overpriced. You know, the consumer doesn't believe it but they build the product. They built the Mustang overnight, and they clobbered the Edsel in two years, you know. The one good thing the customers have done is go for quality, and Toyota can be thankful for that.

H: I wonder if as you think about this society of friends that's Union Church, if you've ever thought about ... the likelihood ... identified folks who are kind of unsung heroes or pillars of the church or whatever label you would like to give, but folks who have been especially important to the church over the years.

C: Well, you know, it's kind of dangerous because there's so many and I wouldn't want to leave anybody out. Also, some of the most important ones, you wouldn't even know what they've done.

H: That's what I'm wondering, if there are folks who we ought to know about, who nobody knows much about, knows much about the contribution.

C: Some of the people who have done a great deal for the unpopular—Ethel Martin who ran Industrial was a martinet and her name was Martin. She laid down the law, but it was her conviction that certain things should be done, and as I told you, they would drive miles to help a poor family. It was hard to fill her shoes after she left. And the whole social thing has changed so that Industrial is not where it was before. They're getting so much used clothing now; they don't know what to do with it, you know. They used to be kind of concerned that the people would take it and sell it. Well, that's fine. If they needed the money more than the cloth on their back, that's fine.

This, ... 'course this charity thing is a travesty. We probably get, without exaggeration, five hundred requests a year. There're three hundred ... say, there're six days a week ... there're three hundred days mail is delivered. And it's nothing to get ... the least we get is two. I just threw two away this morning. And what a waste of money. If somebody dies of alzheimer's and you send in something in memory of them, then they practically think you subscribe to it. You get a thing every .... And how in the world you're going to take care of everything from land mines to overpopulation to global warming to amnesty international ....

If you want to see a church that's in trouble, you want to see what's going to happen to the Catholic Church. It's pretty sad. There's a whole article in this new Times about it. Number of priests going into the priesthood is just dropping off.

Well, there were great people who always came to church and always paid their pledges. [Telephone interruption]

H: Talking about ...

C: ... what people have done for the church.

H: Yeah.

C: Well, first of all, I was saying having a hundred good people who come most Sundays and pay their pledges is a very important part of the church, even if they never raise their voices. Then, there are people like Carl Kilbourne that worked putting in the restroom in the narthex. They left the church and I notice now they're back again.

H: Was he the main worker ... actually did the work or organized getting it done?

C: I think he was chairman of the Industrial Arts. At least he was in Industrial Arts, and he built a lot of the houses down on Bluebird, so he has a lot of experience in building. In fact, he and another man once owned a lumberyard here in town. So, there's a lot like that. Then, there are many people who recently in December—you were two or three thousand dollars short—all those people anted up. Those are great people. I don't know their names. The people who work ... Charlie Murray was a good administrator; his wife was very funny, and [I] walked in the house, and she said, "I'm busy, but Charlie'll talk with you." She would work herself to the bone for the Bazaar. She would be there the first morning, and she was a little soul. And she'd lug chairs. And there's lots of people ... Jim Orwig, he runs ... does a lot of the work for that. Some of the people are gone. You never knew Mossie Wyker.

H: Tell me about her.

C: She was an ordained minister, and her husband also was.

H: I knew Jim.

C: They each went their own way, but they got along together very well. She was president of the ... what's the national church organization?

H: United Church Women?

C: I think, United Church Women. She was much more level headed ... a much better thinker than Jim. Jim would always want, say now, "I can't talk to these people, but why don't you suggest to them." Whereas, his wife would march in and say, "Here's what we're going to do." But those are great people. You don't always get along with great people, but that's why they're great partly.

C: I mentioned the Orwigs. Of course, the Hutchins put all kinds of time and money in the church. [end of tape]

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