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## Dr. Albert P. Marshall, Oral History Interview, 1998

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EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
HISTORY

INTERVIEW  
WITH  
DR. ALBERT P. MARSHALL

LNS: Today is May 12<sup>th</sup> and this is Larry Smith and I'm sitting here with a good friend A. P. Marshall, also known as Albert Prince Marshall. His father was a pipe smoker, and Dr. Marshall retired from Eastern 18 years ago. What got you to come to Eastern?

APM: The then Librarian and I were very good friends. We'd been at Illinois together. In Graduate School. That was one thing, the other one was, I was also recommended I learned later, by the man who was then the Head of Library and the Library School and the University of Illinois and Dr. Downs, Robert Downs. He was perhaps at that time the most outstanding person in the Library field and he had been one of my teachers, colleagues, he recommended. So I had two recommendations.

LNS: You came here as a Librarian and you ended up among your many careers here you ended up Dean of the Library.

APM: Yeah Dean of Academic Services.

LNS: Then Dean of Academic Services. So you were Dean of the Library?

APM: Well, yes, no, yes, I was over at the Library when I became Dean.

LNS: I see, ok. What year was that? Do you remember?

APM: I think that was '73. Latter part of '73. Yes. I believe I either had seven or eight functions under my direction, but the main one was the Library.

LNS: Was the library? And you became Dean of Academic Services.

APM: That was, well when I came here that was cause I just had the title of Director of the Library. And of course, I had faculty rank on the beginning, professorial status and then after Sponberg and I got along real well.

LNS: You came obviously, after Sponberg. What year was that again?

APM: That was '69.

LNS: '69 and he had just been named.

APM: He came in '65.

LNS: '65 right so he was here for a few years. So he's the one who hired you, he was very involved in the hiring I noticed from the files he seemed to be, I was looking through the archives, he was involved in lots of people's hirings, he was not a hands-off president.

APM: No, well he interviewed me but we had four Vice Presidents and the four VP's sat around the table in his office.

LNS: Who were they? Do you remember Bruce Nelson?

APM: Well Bruce Nelson was the one under whom I worked. Then there was Stan <sup>Jay</sup>~~Jay~~ <sub>Geck</sub>. Let's see who was he?

LNS: He was the Dean of College of Ed.

APM: No.

LNS: No?

APM: Dean of College of Ed was a guy who left here and went to St. Louis I believe. What's his name? He and I were pretty good friends. I'll come back to him. There was Profit, Lou Profit.

LNS: He was VP for Administration.

APM: No, he was Finance.

LNS: Oh Finance OK.

APM: And let me see there was Drummond. Wait a minute, Drummond was not a Vice President.

LNS: Drummond wasn't a Vice, he would've been was he Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

APM: Later he became Dean, later he became Vice President. But at that time he was Dean. Let me see who were the four other people, Dean of Students.

LNS: Was that Bill Lawrence at that time or who would've been?

APM: Who came after Lawrence?

LNS: Jim Campbell. Ralph Gilden was Interim Dean for a while.

APM: That came later.

LNS: I'm balking on it myself.

APM: Of course the person that I worked more closely than anybody was

LNS: Zumwinkle was the Vice President for Student Affairs after he went on to the East-West Center.

APM: He wasn't Dean when I was here. I came after him.

LNS: Ok, he came before.

APM: I remember his name but I don't even know him. Oh gosh.

LNS: The years do funny things.

APM: The guy who came here and left here and went to St. Louis went to St. Louis University.

LNS: Al <sup>yers</sup> Meyers?

APM: <sup>yers</sup> Meyer!

LNS: <sup>yers</sup> Meyer, ok.

APM: <sup>yer's</sup> Meyer's was Dean of Education. Now wait a minute now, he was never Vice President.

LNS: He was A Dean he was never a Vice President I don't think.

LNS: Loeschner was a Vice President, was he?

APM: Well I knew him but I didn't know him in that.

LNS: I'll have to go back and look at my own notes as to whom was whom.

APM: I know there were four and then Bruce had this, there were four Vice Presidents but I guess the thing I keep getting up Bruce had this I guess you might call it Executive Council which was composed of Deans. That's when I got my eyes in those kinds of things and we met every Tuesday, every Tuesday morning. I remember that. And Val came the same time. I did and he was an Assistant to Bruce. You probably don't even know Val. Val stayed two years and then out and then left. Maybe he stayed three but when Val left, that was when Dr. Sponberg and Dr. Nelson called me and wanted to know if I wanted to fill Val's position. And oh I guess at that particular time, and my wife definitely said no. Boy I was, I got away with myself, I don't know, and I accepted it. It was a nice experience but it was the kind of experience I was not used to.

LNS: What do you mean by that?

APM: Well this was strictly education. Strictly academic.

LNS: And what had you done before?

APM: I'd been involved to some extent in education, but I'd never run it.

LNS: What were you doing before you came to Eastern?

APM: I was a Head Librarian at Lincoln University in Missouri.

LNS: OK. And before that?

APM: I was Head Librarian at Winston-Salem State in North Carolina.

LNS: And before that?

APM: Before that I was Assistant Librarian at Missouri in Lincoln University but for only two years. And then I came out of Graduate School in 1939. I went back to my Alma Mater for two years. Then I went to Winston Salem State from 1941 to 1949, actually, I resigned in 1950. But in 1948, I took a leave of absence to return to the University of Illinois where I started working on a Doctorate's Degree.

LNS: Is that where you got your Doctorate?

APM: I didn't get a Doctorate. I didn't stay long. I could have. I just about completed all of my, all of my course work. But if you remember in those days, to get a Doctorate you had to have two languages and mine was French and German and I took a course in German there. I had already taken it undergrad and passed German and I got a telephone call the Spring of 1950 from an old friend of mine who had become President of Lincoln University and he called me at the University of Illinois and offered me a position at Lincoln University. And in North Carolina I'd been making somewhere around \$1,500, \$1,600. \$16,000 yeah, a little under \$16,000. Wait that's not right. No that couldn't be right. I went to Lincoln at \$6,000 and in 1950, the whole money in the world it took me. I went to North Carolina in 1939 and he offered me \$125 and I accepted it and stayed there. I went to war from there. 1943 I went in the service.

LNS: What service were you in?

APM: I was in the United States Coast Guard.

LNS: Coast Guard?

APM: So I stayed there until and in '43 I went in the service. I came back in December '45. Well meantime in well, things had sort of changed. Changes beginning to take place across the spectrum. I felt as though I were pushed to go back to school cause I only that one Bachelor Degree and some of my staff members were going back and getting another added degree. At that time they were pushing a lot of brains to get, in fact they still are, pushing a lot of brains to get a Library Degree then get a subject degree. So when I went back I got a degree in history, Master's Degree in History. Then after getting that, then I went on over into the Department of History to work on a Doctorate there. So I stayed there until '50 and then they offered me this job back at my Alma Mater for \$6,000 a year and to indicate how important that was, my wife was working when I called her to tell her that I'd been offered a job at Lincoln at \$6,000 and she said what did you tell them I said that I would have to consult with you. Consult with me? You need to consult with that kind of money?

LNS: So it was big bucks.

APM: Big bucks in 1950.

LNS: How long had you been married at that point?

APM: Well we'd been married since '41.

LNS: Since '41. Do you have any children?

APM: One.

LNS: One.

APM: We were married almost 57 years. Will be 57 years next month.

LNS: Oh congratulations. What date's your anniversary?

APM: 12<sup>th</sup>. June 12<sup>th</sup> '41. But then our daughter was born in April '42. As a result, not as a result, but we were fortunate in that my wife and daughter were able to follow me in the service. So after I had gone to New York for boot camp they sent me out to Oregon. And at that time and the reason I went into the Coast Guard it was the only integrated service in '43 when I went in. And the others were moving in that direction but the Coast Guard was the only one that was actually integrated. And see instead of being sent to Mississippi or Georgia a place like that, I went to New York. And when I came out of New York, they sent me to Oregon and I stayed out there and we aimed at going to Seattle, stayed in Seattle several months and then as the war wore on around October of '45 I was sent to Alameca

California with the express purpose of waiting for a ship. Kizer was building a ship. So we were on board that ship the 21<sup>st</sup> of February I believe and about oh sometime in March we headed for the South Pacific and I was the Helmsman. And while back we came back from that trip and while we couldn't put into San Francisco because the United Nations was meeting there and we had to put in Los Angeles. Then Los Angeles, I was called in and the Executive Officer who happened to be a faculty member from Harvard University had been looking over the records and saw that I was a Librarian had been for four, five, six years.

LNS: You were a what?

APM: I was already a professional Librarian. And he had decided he wanted a Library on board ship. So he took me off of my deck duty off of my wheel job and assigned me to the Chaplain and asked me to supervise the building of a Library.

LNS: On the boat?

APM: On the boat. On the ship. And see we had 550 crewmembers 540 crewmembers and we carried 5,000 troops. He made one specification, no book, well all books were expendable. He gave me the money to go ashore and buy books and I brought back hundreds of books. The men on board, some of them, we called them the "black gang", that was the guys below deck. They came up built this, maybe half the size of this one, put shelves all around and only had one table in the center and paperbacks were new and they were only being published by the government. By USAFI. We did find something we had a few paperbacks, not many most of them were hard back. But they were expendable. Any soldier, sailor, anybody who wanted a book in the Library could walk in and walk out with it. So all I had to do was arrange them on the shelf in a sort of an order and I followed Dewey Decimal generally and that was it. I was Librarian from then on. And we were scared to see when the war ended we were on our way, we had just passed through the Panama Canal from Atlantic on our way to the South Pacific. We picked up some soldiers out in one of the islands out there. We had a load of soldiers and they on their way to South Pacific and I used to say that if you dropped a line down from Salt Lake City you would have fallen somewhere near our ship. But we kept hoping they'd tell us to turn around and come back. But they didn't. So we went over to South Pacific. But I was already counting corners because not only did I have my wife and my daughter, but I also had my mother. And my age was in my favor in that case. I was older than the rest of the guys, most of the rest of the guys. So this time we put in \_\_\_\_\_ and lo and behold I'm getting ready to go and I got called in again by the Exec and it seems that the war department had shown some concern with these young guys,



17, 18, 19 year old guys. Many of them who hadn't even finished high school. And they were trying to give them as much education as possible so that when they got out they could go and get jobs. And the education officer was a two year student from the University of Texas and he had become a ninety day wander and was the education officer on board the ship but he didn't know anything organizing the courses so they called me and asked me to organize the courses and I stayed on an extra month getting all the teachers ready and so forth. When I got to Michigan I found one guy who worked with me very much he's up at Western now, he retired. But he had come from this part of the country and he and I were very good friends on board the ship but he was one of the teachers. I took an inventory and we had about 35 enlisted men who were college graduates. They became my teachers. Some of them, not all of them became my teachers. English, History, Math, woodwork all that kind of thing. And we were some of them were USAFICAL.

LNS: You might want to say what it is for the tape though because there may be someone listening some years later

APM: I don't know if I remember. United States Armed Forces Institute. Anyway, they were coming out with paperbacks. Some guy wanted to advance in the service. I took a USAFI course for example, to learn how to free, what was that, kind of a clerk, not a yeoman, anyway it was clerical responsibilities. They were already pushing me. They wanted me to be a quartermaster and he wanted me to go to school. I'm not cut out for military.

LNS: Just to go backwards a little bit. You were born in 1800's or something like that?

APM: I was born in 1914.

LNS: 1914 and you met your wife? Your wife's name for the tape?

APM: Ruthe.

LNS: Ruthe.

APM: I met her in college when I went to Lincoln. I had just finished high school and she was already there. She was really a senior in high school I met her in 1934 and we went together for those 4 years and then I went off to Grad school and kept in touch. I came back another two years and we decided to get married. So we courted seven years.

LNS: You've been married you said?

APM: Been married for well it'll be 57.

APM: '41 this is '98, take one from eight, 57. I've been married for 57 years and on my next birthday I'll be 84.

LNS: When's your birthday?

APM: 12<sup>th</sup> of September. I'm sorry, hers is the 12<sup>th</sup> mine of the 5<sup>th</sup> of September.

LNS: Of September or December?

APM: September. But anyway by the time I came here, I was always the kind of guy, sort of like you. I was in other things and the Library couldn't hold me. I was dabbling around, I remember the president went down and asked me if I'd teach a course in Geography. I said now that's one I just can't take. I've never had a course in Geography in my life. Anyway he wanted in the early 50's it had to be around '52 - '53, colleges were becoming interested in students who had difficulty reading and writing and President Scripps called me and wanted me to work with that. So I organized some courses in how to help, this is all in the Library and we started offering remedial work to read. Later on the United States government got interested in that and I don't know how we came about it but we received some of the money that they were passing out and the president called me and told me how much money he was giving me to study other programs and to set up a similar program at Lincoln University. Now that was in 1967 because I got those courses going in '68 and then left in '69. I was very much involved in education.

LNS: And you're now involved, since you retired, in history but we'll come back to that.

APM: Well I was in history all along but it was a minor concern. I was editing, I edited professional magazines and I was always writing for magazines and newspapers, even books I had some chapters in some books. A early history of Lincoln University. It's the school's sesquicentennial. That's it. See the school's organized in 1866 and I published that history.

APM: You're right. It was Centennial. Since that time they've had a sesquicentennial. Anyway, I published the history. I think there's a copy in the Library.

LNS: So you came here in '69 and Sponberg was president and it was a very different university than it is today. You came, one as a professional person who was sought after and second you came as an African-American young man.

APM: Yeah that was part of it but see by the time Walt Erickson was retiring, I was on many committees in Washington. 1965 when Johnson was President we had the High Education Act of 1965. Meantime, a friend of mine had become the Acting Head of the Library Services Branch of the Office vacated and he somehow submitted my name and I was paged at one of the professional meetings and was told that I had been nominated for the Commission. It was a Commission then, to allocate, work out the allocation of this money that had been assigned them to provide help for libraries and to not only work out the procedures and all that but to serve as a part of it. And then they were also getting interested in Libraries because they were setting up money for guys to stay and I got in on that. And then I got in on the Council of Library Resources, which was one that already had a lot of money. And then I went from that to the National Endowment for the Humanities as one of their consultants. Well meantime when I first got here, I had been well sort of assigned to or requested to serve on North Central Committee. So I was on the North Central Committee almost as long as I was here. And well I think that was the thing that impressed Sponberg. I had been president of my association, first black and I had been very active in the American Library Association. When I got in the American Library Association in 1940 there were I think there were four blacks attending that meeting in Cincinnati. And most interesting thing that happened in that meeting was I was asked to use the freight elevator. That's when I found that there were Librarians who were on my side and who came to my rescue and so forth.

LNS: Did you use the freight elevator?

APM: No. But what we did from that we were able to organize a group of people primarily that were whites and me. Cause there weren't any more blacks attending the meeting there were black out barriers but to avoid the hassle they just didn't attend the meetings. And so we in the first place I was put on committees and they began to see that and so they eventually came in. And in Missouri, Missouri's just as much a southern state as Alabama almost. But in Missouri the Librarians, now I'm the only black in there and I became Secretary. I became editor of the bulletin, the Libraries quarterly and a lot of other folks \_\_\_\_\_ - editor to that. And I used to go around the state speaking and all that kind of thing. And then in 1959 I was elected president of the association but it wasn't anything like now. Whenever we were going to a town where we would have the annual meeting, and of course some of these places hadn't been used to having blacks so they would always call me and you know going in preparing for it and without even mentioning it we would go and I would be introduced as being the Secretary of the Vice President or the incoming president and that's the way we got it over. By their seeing me they knew they had to make a place for me. And I guess the last one that I, no not the last one

cause in 1960 I was the presiding officer and they really laid out the Red Carpet for me.

LNS: Must've made you feel pretty good.

APM: Yeah. Not only feel good but, it made me feel proud of that group of Librarians and gradually others came in. One of the people that I brought in I considered to be my protégé later through my action became the first black to head up the American Librarian Association as the Executive Secretary and he is now the Director of the Library at the University of Illinois. So some of my protégés are doing pretty good.

LNS: That's wonderful. Good feeling, isn't it?

APM: Good feeling.

LNS: When you came to Eastern, what did you find here? What was the school like? Forget about the Library etc, but we can talk about the libraries though. What was the university like?

APM: You see it was just coming out of those small, those days when the president kept his hand on everything and Sponberg wasn't exactly trying to keep his hands on everything but it was still a small school. And not only was it a small school, small minds. These guys had never been mixed with anything that was growing this fast and so the growth of it. And the other thing that was happening was integration was coming. At the University of Michigan, you had the BAM group. What did they call that? Black something organization of black students. You had a similar group over here. And I remember one time cause I was on the committee...

LNS: Now this was right after you came?

APM: This was right after.

LNS: '69, '70, '71.

APM: And I remember one time in the presidents office we were meeting with two of the student leaders and there was a little lull in the meeting there one of he boys pushed his chair back and threw his feet on the table and Val \_\_\_\_\_ and I were both there and he said, he just threw, of course everybody smoked we had a cigarette box, you know, everybody smoking a cigarette and it seems that they stayed there and I asked him to take the Moff and he just looked at me. That was the kind of feeling, they were afraid of them. Boy I guess I was too it seems cause I backed off.

LNS: This is a white student who did this?

APM: A black student.

LNS: Oh a black student.

APM: He wasn't here but a week and flunked out. But I had some

LNS: It was interesting. A defiant thing?

APM: Yeah showing I guess in his mind showing a hatred for the administration a hatred for the white folks I don't know. There was that kind of a feeling all the way around. And it wasn't all the students it was some of the students some of the leaders. We had some similar situations in Macon, see we integrated in '65, no we integrated in, what am I talking about, we integrated in '54. So we had had some situations down there with black students. I had one boy said my father in Georgia and my two brothers have both been in jail for the cause and I want to have that record too. And he met a group of people downtown Jefferson City and they broke out windows and upset a lot of people. And I was at that time, I was the Faculty Advisor to the Student Body. And we were able to head some of it off through the leaders, but the leaders were afraid of these people too. And many of the leaders at that time coming to the campuses were not students. And what they would do they'd come in there and demand all this stuff. Well what we did we led the council and we said now look we're living in Jefferson City and this is a different place from Georgia and Alabama. First let's try the soft way. And we had these committees to call on the Chamber of Commerce and call the restaurants and call on the hotels and in every case.

LNS: Did the soft way work?

APM: Yep.

LNS: Back at Eastern in '69.

APM: Back at Eastern...

LNS: Were there many blacks on the staff or in administration?

APM: No there weren't. The first two years, first three years we had Val and I who were really the top people. Val had Ph.D. from Northwestern, brilliant guy. But Val, Val's wife didn't like Ypsilanti and so Val really gave in to her and left, left to become Vice President of this college in Virginia. He didn't last as Vice President but he did last on the faculty. At that time, no, I was the top black after Val left, especially after I became Dean. I was the top

black around here. But some people didn't like it, some people did. Too many Librarians, this was while Val was still here. Too many Librarians called on the president to complain about me. And the president said well, he says you have a grievance against Mr. Marshall you should go see Mr. Marshall and talk it over with him and if he can't handle it I'm sure he'll bring it to me. This is Sponberg talking. So except for little in fighting within the Library all of them was on our \_\_\_\_\_ now, I got along fine over there. I got along fine on the campus except that there were faculty members who jumped me about various things one of the things that I did that Walt did not do I formed a Library Committee. Well after about eight or nine years the Library Committee decided they were going to get me out and they did. Roger King became a member of that group. Do you know Roger King? He's in the History Department.

LNS: No idea.

APM: But he became a member of that group. Michael Hormel had come in at the same time I did and he was part of that committee. But by that time they were going out and bringing in people. They weren't screening them too well.

LNS: You mean students?

APM: No faculty.

APM: Oh they were sweeping the streets. That's a saying we have but we often felt that they were going into Detroit and virtually sweeping the streets and anybody who would come down here they would come cause most of them were out the first semester. But those were the kind of people they were bringing in.

LNS: But they would stay on campus.

APM: Oh yeah they were staying on campus. Before I got here. When I got here they were staying on campus. Then of course we went through all those things then in 1959 Dr. Porter came.

LNS: '69.

APM: '69. Yeah. I worked one year under him.

LNS: Feel good you saw the first African-American to become President.

APM: Felt good about that.

LNS: The first black president in Michigan of any kind

APM: So far as I know, so far as I know. No there was this guy who was president of Michigan State came before him.

LNS: Oh yes that's right then he went on to be president of College Board. Suni System and then to College Board.

APM: No he left then and went to Suni System.

LNS: Yeah he left MSU and went to Suni System.

APM: Went to Suni System.

LNS: And then went to the College Board.

APM: And then the College Board.

LNS: He was a very impressive person.

APM: A very impressive person. I don't know. Porter and I still get along very well. But I always pictured Porter as being a very good administrator but he was not conscious of his grace and we always say when he had to look in the mirror sometimes. When he went home he saw his wife. He was hard to get people \_\_\_\_\_ and I remember one time we talked to him about having black representation and he says, well I'm here. And that was his whole attitude. So other than that we got along all right.

LNS: What was going on during the campus? 1969 was the beginning of student revolts, not the beginning but it was a continuation.

APM: They were really taking on a faster pace then and they were going to a Library and throwing the books all on the floor.

LNS: Martin Luther King was marching on Cicero in Chicago

APM: He never marched here but it wasn't that they didn't want it. It was Michigan was in much worse shape than we were but being so close we got a lot of run-over and we dealt with it I think.

LNS: During that period there was a black student revolt on the campus. Do you remember what year?

APM: No it had to be somewhere between '70 and '74.

LNS: Yeah about '73, '74 and it was a lot of anxiety and they went to the administration, they went to the Board of Regents, they had meetings with

the Board of Regents they made a number of demands. Do you feel good about that, bad about that? What were your thoughts about that?

APM: Well, my thoughts about it, on the one hand.

LNS: Where were you in all this is what I'm asking?

APM: On the one hand, I sympathized with them because I had been through this at the University of Illinois. We didn't have any blacks or anything like that. See I had gone through that University of Illinois when I was a student on campus; I couldn't eat on the campus, I couldn't stay on the campus I couldn't even; there was no place that I could have a lunch. I couldn't go into a drugstore.

LNS: What happened if you did stay on campus at lunch?

APM: You didn't. They wouldn't serve you.

LNS: At the University of Illinois?

APM: That was the University of, This was when I first went there, 1939, 1940, Have you ever heard of Steak and Shake? Steak and Shake well they was organized by \_\_\_\_\_ it was they showed discrimination too. Now the one year I was there, we were trying to break them down and the one time I went in there we ordered Steak and Shake and what they would do before they'd bring it out, they'd pour salt. That was one thing that's what they did to me. And they also wanted a pie, an apple pie they would pour salt. But the other thing they did and this was really funny. To insult us, now I was not in that group but I just knew it happened. They'd come in and you would eat and then they'd stand up and break all of the dishes. Well we just, we just bought into that. If they want to break up their dishes OK. But anyway, they broke Steak and Shake fast by the time I was leaving there, Steak and Shake was serving. And before that they would serve us they had a window and you could go ahead and buy Steak and Shake was \$.39 or something like.

LNS: Bet it was cheap.

APM: We could buy but we couldn't eat it there.

LNS: Now when you came here how did you find the Ypsi community?

APM: I found generally the community to be very well. Now I had been very active in Boy Scouts and I was pretty high in the organization. I was a Trainer and when I got here, well in fact the Scout Exec in Jefferson City had called the Scouting Exec here and told him to grab me and put me to



work. But I ran into some things here that I just didn't feel like I needed to be bothered with.

LNS: Such as?

APM: These guys wasn't easy to work with. They'd send me out as a trainer to train men and a few women and these guys would just ignore me. I could tell by the way they were acting that they just had no appreciation for me. So I just gradually dropped out of it. Still contributed to The Boy Scouts but just kind of dropped out of it.

LNS: How about other groups? Was the Lions Club open, Kiwanis Club open?

APM: I don't know cause I wasn't here the week before Stan Jay was in my office and invited me to go to the Rotary club.

LNS: Rotary was open.

APM: Rotary was open yes. But there are still a few people that got out of Rotary when I got in.

LNS: Oh really?

APM: Oh yeah. Especially when I became president. See four years after I was here, three years after I was here I was the president of the club and seven years I was District Governor. But things were changing.

LNS: Yeah, things were changing. How about housing?

APM: Housing was interesting. The first year we were here Erickson had referred us to a realtor downtown and we went to that man and he frankly told us that he didn't have anything to show us. Everything he wanted to show us was on the south side. But he said he didn't have much over there so he sent us to a black realtor, Francoise. And Francoise, we soon met because we were in the same church. Francoise said we're trying to break this town open. Don't let anybody sell you a place on the south side. He told me about site living and another guy a young fellow that was an Ypsilanti boy over on the north side. But there were only three or four. So we...

LNS: Where did you end up living?

APM: We ended up living on Gregory.

LNS: That was a west side.

APM: Yeah that was a new area.

LNS: They call it the west side. That was a new university community.

APM: Right.

LNS: So you moved right in on Gregory?

APM: We were in the first group.

LNS: So you lived here for a lot of years.

APM: We lived there for 23 years. But we found ourselves living next door to George Goodman.

LNS: Former Mayor of Ypsi.

APM: But behind him, did you know Bill Welch?

LNS: No.

APM: Bill Welch was the professor of education.

LNS: I knew who he was I didn't know...

APM: He lived right behind us. And so far as I can remember those, we were the only ones out there. But I know that one of the things that sort of endeared me to that community, I got out and visited every house of the area invited them to form a watch

LNS: A Neighborhood Watch?

APM: Neighborhood Watch. And I ran it as long as I was over there.

LNS: When did you move from Gregory?

APM: We left then in '92.

LNS: Where'd you move?

APM: Into a Condo.

LNS: Oh really?

APM: A condo I own out on 3082 Roundtree.

LNS: Over by Ellsworth.

APM: Yes right off of Ellsworth. We moved over there.

LNS: What happened to your daughter in all of this?

APM: Well our daughter's 56 years old now. And she was living in North Carolina there and then she went to Washington with TransApplica and now she's one of the executives with the American Library Association.

LNS: Oh really? She became a librarian also?

APM: Yes. She became a Librarian.

LNS: Any influence you think?

APM: Well yes. At first she just wouldn't have it, she didn't want to be a librarian. She went into Special Ed. And she was working with trainables. Trainables were her specialty. Her first job was in Milwaukee they didn't have anybody else doing it but she was the one who broke it open. But she felt in fact they assigned her to a white school and there were no blacks in there at all and at this particular time, see she'd been involved in the Civil Rights Movement in Missouri. She wanted to go where she could work with black children. So she left that job.

LNS: Is she married?

APM: Yes, she was married. She married the year we came here. And went to Syracuse New York right there near the university.

LNS: Do you have any grandchildren?

APM: Well she had two. Her oldest daughter

APM: Wixom. That's where her office is.

LNS: Do you see her a lot then.

APM: Oh yeah she loves them. She got that MBA from the University of Iowa. She doesn't know anything but mixed groups.

LNS: What was the \_\_\_\_\_ condition in your family? Ruthe went to college, you went to college. What was the driving force that got you guys to go to college?

APM: You always used to ask me that all the time, what was my driving force. I'm not even sure. I just knew that I wanted to do better than father did. When I was, we left Oklahoma in 1928 and I had experienced an awful lot. And I was determined that I couldn't live all my life in that kind of circumstance. 1928, my aunt, well, my father died in 1924.

LNS: What did your father do?

APM: Carpenter and part time farmer but he worked for the railroad. And he had, one of his fingers had been cut off working for the railroad. Well he died at age 33 with what was called kidney and bladder trouble.

LNS: What is that?

APM: I don't know. I think it was cancer of the prostate. But I know that we had a barn and we had cows and so forth, hogs so forth. But after he was dead I remember those spots were still on the side of the barn where he would urinate against the barn and that blood was there and it just dried up there. But he died at age 33 in 1924. My mother had, she'd always wanted to go to school but she came up at a time when they took care of the men rather than the women. So she had to stay home and work. She encouraged us all three of us to get as much education as possible. She used to say she wanted me to be a doctor, she wanted my brother to be a lawyer and wanted my sister to be a teacher. That was to her, this was heaven. But it turned out that I was the only one that finished college. She didn't know anything about Library. I remember she would ask what about the Library. Anyway when I left Oklahoma.

LNS: How old was your mother when she died?

APM: She was 59.

LNS: Oh so they both died relatively young.

APM: Yeah. But she after we moved to Kansas City, this was in '28. That period in which the United States was thriving economically. The way I remember it is that is true but it didn't touch us. And as a result, when the bank thing came in 1929, no we didn't lose any money we didn't have money in the bank. But the thing that we lost, well the thing that we didn't have at the end of the Depression was a decent wage. And of course all of this I think had some kind of impression upon me. And I would say the other impression was when I got to Kansas City, I had a cousin who was a janitor in the high school Library where I went to school. And they had a black fellow in there who shelved books and there were only three people in there. These two Librarians and him, my cousin. They had a way of hiding their money in a big book and they'd cut out the middle of the book,

this is petty cash. And he got wind of that and he would go in there early in the morning go in there and just take out enough for the day. And of course, they knew some money was disappearing. And Mrs. Bird, a woman who was a white woman and she spoke to my cousin about it and he encouraged her, no what he did was, he came early one morning hid in there and watched this guy go in there and take this money out. When he told her of course, she fired him. And that's when he told her, you know I've got a cousin who would love to have this job. Well we were struggling. We were on welfare by that time. And I went to work in the Library and I think a part of my own determination to get an education was spurred by people like her. Cause she'd been in the First World War as a YMCA worker. And she was a widow. But she used to talk to me just like, she didn't see any color. And she would tell me about Library Science and what it could do. And she used to, when new books would come in she would hand me the books of course I like to read anyhow. And she would tell me about these books and so forth. So by the end of my, well when all this was happening, that was during my freshman year in high school. And I was out trying to help Mamma by taking any kind of job I could get. And when I first got there, my first job in Kansas City was working for the Hotel washing dishes \$.50 a day. I paid my own carfare, which was a nickel and I enjoyed that. And one of the things I remember that happened and it didn't have anything to do with race cause they were this woman was very nice that I worked for out there. I got that job by running an ad in the paper. I remember one time my job was to scrub the floor. They served from 7 to 10 and then from 5 - 8. And at the end of the day I was supposed to go in there and scrub that floor and I was in there scrubbing the floor and you know how a mop going over a porch would sound. And that caught me and there was all this money all this change all over the floor. I said well I laid it up there. I got a little cup, put it all in there. It totaled to about \$5.00 and when I got through, I took it out there and told her I found all this money on the floor. She says, Oh yeah. She said, taking the money out of the cash register last night I dropped it and we found some of it but some of it we knew we didn't find. But anything you find down there you can have. So she trusted me. And we remained friends right on through until I was pretty well situated in college and didn't particularly have a need cause she had another restaurant downtown. She used to have me come down there and work. But the other thing she was always doing is giving me money. Not a lot of money like a dollar, a dollar and a half and so forth.

LNS: When you don't have money, \$1.50 in those days meant something. Yeah.

APM: See Lincoln University was a State school.

LNS: Probably was predominantly black students.

APM: And all black faculty. But when I came out of high school, see after, I flunked out my freshman year and I went back and did it over again. And my high school principal, I've learned a lot about him since that time, but he called me to his office and said, Mrs. Bird tells me you want to go to college. I said yes sir. He said how much money you got? I said I don't have any money. He said, none? I said, no sir. No savings? No sir. Well let's see what we can do. And he picks up the telephone he calls Jefferson City, he talks to his friend the president and tells the president, I got a boy here who wants to go to school and he doesn't have money. Well the president said what can he do? He says well he's worked in a Library for four years. Well that's fine. We need somebody in the Library, he give him his room and board. Well room and board was really important. That's the most costly thing. And then this white woman down there, Mrs. Bird had some customers who had belonged to the Karaoka Club. And the Karaoka Club was made up of black women who were maids out in Country Clubs. They don't have country clubs anymore I understand, but they did then. If you would stay on the job on Thursday that got off and on Sunday they got off. But they had formed a club and they had some money in the Treasury and they were looking for somebody to give it to. And they ended up giving it to me. \$50. Lincoln had no tuition. It had a \$15 fee, per semester. Well that \$50 covered that and it gave me some money to buy books and I tell people all the time all the books I needed didn't cost more than \$20 -\$25.

LNS: You've been able to watch those prices go up over your life.

APM: Oh yeah, yeah.

LNS: So your back at Eastern now and you're the Dean of Academic Services and have these areas and this is a pretty good great growth for the university while you were here. And

APM: And I became very much concerned for the black students. Because many of them didn't have the background. They'd grown up just like me and I felt they needed help.

LNS: So what'd you do?

APM: We did a lot of things. We organized, we had in the old building over there, from the third floor

LNS: Pierce Hall?

APM: Over in Pierce, they gave us a room over there and that's where we were teaching them how to read and write.

LNS: So you began the first trio program it sounds like. You had the A. P. Marshall Head Start Program for College students.

APM: Well I had one in Lincoln see this one was sort of

LNS: a continuation.

APM: I became interested in that. And then of course, I was serving on all kinds of committees. I was even on the Graduate Committee and they had me doing, I was kept busy. I felt that I had a responsibility to both sides. I felt that I wanted to make my contribution to the total university but I had a special interest in the black students. And my wife and I since '70 we've been down on Gregory and we used to give students come down to the house and sometimes we'd have dinner, we'd have Coke, hotdogs, that kind of thing. And we sort of had an influence on them. And we did that kind of thing.

LNS: So when we had the black students demands made on the campus were you involved in that?

APM: Oh yeah.

LNS: were you backing the students or the administration?

APM: Well I was both.

LNS: What happened as a result of that? What strides do you think were made?

APM: I think we laid some foundations, which proved to be very important. I think the school learned how to evaluate people they were hiring. How to evaluate blacks as opposed to whites. They were bringing in people that they never should have brought in. In some cases. Other cases, they were reaching too high and bringing in people who felt they were above.

LNS: Now when I came to Eastern in 1975 as a Vice President, every one of my departments had one black person and only one black person. And it's a rather interesting phenomenon.

APM: Well you know when I came here, there was one professional Librarian who was black. And we had a fellow in Audio-Visual who is still over there. And we had a young lady over there who is still over there and that was it.

LNS: Did the blacks feel that there was a pattern going on here?

APM: Yep, they were very upset. They were always complaining.

LNS: You got to be blind not to see it.

APM: They were always complaining but the first thing that caught my attention was the secretary who had responsibility for helping department heads hire faculty, hire students. Would have them sign a sheet, a tablet if they were black she had a pencil and would put a little dot there beside their name to let them know that this was a black person. So they weren't putting any black kids on desks or in any of the nice jobs a few of them were shelving books and that's all.

LNS: So it was pretty much institutionalized.

APM: The person who was doing that in my office was Miss Hark. She and I had become very close since those days. And I never talked to her about that because that was the environment and she was just

LNS: She was part of the institution. What about the people in the Dean of Students office. How were they?

APM: Well the Dean of Students Office, they were coming along.

LNS: Student Affairs was receptive?

APM: Yeah they were receptive but you didn't have any blacks who were in there who were counseling black students at that time. Eventually

LNS: Velma Clark.

APM: Yeah.

LNS: A few others?

APM: Velma Clark was here.

LNS: She's one of the pioneer counselors.

APM: And she likes to take more credit than she really needs and she was part of it and she did do some credit. For the most part you see, black people, particularly in education were not only trying to pave the way for others but we were also protecting ourselves. We just we were toeing a line but we were always looking out for ourselves and I think that was the way it was with everybody.



LNS: Were you worried that you were going to get fired.

APM: Yes. We thought if we got out there too far, we'd get fired. Nobody wanted that. Cause I faced that same kind of thing at Lincoln. When I was state president of the NAACP in Missouri for the whole state the president for whom I worked had a stroke and his successor called me in the first day he was in office and told me he didn't want me working for the NAACP. So at that time I had to face up to one thing; this is a good job, I got a wife who likes nice things I have a daughter who likes nice things. So I went to the meeting and resigned as the president of the NAACP.

LNS: Do you feel badly about that?

APM: Yeah I still feel bad about it. But the man threatened me and I don't know what he would have done if I had called his threat. I'd probably would've probably been out without a job. But it was a different environment than what people have now.

LNS: What else do you remember from the days that you were here, they weren't that long ago, just in terms of the institution aside from the...What was Bingo Brown and those kinds of people?

APM: Bingo was gone. Now Gene <sup>Beatty</sup> ~~Beady~~'s talked about him.

LNS: He sort of was very fond of him. These were people who seemed to be very concerned about people's welfare.

APM: See Bingo Brown was concerned about black kids but Bingo Brown also was supporting he supported discrimination. This is according to what Gene said. And many of the people here did. The union building was built shortly after Gene came and they would have these dances and the black kids would come and as long as they danced with each other things were fine. And wasn't in that sense it was not safe here. They could all come here but

LNS: They better stay by themselves. Yeah. Stick together.

APM: Now the minute somebody started dancing, with say one of the white girls, they'd get called in and Bingo was the one that would call them in. And they'd answer but even at that time now Gene graduated in 1934 I think but he said even then you could not stay on him. You could not stay on him. Cause he's black.

LNS: He was a famous track star.

APM: Famous track star. He brought attention to Eastern. He loved Lloyd Olds, Lloyd Olds was his man and when he came here he was supposed to be going to Northwestern if you read in that biography he was supposed to be heading for Northwestern but he came here and fell in love with Lloyd Olds and never left.

LNS: Did Lloyd Olds fight the fight?

APM: Lloyd Olds, yes to some extent. See I never knew Lloyd Olds.

LNS: I met him once when we dedicated the building in his honor. He came to campus.

APM: I think, see I met him one time but see he was gone when I got here and there was somebody named Marshall who lived up the street from where I lived, on the other side of Cornell I'm trying to think what his position was. Anyway, yeah those people had come out of a period where their ways of doing things were based upon the times and even though they might, see at the time when a forward step might be being a friend to a black and that was about as far as it went. And a forward step would be letting them in the school. But see they always tell the story about the black girl who \_\_\_\_\_ in home Economics. But they had this place where all the Home Economics do their practice one semester but that black girl was refused from there so she didn't get that part of her education. They had some trouble in those days even after I got here they had some trouble with putting black kids for their practice teaching into some of the schools. See Ann Arbor was just beginning to break and Ypsilanti was a little ahead of them but there were many places around where they couldn't put their black students.

LNS: So when the black students made their big and it was a pretty big event at Eastern when the black students made those demands. The context in which they made them may look tame by today's standards but from what you're saying it was a pretty forward act.

APM: Yeah right.

LNS: High energy. The institution wasn't very supportive, I don't want to put words in your mouth but this is just what I'm hearing.

APM: The institution as such was not supportive even though there were individuals who were. Whenever I write I always try to give credit to those white people who were always on our side, always pushing us, always supporting us.

LNS: Who were some of them you could recall?

APM: Oh around here I would say Drummond was one. And I would say what's his name, guy who died three or four years ago from Missouri, one of those Deans that served with us was oh Lord now there I go, he lives over on Collegewood up at the top of the hill there where you are going out of Collegewood and you have to make a left turn.

LNS: Earl Roth.

APM: Earl Roth.

LNS: Dean of the College of Business.

APM: Earl was always inviting my wife and me to come over when the Business College opened. The only person they had in the College of Business at that time was a girl that died here a couple years ago.

LNS: Rosetta Wingo?

APM: Rosetta Wingo. We used to talk about the little slurs and so forth that she got in those days.

LNS: So we mirrored the larger society had some few forward thinking people but basically it wasn't the soul station.

APM: It certainly wasn't. Now I think the difference is the faculty feels free. Just faculty. They don't have to worry about the fact that I'm gonna do this thing but I'm black. They don't have to worry about that anymore. This kind of things Wells, Wells really thought it and Wells was the kind of person that was so bitter until he carried that to his grave.

LNS: Wells was?

APM: Phil Wells. See he was a bitter soul up until the time he died. The last time I saw him he said I haven't been on that campus since I retired.

LNS: And he retired as what?

APM: He retired as a Professor of Education.

LNS: Professor of Education.

APM: He was struggling, he felt, he said he had to fight to become a full professor. I said all that taken place before I got. I don't know beyond that.

LNS: Some painful memories die slowly don't they. You're also known also known as a historian of Ypsilanti. How'd you get into that?

APM: Well I was already interested in History. And I was always interested in Black History. I was interested in Black History in Missouri. I found out about the Historical Museum and I went down there and I found out about that little book on the story of Ypsilanti. And I got that book and I started reading it and I found very little in there about the blacks.

LNS: Almost nothing. I've read the same book. That's probably the only history of Ypsilanti.

APM: Yeah black. And I also was getting information about Elijah McCoy. I was interested not only in Elijah McCoy, but his family.

LNS: Now they lived in Ypsi. Now for people who may listen to this fifty years from now, that's the McCoy that was the result of the saying the Real McCoy.

APM: The Real McCoy. He was, he was one, I don't know whether he was the first but he was one of the first

LNS: Inventors?

APM: Yeah. His inventions had to do with Ore and there was no engineering school in 1850's that would accept him. His father who had been a former slave had come in here and had been assisted by Mrs. Starkweather and he started a cigar business cause that's what he had done as a slave in Kentucky. Well his business thrived and with his money, he could send his son wherever he wanted. But there was no engineering school in the United States that would accept him. They had this committee. See remember slavery's still on in 1850 and they had this committee and Mrs. Starkweather was on the committee, at least Mr. Starkweather. I've never known a woman to have been on that committee although women used to bring in food and all that kind of thing. But all the members of the committee were evidently were men. McCoy's father so far, as I've been able the first and only black to ever serve on that committee.

LNS: Now this committee was the committee

APM: To help the slaves going through town.

LNS: The Underground Railroad committee.

APM: Yeah it really was but they didn't call it that but

LNS: But that's what it was.

APM: They became friends with people on there and there was this couple from Scotland, a woman became a doctor her great grandson still lives here. MacAndrew. Anyway they became friends and they had just come here from Scotland and they were interested in this slavery issue. And they said yes that they could make arrangements for this son to go to Scotland where he could study engineering, which he did. So in 1860 after he had finished local high school he was sent to Scotland where he became an engineer. Came back four years later and the only job they would give him was a fireman on the railroad. But his dreams were bigger than that. So he started working on this ore thing. He notice as the train would go down the track they would have to stop every so often and go back and oil the moving parts. You can imagine that OK? And he worked on it in 1872, came up with his first invention which was an automatic lubricator, just releasing a little oil at a time so the train could go all the way across the country. Well he made the same application to all the machinery. This is the industrial revolution in the United States and he made that same. And the other thing I think was

LNS: Did he end up a rich man.

APM: No. No he never ended up

LNS: They didn't have strong patent laws in those days.

APM: Well they had patent laws and all that but I don't know why he didn't. He was comfortable. And on the subject of patents, before 1865 if you were black you couldn't get a patent. And so he came at that period when they were just starting to begin issuing to blacks and he but his father was able to send him to Scotland where he became a, they never had any children. This couple. She was a very active person after they left here and moved to Detroit. And he was quite

LNS: Who were some of the other prominent black Americans in Ypsilanti?

APM: 1864, do you know the thing that is always tested here of my memory of names and I can't tell you why I just can't remember names. But in 1860

LNS: You're doing great on dates though.

APM: Yeah I can do all right there, it's just names that I can't remember. 1860, now I can remember this name, the Board of Education was having a problem with black students coming in 13, 14, 15 years old and coming out of slavery, they'd never been to school. They couldn't put them in the

classes with the other students. Somebody came up with the idea of having a school where they could go for three years.

LNS: Remediation program?

APM: Yes a remediation program. They could go for three years and then they would be transferred over to the regular elementary school. That's the building that's over a 405 I believe it is, Adams Street. Still stands there. But they set out to build that school and there was a cooper here do you know what a cooper is? Who evidently was educated because they talked him into teaching this school temporarily until they could find a person to bring in. The building was completed in 1864 and they brought this man in and I swear his name starts with a B but I can't call it. Anyway this guy came in and he became a leader of the black community. He was a big Mason too. And he eventually became leader of the Mason's over the state. But he was quite an influence over the black young people at the time. There was a barber who came in here around 1846 -47 and had set up barber shop at that time blacks would set up barber shops downtown and their clientele was mostly whites. This guy became quite an influence on the people. There were two, three others that came in later, there was engineer here, there was a man here who had been a farmer and who became one of the richest black farmers in the country. But after staying on the farm so many years he moved into town and his home was there were the fire station is now.

LNS: But the new fire station? You mean the current one, not the old fire station on Washtenaw here?

APM: No the new one down on Michigan Ave.

LNS: By the courthouse.

APM: Not by the courthouse. Yeah the courthouse. Anyway you had people like that and people started spreading out. Now it's interesting what they did they had a few of them that come up here to school. The Curtis' always took advantage of this school they'd come up here to high school. has always to defended this school. And some of them would go on farther than that

LNS: And one of the Curtis' was a union guy.

APM: Oh yes. He's a descendant. He's a descendant of Floyd. Not dumb but he just never took advantage of the education that was here.

LNS: He was unschooled but the did make his mark in his own way.

APM: Yep but there's still some Curtis' here. In fact one of the Curtis' was in charge of building our church. And then of course preachers. Not all of them but you had some come in who had very definite influence on people.

LNS: Who do you think? Among the names can you recall any?

APM: I'm trying to think. I can't recall any at the moment.

LNS: Early times or current times?

APM: I'm talking about early times. I don't think they had much influence on that. I know one thing you had a guy come in here named Roberson.

LNS: S. L. Roberson?

APM: S. L.'s father he was an uneducated man but very influential. You know he was a preacher. He became a preacher after he got here but he came out of Alabama as a sharecropper and S. L. was his oldest child. S. L. was born in Alabama too. But he came up here but because of his own perseverance and the help of the pastor of the Baptist Church down there a white fellow, who taught him how to read and write, taught him how to read and write he never learned to read and write. Well anyway you had people like that then you had the school, which people who worked rather influential.

LNS: Gene was very influential.

APM: Well see Gene didn't come here until '29.

LNS: I know I'm just saying. What about current influentials? Who do you see? John Barfield certainly was influential.

APM: Johnny doesn't participate in anything. John operates on a higher level.

LNS: How about John Burton?

APM: John Burton was very much so.

LNS: Union leader. Chairman of our board. He didn't have much formal school.

APM: He didn't have much he had gone to that little college in St. Louis. But he didn't have a lot. But he certainly

LNS: Distinguished himself?

APM: Right he was very much a leader. And

LNS: George Goodman?

APM: George's parents, back in 1870's, 1880's they sort of prepared for him. There were blacks, who were keeping their eye, one way of putting it, keeping their eye on the prize. From the time slavery ended on down past the ending of the new century there were blacks and when you go back and find what they were doing, clubs. Masonic Orders, not just Mason's, Elks and all those. These guys had educational programs, musical programs, educational programs and they would come together and they would have all kinds of contests and so forth, but their whole program was trying to help a people who hadn't had these things. And I think that they made definite contributions. Now Harold Campbell was in the early days and I haven't been able to find out when the first black came up here. I think it was somewhere along around 1880's or something like that. But there was a man out of Ypsilanti who hung out his shingle as a Lawyer about 1874.

LNS: In those days you didn't have to go to college or law school.

APM: Oh he went to University of Michigan. But he was raised by a white family. He was raised by a white family. And not so unusual for the times he didn't live very long, practiced law about 5 or 6 years and then died. But there was that kind of thing going on a lot of that I tried to cover in my book. But yes, there were people when Gene Beatty became the Principal of Harriet Street School one of the first things that he started was encouraging black kids to move beyond elementary school. They had