

Obama Kansas Heritage Project

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Interviewee: Clifford W. Stone

Date of Interview: October 2008

Location: Stone Office, Commerce Bank, El Dorado

Videographer/Editing: Steve Cless

Transcriber: Jessa Soto, March 3, 2014

Editor: Micaela Ayers, January 2, 2017

Run time: [1:36:24]

CS. -- Stone. My -- my mother's family name was Clifford --

Q. Is that right?

CS. -- and my father's father was William Stone, and I just -- I became Clifford William Stone.

Q. Do you, did, did you always go by Cliff?

CS. Mm-hmm, Stoney. [Laughs.]

Q. Oh, Stoney.

CS. In the war, in the war I was Stoney.

Q. Oh, is that right? Okay.

CS. In World War II.

Q. Never William?

CS. No, never -- not -- never occurred to anybody.

Q. Okay. [Laughs.] Nobody knew, so that was okay.

CS. But as I say, Clifford was my mother's family name.

Q. I see.

CS. So --

Q. Huh. So you got to carry it on?

CS. That far. She didn't have any brothers. I was the end of the line. Clifford Township, although, up in the northwest part of the county, was named for my great-great-grandfather.

Q. Oh. Wow. So tell me a little bit about your background -- early days. You lived on a farm, I understand?

CS. Well, no. I never -- that was after school. No, I just went to school at Washington Elementary School, and at that time -- when I was born, my mother and father lived farther west, up before you get to High Street. I forget the name of the street.

Anyway, as things went along, why -- I grew up -- the years that I was growing up, I was at 311 South Washington, which was -- is a, to a -- well, a block and a half catty-corner to where I live now, which is 119 South Taylor, which my grandfather, Clifford, was a farmer, but he got elected County Treasurer up in Clifford Township, and that's where you -- it was just horse-and-buggy days, so they had to come to El Dorado and find a place to live. You couldn't go back and forth to Clifford Township and be County Treasurer, so they were looking for a place to live, and 119 South Taylor is where they found.

And at that time, everything west of my driveway was orchard, so the whole half-block, and it -- it -- it -- the owner was the Presbyterian minister, and his wife died, and there was my grandfather, and my grandmother, and my mother, and she was 12 or 13 years of age, but the house was large enough that they were looking for a place to live, and they just rented rooms -- some of the rooms, because he didn't need that much room by himself, but the good -- good Presbyterian ladies did not think it was 'meet for man to live' alone, and "I want you to come have dinner now," "this; there now," and he got tired of that. He said -- came to my grandfather one day and said, "I've had all this I'm going to take. If they think they're going to run my life for me, they are mistaken. I'm leaving town. Do you want to buy the house?"

Q. They did?

CS. \$320.

Q. Wow. Oh my Goodness. Was that a lot of money back then?

CS. Well, obviously.

Q. Yeah, must have been.

CS. Well, I mean --

Q. Yeah.

CS. -- that was a long time ago.

Q. Sure, sure.

CS. I don't know whatever happened to him. I don't know that much about the story, but it's been a -- it's been a very pleasant

place for us -- because I'll have to go to someplace else, because neither of my children -- my daughter lives in Kansas City, and my son lives in Tulsa, so one of these days the ownership will change.

Q. Mm-hmm. So you had a pretty normal childhood as far as that goes?

CS. Oh, I guess. I don't know. It was --

Q. Anything stand out that was extraordinary?

CS. I don't think there was anything extraordinary about it. I walked back and forth to Washington Elementary, which is where the library -- Bradford Library is now. And then, when it was time to go to junior college, the junior college -- or junior high school was where the -- well, it was where the parking lot of the Allen Hospital -- well, that's not quite right. It was east of there on the corner.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Right -- in the middle of the block on the west side of West Central -- I mean, the north side of West Central was the McKinley Grade School.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. It was a buff brick with a red-brick trim, and had classrooms in the basement, and then two floors above. So -- by the time that I was there, it was -- it was part of the junior college.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. The junior college was north -- I mean, to the west, on the top floor of the old Junior High School.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. And so anyway, I was always able to walk back and forth to school, because Washington School wasn't very far, and Junior High wasn't very far.

Q. Sure. Yeah. Yeah.

CS. I -- they experimented with -- there were about eight of us, and we didn't -- we didn't go to -- we didn't go to 7th grade. We went from the 6th to the 8th. They tried it with -- there must have been eight or ten of us, and I've always thought it was a mistake, and they never did it again, I noticed. I didn't think --

Q. How did you get chosen? Were you just really bright, or how'd you get --

CS. Well, the others were at least. The others were bright -- very bright. There were about, maybe, ten of us.

Q. Hmm.

CS. I don't know.

Q. Was that hard for you?

CS. Huh?

Q. Was that hard to skip a grade like that?

CS. I don't think -- it wasn't hard to do, but I don't think it was good for us, and they never did it again. They'd never done it before, and they never did it again.

Q. Huh.

CS. And I don't think it was -- I don't think it was -- I don't -- one of the people, just the other day, her name was Betty Prohodsky -- Betty Bond Prohodsky [Died Oct. 3, 2008], and I think she -- I think -- I think I'm the last one. She was next to the last.

Q. Mm-hmm. Hmm.

CS. There were about ten of us.

Q. Mm-hmm. So --

CS. But it was a -- it was experimental and --

Q. Yeah.

CS. When I was in the 5th grade, they came in one day -- the principal came in one day and asked -- she was a black girl, very bright, 5th grade - and took her up to the - Just so you'd -- you know, the explanation was, that we heard anyway, that she didn't spend her time in the 5th grade, she's too smart, so they put her in the 6th grade. Well, then there were about ten of us that, that skipped the 7th grade and went from the 6th to the 8th. They had never done it before, and they never did it again, and I suppose that they thought it was worth trying, but they never did it again that I ever heard about.

Q. Did you have any -- you said you had a brother?

CS. No, I didn't. No brothers or sisters.

Q. No brothers or sisters. You're the only child?

CS. Mm-hmm.

Q. Wow.

CS. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Were you -- was your family pretty much middle class, do you think, or --

CS. Oh, yes, I think so, although -- well, I'd say middle class.

Q. Sure. So you were probably 10 to teenager when you -- when the Depression was going on?

CS. Oh, yes. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Q. Okay. What was that like?

CS. It was -- it was tough, but it wasn't -- people got along. I know my parents and grandparents were forever taking food and things to people that didn't -- particularly black people, that -- because you could get 25 hamburgers for a dollar. They were about that big [indicating], 25 for a dollar.

Q. And a house for \$320. [Laughs.]

CS. Yeah, yeah. And -- but people got along. There wasn't the -- there wasn't complaining. There wasn't unpleasantness about it. People just -- I know we were forever delivering food and things to, to families that didn't have -- have it.

Q. Hmm.

CS. There was no unrest. There wasn't anything like that, but when you get to thinking about it, you know, two or three dollars a day was farmhand wages.

Q. Yeah. Yep.

CS. And it was -- it was -- it was -- it was tough. It was tough.

Q. So now, looking back, were there any lessons that you took from that era, any -- any -- like, the way you conducted your life after going through that that is different because of that experience?

CS. Well, I would -- I would have hoped that a certain amount of conservatism seeped through, one thick brain, but we were -- I, personally, and most of my friends were not affected. We were not poverty stricken. It just happened to be in a small community like this that there were some people better off than others, but there wasn't any unrest or things like that. People just got along.

Q. Sure. I'm sure times were tougher -- times were probably tougher in other places, bigger cities.

CS. Well, of course, the Discovery Well out west was 1920. Now, before that, of course, there wasn't any -- there wasn't any oil, there weren't any refineries, there weren't any pipelines, or anything like that. It was just all farming area. Now, that -- the Discovery Well, 1920, 20,000 barrels a day, that, that changed everything.

Q. Did it?

CS. And people who had land were -- the big production was the -- they immediately moved to Wichita and built a great big house.

Q. Send me the check.

CS. Yeah, yeah. Send me the check. Oh, there were wonderful stories.

Q. Yeah.

CS. There were wonderful stories of people that -- well, the Clifford farm was right in the area -- in the -- where -- where the other families adjoined.

The Lathrops were on the -- were south of the Clifford farm, but they had four boys and one girl, and the Cliffords just had one girl, and so they had their own harvest crew and things like that, but then everything was -Bra- --the uh -- the -- that oil pool up there was one of the most prolific little pools in the United States. It made them all very well-to-do.

Q. Sure.

CS. One of them was a big owner in -- in TWA, Trans World Airlines.

Q. Wow.

CS. Another one had a bond -- bond house, and securities/exchange thing. One of them had a big purebred Hereford herd, big -- great big huge native stone barn, and so forth. He wasn't married --

Q. Hmm.

CS. -- but it made -- made the Lathrops all rich.

Q. Hmm.

CS. Quite rich, as a matter of fact.

And one was an interesting story. My mother -- somebody in the family lived out in California, so my mother and grandmother

took me, and they went out to visit them and so forth, and one of the families -- and this was a palatial brick house, and here was this great huge yard, probably acres, and this big driveway that came in up to the big house and around, and so this was a family that had land there in this Lathrop pool, and it made them quite well-to-do.

And so we -- my mother and grandmother took me along, and I sat on the floor and looked at a book or something while they visited, but in conversations afterwards -- I wasn't even listening to what they were saying, but my mother told me about it afterwards, how -- she said -- and they'd used, they used this house in many movies, because it was such a palatial -- well, almost a southern-mansion type of location and setting with palm trees, and a big circular drive, and -- or U-shaped drive, sort of, but my mother told me one time afterwards that part of the conversation was, "All that money has really never brought us anything but unhappiness," and that was -- that was true of her children. They just had so damn much money that values weren't the same, you know?

Q. Sure. I've heard that.

CS. They spent it, and enjoyed it, and all of the stuff that goes along with it, and she said, "It never brought us anything but unhappiness," and that's true in a lot of cases. There's a lot of cases it isn't true, but it's -- it's easy to slip into that mode if you -- if you're not careful.

Q. Yeah. And people that win the lottery --

CS. Yeah, sure.

Q. -- similar situation. I've heard stories.

CS. Yeah, same -- same thing.

Q. Yeah, nothing brought them happiness -

CS. There you are.

Q. -- and they would probably wish they hadn't won it as it turned out.

CS. Uh-huh. Yeah. Well, that's -- it works both ways.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. And some people take that money and do glorious things with it, helpful things and profitable things, and then some of them take it and don't do good things. So anyway --

Q. So what'd your father do for a living?

CS. My father? Well, he was in the banking business for a long time, and then, he was an alcoholic, became one, and -- but -- and that was not a pleasant situation, but anyway, we got along, but then he -- my grandfather had acquired pasture lands and so forth, so he got in the cattle business. I was really raised in the cattle business. We lived in town, but my summers were spent riding fence, fixing -- keeping the windmills going, and things like that, so I was horseback.

And the ponds in those days were built with teams and slips, a little digging device, and so they weren't very deep, and -- and when it would stop raining, then the water wasn't deep like when you

came along later on with the bulldozers and go down real deep. Well, that water doesn't evaporate like it does when it's very shallow, and so we had to haul a lot of water when it would get to be - uh - [Laughs.]

My -- my grandfather gave his daughter a section of land, and the house was right in the middle of this section of land, and the little school was just a half a mile -- the house was right in the middle of the section, but the little country school was down at the south border, and this fellow's name was Wilber Countryman, was named for my father by his sister, and well, we're countrymen.

The Countryman Rodeo was an annual event around the Fourth of July, and it was -- took place right there on this section of land that I was telling you about. [Laughs.]

The language around the house was -- was a little rough, but anyway, my cousin, when he was -- time to go to school, his -- his mother packed him a lunch, because the other children would have lunches, and she wanted him to be like them, so his first day of school she just sent him off walking a half of a mile down to the little school. Didn't take him, just he knew where it was. At noon, he was back at the house. He'd eaten his lunch that she packed for him at recess. [Laughs.] "Well, why? Well, why did you -- why didn't you stay?" "It just lasted too goddamn long for me." [Laughs.]

That's what -- he was that way all his life, but he had the Countryman Rodeo. His name was Countryman, and he had the Countryman Rodeo. That was a big institution for us around the Fourth of July, was everybody went to the Countryman Rodeo. "It just lasted too goddamn long for me." [Laughs.] That's the way his father talked, and that's the way he talked.

Q. I bet the next day he stayed a little longer.

CS. He probably -- he'd eaten his lunch at -- at -- at break.

Q. Yeah. So you went to high school, and then -- then you went to college?

CS. Well, I was going to go to KU, because that's where all my friends were going, and I thought, you know, because I'd worked -- I'd worked for my grandfather out on the farm in the summertimes, and I got -- so I rode fence for my father, and drove the water truck, and did all these things, and -- but all my friends were going to KU, and I was going to go to KU, and I just got to reasoning about it and thinking, "Why the hell would I go to KU if I'm going to be a farmer or a rancher? Why don't I go over --?" They teach that kind of stuff, so I was just kind of a -- I just decided to go to Kansas State.

Well, then, it didn't work out that way, because I could have -- I could have stayed on the farm. I didn't. After I got out of school, my grandfather had a farm out at Garden City, and so my grandfather and my father said, "Well, we'll just -- whoever's been to college and supposedly learned about farming, so --"

My grandfather had died by that time, my Grandfather Stone, but my father said, "Well, why don't you go out there and take that operation over?" Well, it was 1,300 acres, and the Arkansas River was the north border, and up north of the Arkansas River was this nice loamy soil, and what I had was pretty sandy. Well, I had 1,300 acres there, and I had two -- two sets of irrigation pumps, thirteen-hundred gallon -- thirteen - fifteen-hundred gallons a minute.

I was -- hadn't been there very long, and I was in the McCormick-Deering farm machine place getting a -- getting some parts or something, and hadn't been there very long, and I was getting ready to leave, and this kind of portly fellow, bib overalls and so forth, was walking down -- gray-haired -- walking down, and I started to leave, and this fellow that ran the place said, "Oh, just a minute, Mr. Stone. I want you to meet your -- your neighbor." And so, "He lives -- his land is across the Arkansas River from you," so he came up and introduced me. This fellow said, "Now, where is it your place is?", and so I told him. "Oh. Want to know what your place needs over there?" "I'm sure I do, sir." "Well, it needs to rain every other day and a shower of shit in between." [Laughs.] That's exactly what it needed.

Q. He's right.

CS. But anyway, then, my father died, and so we rented that place out, and I came back here, which everything -- we had -- you

know, we had tenants, and I didn't want to stay out there and farm, frankly, and so I came back here, but then, I wasn't -- I wasn't on one of the places. I wasn't using one of the places. I was -- they were leased, and I would have -- I'd have to terminate a lease, or buy it out, or something, and then take over.

And I'd learned to fly. I got my pilot's license out there at Garden City, and that was interesting -- a little Taylorcraft.

Q. Hmm.

CS. And the lessons were \$5 an hour.

Q. Hmm.

CS. And my father thought I'd lost my mind. My mother thought, "Well, if he wants to do it, he's -- let him do it." My little grandmother would send -- every now and then send me \$5 for another lesson.

Q. [Laughs.] She wanted you to do it. So why'd you decide to do that? Why'd you decide to take flying lessons?

CS. Well, I don't know. I just thought it'd be fun, and I got my pilot's license, but it was just something I wanted to do. So anyway, then I came back here, and see, I'm not farming. I'm not ranching, because the land had all been leased out, so I'm ready -- I'm A1 for the draft. I wasn't going to go out there and terminate somebody's lease and hide from the military service. Hell, I wanted to -- I'd learned to fly, had a pilot's

license. I thought I qualified. Well, I didn't. I didn't pass the physical. It was interesting.

So anyway, I got in the what was called a civilian pilot's training thing they had set up, and that was -- they couldn't -- you know, the Air Force had their own, but they didn't have anywhere near enough instructors, or planes, or anything else, so they farmed out a lot of their learning, and a lot of their teaching, and maintaining the - oh, is --

And a fellow here in El Dorado named Herman White [phonetic spelling] -- at that time, the El Dorado City Airport was where you go down south, and you turn on a blacktop road going east to the airport. The airport was on the west side of the highway, and that's where it was.

And anyway -- anyway, I got involved in that and learned to -- learned to fly all over again -- I mean, got in what was called a Civilian Pilot Training corps, which -- so I just went through the whole learning process again, which was all right, but -- because I didn't -- but it came time, then, where you had to -- you had to either keep on as an aviator, or you had to go into infantry, or -- or something --

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. -- so we were up at Fort Riley. We had to go up there for our physical examinations, and I was 12 pounds overweight, so I wasn't going to get to go to flight school.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. I was going to have to go to the infantry or something like that, and I was sitting around there kind of regretting what was going to happen to me, and this warrant officer came through the -- walking through this area where I was, and he was somebody I knew. He was older than I am, but I knew him from El Dorado, so I got ahold of him, and I said, "Look, look. I -- I can take that off. I don't -- You know, I learned to fly. I would like to stay in it" [indicating]. "I'll take care of it," so he took care of it, got me out of going to the infantry, and got to stay to go on with flight instruction.

Q. Sure.

CS. One of the people that was in the same class that I was didn't pass the mental examination.

Q. Hmm.

CS. He went off to one of the airlines.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. They taught him to fly, and I went off to the military for \$125 a month, and he went off to the school to teach the transport pilots for \$600 a month.

Q. Got to be a little crazy.

CS. But he died - many, many years ago, he was flying for TW -- flying four round-trips to Chicago to Honolulu and making \$100,000 a year, which is nice, except he's been dead for 40 years.

Q. Yeah.

CS. Oh, it's funny, the little twists and turns that life throws your way. But that was so funny, he didn't pass the mental examination, but he went off with Delta -- it was one of the airlines at \$600 a month, while I went off to the Army Air Corps at \$175 a month.

Q. Yeah.

CS. But I'm still here.

Q. Yeah.

CS. That was interesting.

I was on my last mission. A mission may -- a mission sounds -- well, you'd go out and come back. That's a mission, except some of them were so hazardous that you got two credits.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. So I was flying -- I was -- I made a big mistake. I was so -- so apprehensive. I was a pilot, of course, but I was a copilot for the first part of my overseas part, and -- but we had a -- such a good crew that usually the -- one of the big shots would go with us, because we were in the -- we were in the little tiny group that formed our -- our -- our wing or whatever you call it, but we had such a good crew that -- if you flew 50 missions -- and some of your missions were double credit. It was long and hazardous, why that qualified for two credits. The short ones were just one credit.

But anyway, I was -- always figured that -- and I was a copilot for the first part of that, and then our pilot was moved up to

headquarters -- squadron headquarters, and I took over the crew then.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. But I got off of track of what I was going to tell you, but --

Q. Was there a bombing?

CS. Yeah. If you flew -- some of your -- some of your missions were double credit, but you had to have 50 credits, and then you could -- you came home, and then went on. If there was a place where they could use you, then you went on.

Well, I was on -- I was on my -- what would have been my 51st credit, and it was supposed to be a short flight, heavily-loaded. I was leading an eight-plane -- two -- two diamonds of four, and it was going to be my last mission, except I didn't get back. I was leading eight planes, and it was -- the airplane was loaded for a much shorter flight, so I had to get out of formation, and go out, and drop two 500-pound bombs, and then get back into formation, and I had a radar -- a radar bombardier, and it was a close-cover target, and it was Munich, and it was -- had been a very short -- so I had to get rid of some bombs, but I still -- Munich was supposed to be cloud-covered, so I had to get back in, and the trouble was that this bombardier -- I had two bombardiers, but one was a regular bombardier, and the other one was a radar bombardier, because it was cloud-covered.

So anyway, got that done, but in all that maneuvering, I lost an engine.

Q. Hmm.

CS. Now, if I'd been back in the formation just following somebody, I'd have turned around and gone back, but everybody was drop -- supposedly dropping on our plane, because we had this radar bombardier, so I had to keep going, but then I lost an engine.

Then, Munich was the target, and got to go on - and lost another engine from flak, but I still had to keep going, because everybody was dropping on our plane.

So now, I am headed for home, and I lost another engine, and you're just not going to keep a B-24 flying a long time with just one engine. We threw everything. Everybody had gone off and left us of course, because even with two engines, I couldn't keep up with the rest of them, so we started throwing everything overboard, and I had two choices. I had to either go to try to get to Switzerland -- if you got to Switzerland, why, you were there for the rest of the war -- or you could get down to Yugoslavia, and they'd get you back to Italy in a couple of weeks. So I wanted to get home for Christmas, because this was my last mission, and I'd get to go home, so --

But I got down there, lost another engine, and we were down -- got down to -- I started getting them out of the plane -- everybody out of the plane, and I -- it was down to 1,500 feet when I got

out. I didn't break my ankle when I landed, but I sure as hell hurt it, and so I was kind of crippled up for awhile with that, but it fortunately, it wasn't broken. It just bruised pretty bad. It was -- it was chipped, anyway.

Q. Huh.

CS. But anyway - but anyway -- then anyway, so I spent six months as a prisoner of war -- kind of interesting -- 70 miles from Sweden. Stammlager Luftlager Eins (German: translates to Prisoner-of-war Camp, Air Forces Personnel, One].

It was really -- it was one of the most productive five months of my life, because I'm an Episcopalian, and the chaplain at this Stalag One, who moved amongst the compounds being a chaplain --

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. He and I got acquainted, and he -- it came out that -- anyway, he -- it got so crowded that he had to have two people move in with him, and the room was about a fourth the size of my office in there [indicating], and there were three of us in there; the chaplain -- and then, he said -- he was British, of course, and he said, "Find someone who can cook, Stoney, and bring him along," and so one of the other guys in my room -- because we had to cook our own meals. He -- he -- he had a flair for that, so I talked him into moving in with me.

Now, he could circulate amongst the compounds being a chaplain, and so the library, for this part of the camp, was through the fence, and he said, "Now, I can bring you books. You

can't -- you can't go with me, but I can bring you books. What have, what have you been reading?" Well, I told him what I had been reading. He said, "Well -- hmmm," he said, "that will never do. Hereafter, I shall select your reading for you." So for the next five months, I had a short course in really fine British novels. That was one of the most interesting things.

Q. Wow.

CS. He's still alive. I keep in touch with him. He doesn't know that -- he's not aware enough -- awake enough during the day that -- he probably realizes that I've sent a letter to his wife, and she's -- he probably understands. I don't know, but he's -- he's -- he was older than I am, so he's probably 100.

Q. Hmm.

CS. But that was a -- that was -- cause I read books that I wouldn't have read normally, because he just brought them to me and shoved them down my throat.

Q. You have -- I know you have a passion for reading --

CS. Yeah.

Q. -- and -- and you've shared that with many. Steve Thunk  
[phonetic spelling] --

CS. Yes.

Q. -- has mentioned that at another time. Do you think that's where that came from, was that experience?

CS. No, no, no, no.

Q. Was it before that?

CS. Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

Q. Tell me about that. How did you develop that?

CS. I don't know, just that my mother and father were real readers. They just always had books going, and so I just -- it came by naturally, I guess. I was surrounded by it. They both always had books going.

My mother was -- she was on the library board for a few years, and she was on the school board. But anyway --

Q. What do, what do you find in books that fascinate you even today?

CS. I don't read like I did. I don't. I just -- my eyes just don't --

Q. Sure.

CS. -- don't hold up. I don't know. I just -- I read rapidly, and just anything that interests me, I read it. I don't retain a lot. I just enjoy -- enjoy it.

Q. I don't want to skip over your time at Butler. After high school, you -- did you go there for a couple years?

CS. No, no. I took classes as a senior. Most of my classes were in McKinley Grade School, which was junior college. No, most of my senior year was -- was college courses.

Q. Okay. And those were through Butler?

CS. Well, it was El Dorado Junior College in those days.

Q. Oh, okay.

CS. Uh-huh. It was in the McKinley -- their headquarters was in the McKinley Grade School. They tore down the high school. The class of '35 was the last class in the old high school. It was a -- oh, there are pictures of it. It was kind of a classic beautiful building in its time. When it was first built, it was the pride of El Dorado, but of course, all that faded, as the new building techniques came along and so forth.

Q. So the junior high that's there now, was that, that the high school at first?

CS. Well, the junior high would have been in -- well -- well, the high school -- yes. The high school was behind -- take the front part of what is now the junior high and visualize that north of that was the old high school. And so, I was in the last class of that, then they tore it down and built what you see now, which, of course, is the junior high as opposed to being the high school. But then, the -- the -- the corner -- the corner there between the high school and the -- just before you get to, to Denver Street, was a little filling station, which was a City Service station, but when I was in school, it was, it was a hangout for hamburgers and things like that. It was, it was a filling station which they had abandoned to get a larger area, and a fellow took it over, and made a hamburger stand out of it, a very popular place -- had to drive in. You could drive up, and had the girls that come out and wait on your car.

Anyway --

Q. Your support of Butler has not ceased since -- well, gosh -- for a long time I would imagine.

CS. Well, my mother was on the school board when the -- when the community college was -- when the El Dorado Junior College was in its formative stages, and some peculiar set of circumstances, I guess, I just have kind of kept up that interest and tried to help.

Q. What is it about Butler now -- what is it that continues to -- that you continue to want to support it? What, what --?

CS. Jackie Vietti, very simple. I would have supported it anyway, but she has brought such vigor, and such life, and such expansion to that whole thing. That's probably the -- that's probably one of the best junior colleges in the United States, and all because of her.

Q. I agree.

CS. She's been here 16-18 years, and it's just absolutely mushroomed, not only mushroomed as far as attendance and students is concerned, but as far as the quality. She's -- she's a remarkable person, and she's led that thing -- well, they have 80 courses out there. They prepare you for 80 full-time useful wonderful occupations in two years. And the nursing program out there is probably one of the best in the United States of America for -- for -- probably, and that's just because one physician here just made it a point to make sure that -- they

had -- the Allen Memorial Hospital had a training course, which they were having troubles supporting it financially, and so this doctor took over and just crammed it down our throats and into the community college, and so now, turn out 80 a year registered nurses, two classes of 40. Wonderful, just wonderful.

But Jackie Vietti has -- has been the spark that ignited all the rest of this expansion. You've been down to Andover. That's sensational down there.

Q. Yeah.

CS. And it, but -- it's all such common sense. There's no hooray about it. It's a good solid place.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. I just think it's wonderful. But she's -- she's been the spark.

Q. Sure. Sure. What has the college -- what's the college give back to the community besides employment, you know, a lot of people that work there?

CS. Oh, spirit. Spirit. It's -- it's -- it's a mini-version of Wichita State and Wichita. Something to -- well, look at their theatre group. Look at that, that section. The -- the Ag school is finally getting to get a larger share of attention and so forth. That's been kind of neglected. I don't -- just -- it just wasn't in Jackie's --

Q. Yeah, vision.

CS. -- but she was interested in it. It's, it's been awfully good, but -- but it's beginning to get the attention that it deserves

now, I think. But of course, they have always had a -- they've had good sports. They have done a good job with their athletic men. They haven't gone ape over it. They didn't. It's -- it's just a really good -- good department. I mean, they keep it that way.

Q. Well, you're being honored in a few weeks.

CS. Yeah, I don't understand exactly what all this is, but --

Q. Well, as an entrepreneur.

CS. Well, I don't really think I belong in that classification at all, but --

Q. How would you -- how would you define that? How do you define an entrepreneur? What is an entrepreneur to you?

CS. Well, an entrepreneur is somebody like Henry Ford who goes out and starts building automobiles or somebody --. Well, you've got entrepreneurs in Wichita, because you have the aircraft industry, because of one guy who was in the oil business, and he was a nut about aviation, and he kept pushing, and pushing, and pushing, and there were these three guys in Wichita all working together in the airplane business; Cessna, and Beech, and I never can call that other guy's name. It started with a G, I think. But then, of course, they -- because he kept after them, he kept pushing and pushing, and he was just a nut about flying, and he really was responsible for them staying there together even though they each went their -- their different ways.

They were all in the same -- in the same company at the, in the beginning, and then they split up, but they didn't leave, because there was -- hell, there weren't places in the United States that built airplanes. Where were they going to go? They just borrowed some of the guys from the other guy, and then people just grew like Topsy.

I can't think of that guy's name. I've reached the point in my life where names just simply don't surface with me when I want them to, but I wish I could think of his name, because he kept them -- he kept them together and kept pushing on them. And I could look that up. I think I could find it maybe in my files in there, but he was the reason that it stayed and grew, just because he kept pushing.

He was a pretty severe alcoholic, I think, toward the end, but they didn't leave, because where are you going to go? Just rob a few -- talk a few employees into coming to work for you, and you have a workforce.

Q. Yeah.

CS. It's remarkable. It's a remarkable thing, but it was all due to that one guy who was a nut. He was in the oil business, but he was a nut about flying.

Q. Hmm. Did you ever get a chance to meet any of those guys? Have you ever met Clyde Cessna or Walter Beech?

CS. Well, I met them. They wouldn't -- just because I happen to be in a group, they wouldn't have known -- wouldn't have remembered

my name. I've known some of the -- I've had some friends that were in various stages of the management, and so forth. One of my particular friends wrote all of the president's speeches for him. [Laughs.] Boy, it was just a blessing -- it was just a blessing that that fellow in the oil business --

Q. Sure.

CS. --Was -- was -- loved flying so much that it got started. They wouldn't have -- if it hadn't been for him, it couldn't -- it couldn't have coalesced as it did, I think. I don't know that much about it. I wasn't in on it, but I just watched it all these years, and it was very -- well, it was just very interesting that because of these little particular circumstances that they all stayed instead of drifting off to the west coast or someplace like that. And we have good flying conditions here most of the time. Plenty -- no mountains to run into and things like that.

Q. Yeah.

CS. And it's just -- it's very, very fortunate that this fellow in the oil business was -- was -- was able to coalesce enough of them that once -- once you're -- once you have people that can -- know how to build an airplane or see how it's done and are looking for a better job, well, here's a guy that wants somebody that knows, that can help my company get started, and it kind of builds on itself.

Q. Yeah. So you've been in the banking business for a long time.

CS. Yeah. Do you want to know how I got in the banking --?

Q. Yeah. How'd you get started in that?

CS. I'll tell you.

Here I am, I get out of the -- I get out of the United States Army Air Corps and looking for something to do, and a fellow that lived just two houses north of me, where I grew up, was running the Citizens State Bank over there, which is now INTRUST. And here I am, I'm home, and my father-in-law banked at the Citizens State Bank. My family banked at the El Dorado National.

Now, I could have gone into the farming business, but I would had to have canceled somebody's lease in order to take over, and I -- I didn't -- frankly, I wasn't that excited about farming.

My -- if I'd done anything, I could have gotten into the cattle business, but I watched my father, and sometimes he made a lot of money, because he operated on a large scale, but then, the next day, it was damn near getting wiped out. I didn't -- there are ways to protect yourself, but that wasn't the way he played, and I just -- I didn't -- that's not in my, my -- gambling instincts are not part of my nature.

Well, anyway, I had all this training in agriculture and was looking for something to do, and my father-in-law banked at the Citizens State Bank, and this fellow that was running the bank, I grew up just two houses down the street from him, and he asked my

father-in-law what I was doing. He said, "I don't know."

"Well," he said, "why don't you ask him to come in and see me?"

Now, let's go back before the war. You had three banks in El Dorado, and one of them was pretty small, the Walnut Valley. It was one-third the size of the Citizens State and one-fourth the size of the El Dorado National. But the people that owned those banks, the two big ones, their money - their, the basis for their money was the oil business, and I had -- I had gone to them.

We had stock in one of the banks, and after my father died, I'd gone to one of the shareholder's meetings, because I was -- I was trying to help with the, with the people that -- the tenants that we had on our land that were in the farming business -- in the livestock business, and I just -- I went to the board meeting, and they let me in, didn't kick me out. Well, they couldn't kick me out, but they weren't much interested in anything other than just being nominally polite.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. And mentioned that I thought it -- that there was -- there was a lot of business that could be helped by taking, taking more interest in the, in the cattle business. This is too damn long a story. But anyway, after I got back from the war, this almost-neighbor had said to my father-in-law, who banked with him, "What's he going to do?" He said, "I don't know." "Well, ask him to come see me."

Well, I had in my mind put together a program that I was going to try to get the El Dorado National Bank, where my father had stock and so forth, to do more in the cattle business and so forth. Well, hell, they -- they didn't even listen to me. They just asked me to -- they were polite enough to let me come to the meeting, but they weren't going to spend any time with me. But anyway, this fellow who's grown up with -- I mean, neighbors, almost, two houses, had me ask -- ask -- told my father-in-law, "Why don't you have Clifford stop in and visit with me sometime," so I went over to visit with him, and he wanted to start doing more in the agricultural lending business and offered me a job. And so, I get it, and so now I'm out soliciting business, and counting cattle where we had loans, and trying to find more of that, and so forth, and -- and he left, and went to Wichita to be a president of one of the banks over there, and wanted me to go with him.

Well, I didn't want to go to Wichita, and my mother and my grandmother were here, and my wife was from El Dorado. Things that -- I just didn't want to go over there, and so I stayed. Well, all of a sudden, I wasn't -- I wasn't out -- I wasn't out soliciting business, counting cattle, and trying to get farm business, I was -- had to work as one of the tellers and just, you know, sweep out, because I was the junior member, and clean off the sidewalk when it got icy, and things like that.

And then -- and then, they let me buy some stock and so forth, and then they made me junior officer and so forth, but -- and then, that guy left, and all of a sudden, I wasn't out soliciting business, I was being a teller and a bookkeeper and so forth, because this fellow who took over as the managing officer didn't have any use for somebody that wasn't just a teller, a bookkeeper.

Q. Right. Yeah.

CS. So anyway -- anyway -- anyway, I -- they made me a director and an officer, junior officer, and so forth, but it's too long of a story to go into it.

I had two brothers-in-law, and we formed a little finance company. One of them's father had one up in Kansas City, and my other brother-in-law was an attorney, and so we just formed a little -- because they didn't -- they didn't think over there that you had to borrow money to have a normal meal. You didn't have any business having a normal meal. I mean, that just wasn't there. And we formed a little finance company, the three of us. Well, there were four of us and -

[Video cuts out online from 1:02:42 to 1:02:44. Part 2 of DVD begins]

CS. -- the guys ran it. My brother-in-law in Kansas City had a -- his father -- he and his father had a finance company,

automobile finance, so he knew all about how to do it and so forth, and the other brother-in-law was an attorney, so he could do all the legal part, and this other fellow didn't have a job, but -- or if he had one, he didn't like it as well, and he was very capable and so forth.

Anyway, the four of us formed this little -- Prairie Finance was the name of it, because these two big banks -- the little bank, the Walnut Valley, the one I ended up with -- but the El Dorado National and the Citizen State, hell, they didn't care anything about financing tin lizzies and things like that. They wanted to finance people in the oil business, in the cattle business, and stuff like that, big deals, big deals.

Well, that was just -- just the right spot for a little finance company, so we formed -- had a good manager, and bookkeeper, and things like that, and, and we had a lot of fun with that. That was good, because it gave us a chance to go to the finance company annual conventions, and that was a good way to go and charge off some of the expenses, [laughs] and learn more about the business, and so forth, and we just did that as relatives, but business associates, and we did a good job. We finally sold it. Anyway, I don't know where I was going with that.

Q. Well, how did you go from there to getting into the banking business per se?

CS. Oh, okay. So -- so I was - I'd left the Citizen State, and I -- we had this insurance company that was part of our finance

company, and so I was selling insurance and trying to sell investments and so forth, and I was a director of the bank, and this guy from Wichita who sold bonds to the banks and so forth brought up the subject that I really could not be a director of the bank and be doing this. That was verboten [forbidden], and nobody had said that was before. I guess we didn't think about it, but anyway, so I quit.

A fellow came to town and bought the control of the Walnut Valley State Bank, which was a little bank. It burned. The building burned. It was over next to that photographer studio over there on Main Street, South Main. The next building was where the Walnut Valley State Bank was.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. He came to town and bought the control of it, and he had a good theory. He had a bank up in Kan. -- in the outside of the metropolitan Kansas City area, but close enough that it was a good market, and he had a 35-year-old son who was in the bank with him. He owned it. He was really a horse trader, but he got into this bank, and they made a success of it, and his son, 35-years-old, and -- and nobody knew -- neither one of the other banks knew that the Walnut Valley State Bank was for sale -- the control of it -- just the control, but he was -- he was -- sold -- he was a horse trader and auctioneer --

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. -- and he had this bank, but he found out about it, came in, and bought -- bought the control of it, and he had a theory. Either he and his wife would move to El Dorado and run the bank and his son and his wife would take over the bank up in the Kansas City area, or the reverse would do. Overlooked one little tiny detail. Neither one of those wives was about to move to El Dorado, Kansas. So the father would come down. He'd get -- he'd get to El Dorado about noon on Monday, and worked, and had a -- they had a suite over at the El Dorado Hotel, and then he'd go back to Kansas City, and his son would come down the next week and do the same thing, and so they had this worked out, but theory was that one of their wives would -- they'd come to El Dorado. Well, neither one of those women was about to move to El Dorado, Kansas, so he came down to see me.

I was selling insurance at this finance company that we had, and trying to sell some investments, and so forth, and not really doing much good, but I -- anyway, I was there. He came down to see me and wanted me to go to work for him, and I said, "I'm not ever going back in the banking business if I don't have control." "Well, sorry to hear that. Sorry to hear that. That's too bad." And it wasn't two weeks until he came down and says, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll sell you my deal."

Well, I'd gotten really acquainted with one of the fellows that called on the Citizen State Bank where I had worked who was a fieldman for Commerce Bank up in Kansas City. That was their

headquarters in those days. It's moved to St. Louis now, but I'd gotten really acquainted with him, and so I was able to arrange the financing with my mother's help, her signature too, but anyway, I bought him out.

Q. Hmm.

CS. So then -- it's long -- too long of a story, but I had a chance then to buy the minority interest out, so I ended up with 95 percent of it.

Q. So what do you think it was about you that impressed him that he should sell the bank to you? What was it?

CS. Well, he wanted to sell it to somebody, and --

Q. Yeah, but there was something about you --

CS. No --

Q. -- that he thought must have been attractive.

CS. No, I don't have any idea, he just, just that he knew I'd worked in the bank, and, and he knew that much, and he wanted me to come work for him, and, and he didn't have any idea whether I could raise the money or not, but at least he gave me a chance, and my mother and I -- my mother signed the note with me with Commerce Bank, because I had dealt with the field people when I worked in the bank at the Citizen State, so they were the only ones that I -- knew where I maybe could borrow the money to buy a controlling interest.

Q. Huh.

CS. Ended up -- ended up getting about 98 percent of it, so --

Q. So what -- what personal skills do you think you bring to work every day, to the people around you? What sort of -- what sort of skills -- what sort of characteristics do you think you possess?

CS. The ability to understand that I didn't know it all, that I needed the proper kind of help, and had gotten acquainted with a -- a fellow in Wichita who had as a -- had worked for a big utility company and had duty -- had responsibility for staff -- staffing and selecting staff, employees, and who had gotten into the -- into a fringe business of counseling people how to hire people, what to look for, and had developed a series of -- let's call them aptitude tests, cause you have somebody who is very intelligent, and so forth, and likes to deal with people, and so forth, well, put them at a teller's window.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. You find somebody who dreads that daily contact with -- with all these different personalities, and -- but loves to do all the finger-work and it takes to balance the books and do all that stuff, see, and so he developed a whole aptitude testing, so you don't -- a person wants a job. Well, they're going to try to make sure that their interests fit what you want. Well, they may, they may not, so he developed this -- this whole procedure for how you find out. You give them these tests, and you find out where their interests are and where their ability -- where they are comfortable, and they can enjoy it, and so that's -- I

had gotten acquainted with these people, and so when -- then when I had a chance to buy the control of the little Walnut Valley, then I immediately started using them to help me when I wanted to hire staff to make sure that the person is doing what they enjoy.

Q. Mm-hmm. So you think your ability to kind of read people and figure out --

CS. Well, no. I won't say -- I won't say I read them, but I -- I had them tested --

Q. Uh-huh.

CS. -- for the aptitude in the area that I wanted, because that's what this fellow had done was generate these tests -- which --

Q. Sure.

CS. -- showed you. And I think we had -- I think we had one failure, but most of the time we could get the person and the job matched up with their -- with their likes and dislikes.

Q. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

CS. So you're not -- you just dread to have to deal with people, well, you don't want them at a teller's window for God's sake.

Q. Sure.

CS. But in a -- in a -- some other part -- oh, and it worked so well. I think out of all the people that -- that I hired through the years, all knew that they had to take this test. And we had one failure maybe, maybe two, but it certainly -- it

gave us the feeling that we weren't putting somebody at a teller window who really just doesn't like to deal with the people.

Q. Right. What do you owe -- you've had some success. You've had a lot of success in business over the years. What do you owe to that? What do you think caused that, you know? You mentioned --

CS. Luck.

Q. Luck.

CS. Luck. No, mainly, it was the ability to generate teamwork - to have --and to have people doing what they really enjoy. Now, if you have somebody who's a wiz at books, and figures, and things like that, but just doesn't like to deal with people, well, you don't want to make a loan officer out of them, [laughs] but you find somebody that has the right personality, and you use these.

These aptitude tests worked like a charm for me. I never hired anybody without one, and I probably had one or two failures out of --

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. -- several hundred things, but -- but I want -- I want the person to be doing something that they enjoy doing.

Q. Hmm. Makes sense. Do you have -- do you have heroes in your life?

CS. Hmm?

Q. Have there been people that have been heroes to you over your life?

CS. Yes, yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah.

Q. Does somebody stand out?

CS. Well, my -- one of my brothers-in-law, he's just absolutely marvelous. We were in business together and does -- and -- but he was so -- so penetratingly intelligent, and matter of fact, and yet had a wonderful marvelous sense of humor. That's one, particularly.

And the other brother-in-law had all the smarts you can imagine, and was great to work with, and our little finance company that we put together was a success.

[Video skips from 1:16:14 to 1:16:16]

-- Until we just stumbled into this relationship with this fellow who had put this hiring methodology to good use.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. And it really worked very well. I suppose we had one or two failures, but most the time, we had people in -- in regimens that they were comfortable -- that they enjoyed --

Q. Yeah, yeah. Hmm.

CS. -- and we didn't have them doing something that they were uneasy about.

Q. Sure, sure. Have there been any -- oh, people that you might consider to be entrepreneurial that might be heroes to you? You know, people that have been in the industry, maybe you've never met, that you might think --

CS. Well, of course that's -- the winner right there is -- is -- what's his name? John -- president of Ford Motor Company.

Q. Oh.

CS. Married to my wife's niece.

Q. Mulally?

CS. Mulally, John. He's -- he's -- he's -- he's -- he's the classic. He is the classic. He is so smooth, and so capable, and so well-organized --

Q. And --

CS. -- and so damn nice.

Q. And when he was here, he mentioned you.

CS. Oh, well --

Q. Yeah. You hosted his --

CS. Well, see -- see, here -- here he's marrying this girl whose father is an attorney.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Her brother is an attorney. Her other brother is an attorney. Her other brother has a law degree but doesn't practice. Marrying an aircraft worker, \$1,200 a month. So. [Laughs]

Q. Yeah.

CS. So -- so this is all going on. I don't want you to record this. This is all going on, and nothing is happening at headquarters. Oh, Sally says, "Well, this is ridiculous. If they aren't going to -- if they aren't going to welcome me -- welcome him into the family, we will," so we had a bachelor party for him. The rest of the family, "He wasn't an attorney. What the hell is he doing in the family? An aircraft worker, for God's sake. [Laughs.] Look at him."

Q. Exactly. That's funny.

CS. He's never forgotten that. He's never forgotten that either.

Q. Talk about years ago.

CS. He's just one of the nicest guys that ever walked the face of the Earth. He's just, he's just wonderful.

Q. Yeah. So how would you like to be remembered, in you know, 20 years from now, 30 years from now? How do you think you'd be remembered?

CS. Well, no. No, there won't be anybody around. There won't be anybody around.

Q. Oh, but your college will be.

CS. No, no.

Q. The things you've done at school -- at the college will --

CS. No, no, no, no, no, no. Hmm-mm. Nope. Everything - everything's wiped clean. Isn't anybody left to even think about it. I can already see that. Been out of circulation for so long now already. Hmm-mm.

- Q. I wouldn't be too quick to judge that. I think you'll be remembered.
- CS. Well, no, no, no. Hmm-mm. No.
- Q. Well, you've done a lot for the school.
- CS. Well, I hope I've helped a little bit.
- Q. Yeah, you have. What are some passions -- besides reading, and books, and that kind of thing, what are some other -- what are some other passions of yours?
- CS. Well, travel when I could -- when I could, when we could take time --
- Q. Mm-hmm.
- CS. -- but books, and my family, and traveling is about all. I don't have anything else. I -- I have a passion for books. I can't read like I used to, because my eyes just don't hold up --
- Q. Right.
- CS. -- but -- and the theatre. I had, I had a chance to go to Hollywood for a screen test.
- Q. Huh.
- CS. I was at Kansas State, and the guy who, who came to Kansas State from Wisconsin was the fellow who discovered Don Ameche. He was -- he had it all arranged for me to go to a screen test out in Hollywood. What in the hell? Am I? You know, I'm going to be in the cattle business and a farmer. I'm sure it would be

interesting, but why? So I turned it down. I wouldn't have been any good at it.

Q. Well, likewise, I'm sure over the years you've had a chance to go -- as a successful banker here, you could have gone other places. I'm sure there were opportunities to do that. What was it about El Dorado?

CS. Well, it was home. It was home. It was just home. I could have gone to Wichita with -- when the CEO that hired me over at Commerce - he wanted me -- over at Citizen State, he wanted me to go with him, but my mother and grandmother were here, and I knew I wasn't -- they were both widows, and anyway, I just was too chicken. I just wanted to be under -- I just didn't -- I just didn't want to be a fish out of water. I'm comfortable with what I'm doing.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. I would not be comfortable playing the politics you have to play in the big yard. I just -- I don't operate that way. It's just not my nature --

Q. Yeah.

CS. -- and I don't want to have to be in that. I'd be a fish out of water, and I just -- I'm just not interested. I can't play that game.

Q. Sure.

CS. I never have, and I never will. I just -- you try to be everything to everybody, and you get your hands full.

Q. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, but there has to be -- I know there's something besides family being here -- and home is important, but I know there's things about El Dorado that you really love and has kept you here all these years -- 90 years or so.

CS. Well, it's a -- that's kind of a one-way street, I think. I'm more interested in trying to get some of these things done than they are interested in getting them done.

Q. Where do you see -- you know, you have a certain love for the community college. Where do you see that college 20 years from now in your crystal ball? How do you --? What vision do you have?

CS. Well, if they are -- they better be looking for a crystal ball that comes up with somebody like Jackie Vietti. Ain't many of them around. Judas priest. What -- what charm, what personality, what desire. Boy --

Q. Yeah, she embodies --

CS. Oh, she's just a master.

Q. Yeah.

CS. And it's all -- isn't any of it put on. It's all genuine, and that's what makes it so effective.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. She's -- she's just a marvel. That's just all there is to it.

Q. Do you see in that crystal ball 20 years from now the college still being in the forefront of education at least in this region?

CS. That's in the lap of the gods. There isn't anybody that preceded her that had her set of skills, and interests, aptitude, whatever you want to call them. There wasn't anybody that brought it all together; vision, intelligence, balance, all those -- all those little intangibles that make it real. We had effective people before, but nobody with her vision, her ability to coalesce, and -- and put it together. It's just such an amazing little school. It really is probably one of the best. It's -- it has to be in the top one percent of community colleges in the United States, and it's all because of her. Believe me.

Q. I may be wrong, but when you talk about your finance company and your -- your time here at the bank, you've got to be a little bit of an entrepreneur to --

CS. Well --

Q. Especially the finance company. There's four guys. You're kind of going up against the big boys.

CS. Oh, yeah, we were.

Q. So -- so kind of tell me a little bit about that -- you know, that culture -- that atmosphere that you guys developed, kind of, entrepreneurial.

CS. Hunger. Hunger. Just wanted to make some money. [Laughs.]

Q. Oh, but more than that.

CS. Well, well. It was -- it was fun. It was fun. It was filling a niche, and it was just fun to -- to see that if you're

interested in people, and you like to help them -- you know, I saw this attitude, "You want to borrow money for a car? Hmm. Really?"

Q. Yeah. The way you describe Dr. Vietti, desire, aptitude, those kinds of things, I would guess you guys had that very same thing, especially in the finance company days.

CS. Well, they had it, I didn't. I was just along for the ride. No, I'm not -- I'm not a finished artist, you know. I can tell you what I like, but I can't tell you -- I can't tell you how to paint it, or carve it, or things like that. I don't know. I'm just lucky.

Q. Speaking of art, you did mention you have given that -- a lot of those to the college, The Reader.

CS. Yeah, that's nice.

Q. That was a gift of yours.

CS. Yeah. Well, I haven't done anything. I've helped with some of those things. All right. I'll admit that, but The Reader, to me, was something that the college should have.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Here's a school teacher who has this hobby, and if you were to go down and go into his pretty good-sized barn, it's filled with the things that he made.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Terrific artistry, terrific. And just a hobby, but he's so good. He's so good. I don't -- I haven't seen him lately, but

that sunflower in there [motions] is a perfect illustration of what he could do. Oh, God. Some of his stuff is just marvelous. He doesn't -- he doesn't like to sell it. He wants for his children to sell them, and they all sell. Everything he has is good.

Q. Have you supported the arts in town? I mean, I notice there's a lot of streetscapes, and statues, and stuff. Is that something you've also supported?

CS. Oh, if they ask me, I suppose, yes. I haven't led the charge on any of it. I -- I'm not -- I'm not good at things like that. You have to -- like the historical society --

Q. Oh, that building?

CS. Well, the whole thing, getting it there. See, if you look to the east and look to the west, you'll see what the terrain was like.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. They had to all get that filled, and that was all volunteer. I furnished the dirt. Mark Myers [phonetic spelling] marshalled the trucks. The fellow that was building the Bluestem Dam put his loader down there to load the trucks. It was all volunteer, the whole damn thing. It'd still be down there. You can see where the terrain -- that's all filled. That whole damn thing's filled.

Q. Hmm. Have there been other civic things that you've contributed to over the years that you recall?

CS. Oh, I don't know. Not particularly, I guess.

Q. I hear your name all the time, you know. Saw your picture in the paper not long ago at some -- well, Wichita -- some civic thing. I think Dr. Vietti was there.

CS. Well, I've -- I've -- it's -- it's -- I'll just be very candid about it. It has been very much easier for me to support things in Wichita than it has to put things together in El Dorado.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. I've helped a lot. I've helped Wichita Symphony, the Wichita Art Museum, the Wichita Center for the Arts, the Exploration Place. I've done a lot for them, because I'm just -- I'm just one of the -- I'm just one of the crowd.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Here, there's a certain amount of resentment anytime you start taking too much -- doing too much.

Q. Wow. That's hard to believe. [laughs.]

CS. Well, no. No, it's true.

Q. I'm sure it's true, but --

CS. Yeah, it's true. It's true. I have to be careful about that.

Q. Hmm. I figured anytime anybody was giving people help, they'd gladly accept it.

CS. Help, yes.

Q. Well, in monetary ways.

CS. Help, yes, but don't get too pushy.

Q. Hmm.

CS. We have been so fortunate with that hospital to have somebody like him head of it for 23 years. God, what a gorgeous job he's done. Oh.

Q. Oh, yeah. The remodeling is --

CS. Well, it's just the whole thing is so --

Q. Yeah.

CS. -- so well done and so -- well -- but he's -- he's -- he's done it just right. He's always in the background.

Q. Mm-hmm.

CS. Yeah. No, in a small town, you have to be awfully careful about that.

Q. Is that the way you like to be, kind of in the background?

CS. Oh, yes. Mm-hmm, yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Q. Helping, but not necessarily visible.

CS. That's right, yeah. Yeah, that's been important. We have had some -- we have had in the past some very visible people who didn't mean it.

Q. Hmm. Do you think that's what people think with the things that you do? Do you think that's -- do you think they think that or not? I can't believe they would, but --

CS. Well, I don't know. I don't -- I don't -- I don't -- I don't have, I don't even think about that. I just think that I don't want to be -- I don't want to be pushing.

Q. Right.

CS. I'll be glad to help, but I don't want to be -- I just don't want to be there.

Q. Making a name for yourself or any of that.

CS. Huh-uh. No. I'll be glad to help, but I don't want to --

Q. Sure. You don't want your name on a building.

CS. Well, I just don't -- you have to be too many people to too many people.

Q. Right.

CS. I don't have time for that, you know. If I can help you, okay. If you don't want me to, okay. I got things to do.

Q. Yeah. You don't want your name on a building somewhere; right?

CS. Huh-uh. No, no.

Q. Not going to see your name on a building at Butler?

CS. No, no, no. I got to be careful about that. But Jackie -- you can charge it up to Jackie. Judas priest. What a -- what a gal.

Q. I would think she's somewhat of an entrepreneur.

CS. Yeah, she is. Mm-hmm, she is. She's just wonderful. Well --

Q. Very good.

CS. -- you have things to do, and I do too.

Q. Yes. I thank you very much.

[END]