Interviewee	Theodore Dreier and Barbara Dreier
Interviewer	Mary Emma Harris
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[BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW. BEGINNING OF TRANSCRIPT.]

BLD: – because one doesn't know what one's ancestors were really like, but I had a very long-lived grandmother, Mary Hillard Loines, who was a Unitarian. And that was as good as being a Communist in her day. She was born in 1844. Her mother Harriet Low Hillard had a – was born in Salem, Mass. and had the intelligence to get a doctor to advise a long sea voyage, and she went out to China in 1829 with her aunt and uncle, William Low, I think his name was. He was a clipper ship captain. [TD correction: William H. Low, Sr. was a merchant, not a captain. Charles Porter Low, Harriet Low's younger brother, was a captain], and they were running tea fast for the good quick market in those days, took sixty-odd days to get there. She stayed there five years and kept a diary, which is the only document now in the Smithsonian, I think, that isn't a bill-of-lading from that time. And they were kept by the Emperor on a small island, a very plush part of an acre, I think it was, in Macao. And so she was – and she was a Unitarian, I believe, or maybe she was Episcopalian still, and grandmother's generation got Unitarian. They all were sort of un-regular Christians, so to speak. I think the Church of England was being rebelled against in those days, and they felt like radicals. They were able to observe

more of the scene, rather than comply with it, and so my conservative Quaker grandfather married this – my father's father and mother this is – married this Unitarian, little bitty Woman's Lib Suffragette, who horrified him by going out West alone to Carrie Chapman Catt or Alice Stone Blackwell's lectures and things for all her life in Consumer's League and Woman's Vote, and everything. And they read him out of meeting for marrying a radical girl like her, but then they got to know her and they liked her better than him and invited them back. And he wouldn't go. And so – but they called each other Thee and Thou and Thy all their life. And I remember them as a non-conforming but basically conservative calm living group. And they brought up my father, their oldest child, their only son, and three cantankerous daughters whom they kept more or less at home. The youngest finally married, but the other two – one did gardens and one did astronomy and agriculture.

MEH: Um-hm. The ones who did –

BLD: And those two, the two youngest, are still alive.

MEH: The one who did gardens was the one who was at Brooklyn Botanical Gardens?

BLD: Yes. She was on the Board there for forty-two years, and she was extremely able to teach about gardening. And she did children's gardens all over northern New York State. And they established a children's garden department of the Botanical Gardens – still going, I think. City children given plots and taught to plant and harvest and care for plants. But she was a very lovely, gentle, and beautiful woman. And she was Christian Scientist. Her youngest sister had

gotten her into that. And they defied germs, and kept out of bed, and felt superior to others for doing so all their lives, and thought that if everybody thought straight, they didn't have to accept sprained ankles or knocked knees, or hard luck, or accidents, or anything, which was – kept you from emptying the medicine cabinets, and kept you in circulation where you were telling others that they ought to be doing this too. I never listened with very much composure to their thoughts, but you understood somehow that what you could think did effect how you physically operated. Although, I thought the arguments were unnecessary. You don't have to say, "The chair doesn't exist, but please sit down." You just have to say, "You don't have to think of it that way.” or whatever. So I – and my mother defied the Episcopal Church and got interested in the East at a very early date. Her form of it, after my father died, took – She got interested in the young group of Theosophists, who were not dividing the world into good and evil so much as noticing what it was like. And it was more an expanding circle of awarenesses rather than sheep and goats you have to be thinking of. She was a remarkable and able woman, my mother, as far as knowing what was going on inside of people was concerned – far more subtle than my father's family in every way, and way ahead of her time as far as reducing anxiety in children was concerned. She brought – My father died when I was fifteen, and she brought us up and was a widow for thirty-five years – my sister and – I have a five years younger sister – until I met Ted at nineteen. And we somehow, both of us thought that what hadn't been done to us was what we'd better do. And that made it easy to think that what kind of education we

couldn't get or didn't do at Rollins could quite easily be done if we didn't have outside control. And we thought up an institution where the outside advice was possible, but not control. So we wouldn't have trustees calling the tune from a distance for financial reasons, but we would have a faculty – managed group insofar as we had insight enough to manage ourselves, and if, it might work. And insofar as we did, it did work. And when we couldn't, it didn't.

MEH: You said you went to Bryn Mawr.

BLD: I went to Bryn Mawr because my two aunts had gone to Bryn Mawr and because it was very hard to get into and considered very high standard. And they thought I was bright enough. And I didn't have a father at that point, who perhaps would have encouraged me to use a perfectly good mind a little more. They tended at colleges to use what you could do already rather than develop what you couldn't do yet – another reason why we emphasized our kind of college later, our kind of training later. But I was very able physically and played on all the teams. And I was very able to get confidence in my fellows, I think.

TD: You were on the basketball team, and you even played on the hockey team.

BLD: And I could – you know, I could be a class president without thinking too well of myself on account of it, and stuff. So I mean, I could help head up energies that weren't oppressive, and liked doing that, but felt I'd done enough of it in college and rather was intrigued –

TD: Tell her about the Christian Association.

BLD: I told her. We abolished that.

MEH: You told me earlier, so tell me again.

BLD: Well, one finally got to be head of something when one got to be a junior, I guess. I was head of the Christian Association, which was the fourth in rank in esteem, I think, of the self-government. Most people were more interested in the Undergraduate Association, which managed things, and so on. But the Christian Association was limping along. And I hadn't had any church training. And I just looked at what it was and wasn't doing and thought if we only called it something else, more people could participate. And, actually, by their deeds you could know them. And there were no deeds and nobody came to chapel. And, in other words, it was an obsolete way of thinking about insight or gaining more insight. So we switched it into – we called it the Bryn Mawr League, which was an evasion of title, really, which it's still called. And it's a social service organization with musical services and quiet sittings. It was a Quaker college originally, and no music was allowed. We now could have good music.

TD: This was in 1927.

BLD: And it rallied what energies wanted to be outgoing in social servicing. And we had – we ran a school for the black maids that was good. And we ran a school for the blind. And we ran a day camp in the summers. We raised money for that. And we kind of kept track of our fellow members. And it wasn't all that great, but it enormously increased the capacity of this silly thing to be of use in the college we thought. And there were a great many able Orthodox Jewish and, I suppose, other faiths – people more church trained than I – who could sit

quietly somewhere or listen to a good lecture or speaker without feeling that they belonged to a sect or that the Christians, as they were wont to be, were more holy than the other people. And I think the snobbishness of the Christian of that era was very intense. I mean, everything in the Orient was heathen. And those insights were much more ancient. And, of course, the Christian ones had derived from them through the Himalayas and the Essenes, as later came out. So, in other words, it was a sort of a – we got out of a sect feeling there. The Quakers were very strict about songs, you know. Music was a distraction and a feeling for the devil in those older – earlier days. And it was all a very mild thing, but there was a great upheaval in the college, and the alumni were most upset that Christianity was being abolished. Whereas it was just our way of handling concern for the people there that we were abolishing, trying to widen – It worked. One indication that it worked is that it's still going in that same sort of a way. It was a – And I think that the sense of not concern for the whole there, that I felt the whole man wasn't being developed. I felt my own abilities hadn't been challenged and that I was just being put through a mill, however good. And I – you got a great sense of quality and some sense of handling time for any conventional education. But your own incapacities weren't explored and changed. And I think that our effort at Black Mountain, and mine certainly, was to make up for that in some way in the design of the educational setup. So that concern for what you didn't know was not – was a help to you. You could learn something new about what you were interested in, rather than what someone else knew about it only. And that was a great thing for me to study with Albers,

to go to some of those Rice classes, to go to – As a faculty wife at Black Mountain, we could go to all classes. And that was marvelous. We hadn't housekeeping problems. We took care of our children. We had Gertrude to help us take care of our children. And we could participate livelily in the whole scene and see where what we knew could be useful and not make such a big deal out of our position – quote, unquote—you know. There wasn't any position. We were all just there thinking it up. It was fun.

MEH: Did you take seriously – ? People were given titles when they came to the college like Instructor or Assistant Instructor, Professor or Assistant Professor, or Associate Professor. Were these taken seriously?

BLD: Well, there was only one in each subject, and they were the ones concerned with that. And we didn't use the titles. They were written in a catalog. But what you really did was what happened, not what was written down. That was the nice thing. It was a perfectly visible – visual situation. You could – no matter what, if you were a professor of philosophy and knew less of it than somebody else, they also could be thought of when philosophy was thought of, you know. I mean, that setup is something you enter into if you're in a dynamic situation.

MEH: Yes. I mean, just in going through this, it seems like a strange carry – over from something else.

BLD: Yes. It had to –

MEH: I wondered if it had any –

BLD: It had to do with the outside world –

MEH: Right.

BLD: – more than how we operated. I mean, one didn't salute –

TD: What was a carryover? You mean having ranks of professors?

MEH: This business of assigning ranks, you know, so tediously.

TD: That's right. It was a carryover and had some relation to trying to establish recognizable standards, I mean standards that would be recognizable, you know.

BLD: My parents.

MEH: I'm interrupting –

TAPE INTERRUPTS

MEH: When you left Bryn Mawr, what were sort of your expectations? Were you married as soon as you left college?

BLD: I met Ted at the – New Year's Day of my junior year, and after I had seen him one other weekend – He came down to Bryn Mawr. He was working nights for General Electric, and he came down with a pack on his back, hitchhiking to Bryn Mawr. And we decided –

TD: Slept outdoors on the campus.

BLD: – that we would make a good team. And I'd seen him about seven hours, really, in all, but over three different encounters of a very short time each. I just recognized him as a problem I would be interested in and would do it again like a shot. And so then I began to get very good marks and know what I was going to do, and got the best marks of my career that next two weeks later examination period and struggled through thinking out how a degree,

because that would give me a certain independence in case I decided that he was a villain and I had to feed myself, which I didn't.

TD: Which she had a pretty hard time not to at the time.

BLD: And so by the time – And then my mother, thinking that I was very young, because nineteen was pretty young, that I should see something of the country, took my sister and me on a swing around southern Canada and the West, and all. And Ted came out in the middle of it and gave me an engagement ring and messed up all her plans of independence. And so we got engaged that fall. And I went through senior year, and was married –

TD: We were engaged long before that, but we didn't announce it until then.

BLD: I got my degree and was married as soon afterwards as I could get into the wedding dress, really. And then we went and lived in my grandma's old house in Brooklyn.

TD: And then we went to the Smokies.

BLD: We went to the Smokies. That was our first introduction to the North Carolina mountains, which had been here all along, but which northern people hadn't known as [UNINTEL WORD]

TD: They'd hardly heard of at that time.

BLD: And then we went to Schenectady where we lived a year and a half.

TD: Two years.

BLD: And our son was born. And then we went to Florida because Ted got offered a professorship of physics there. The Depression was starting by then, and the jobs were getting fewer in the GE. And this seemed like an interesting

opportunity. He always wanted to go into teaching, and he thought physics hadn't been taught interestingly or right. And he tried to take a crack at it. He's not a natural born teacher, but got interested in teaching. And we – that was a beginning of a big expansion. We got out of the cold. Our friends, the Forbes, were there. We got to know Florida. We got to know the young again. We were slightly young ourselves, but they were a little younger.

MEH: You had been with GE for a while?

BLD: He had been with GE five years.

TD: I had been with them five years before I left. I left after five years.

BLD: And that we were three years in Winter Park, my second child, Mark Russell, was born while we were there. Good friends, interesting people, "golden personalities" were what were teaching there at the time. And that was Hamilton Holt's slogan.

TD: And the headlines in the Orlando paper were when the fuss got going, people were saying "Rollins Off The Gold Standard".

BLD: And then he decamped with them to form Black Mountain from there, joining – Although, we hadn't been fired. We were insulted at not having been fired. And we resigned and went North with the bunch to form the college. That was great fun and very uncertain, and everybody knew we couldn't do it. And so we did it immediately. And that was the beginning of that phase. But I didn't have much time between getting out of college and knowing what I was going to do to worry, because it was all of ten days, really.

MEH: So what about you? We've talked about Bobbie's family for a while, but

who were your people? Where did you come from?

TD: Well, my mother came from old – really old English stock. And Governor Bradford of Massachusetts, who was one of our ancestors. And Benjamin Franklin's family was in our line, too. And Peter Folger of Nantucket, on mother's side.

BLD: A little louder, so she can –

TD: Oh.

MEH: Speak up. Go ahead. That's okay.

TD: Do you want me to repeat that? No.

BLD: Peter Folger is also one of mine.

TD: Right. Yes. We were even distant cousins. We had a common ancestor. And then my father's family came from Germany and, oh, two or three centuries ago, came from the city of Bremen, which had been a free city. It was not part of the German Empire until long after my grandfather came over here. And now one of his grandfathers was Burgermeister, which is Chief of State for the free city of Bremen. Now he – their background there, they'd been either businessmen or ministers. And my father's parents were first cousins. They were both Dreiers. And one side was a minister, and the other side was a businessman. And they – he came over to the United States in 1940 – 1849. It was after – when there was a great influx of Germans after the Revolution of 1848 in Europe. There was a whole group of Germans that came over here. But he came over independently. He was a young man of twenty-one when he came. And he walked the streets of Baltimore and New York for three months

before he found a job. And he never got but one job in his life, and that was he was an office boy in a firm and he rose to be senior partner and head of the firm.

MEH: And this was?

TD: And this was an iron and steel importing company, Len Naylor & Company, in New York. And it became quite a big thing, and he made a very handsome fortune in those days. And he worked for – he worked here for fourteen years before he even took a vacation, without any vacation at all. Then he went back to Bremen. And he had with him in his pocket an affectionate letter from a seven year – old cousin who had – a first cousin, who had written him goodbye when he went, and he went back and found her twenty-one. And they fell in love and –

BLD: The letter said, "Don't forget your darling little Dorothea".

TD: That's right.

MEH: At age seven?

TD: At age seven.

BLD: Was it seven or was it nine?

TD: No. It was seven.

BLD: It was seven.

TD: And fourteen years later, she was twenty-one.

BLD: Right.

MEH: Ah-so.

TD: And she married at twenty – one just the way you did.

BLD: Ah-ha.

TD: And she –

BLD: He also paid his debts back. I think that was – his father's debts back. Didn't he?

TD: Yes. His father had been – had gone – They had a very – it was a very tough period in Germany, almost like after World War I. And everybody was having – There were many failures and lack of opportunity, and he – No. I don't think it was he who – I think his – I think the father managed to pay the debts back himself. I know he invited – He had gone bankrupt, and then twenty years later or ten years later, or some period later, he invited all the creditors to dinner from whom he had been excused, you might say, invited them all to dinner, and on everybody's plate was the complete debt plus 6% interest for all those years. And so he paid everybody back. And that was sort of a family tradition in a way. And, well, anyway, they had quite a time marrying. It was a question whether first cousins should marry. And they went to – Her father was a minister, but her uncle was also a minister. I think out of five brothers, there were two or three ministers and a couple of businessmen. And he said, "Well, if you love each other, you'd better get married". So they did and came over in – That was twenty – one years. No. That was fourteen years after 1849. That made it 1863, I guess. And I think they were married in 1864. The first two children died, and then they had – and then there were four daughters and my father, who survived. And my father was in the middle. And all four of father's sisters became famous.

Two of them became well-known artists.

MEH: Katherine Dreier I know, but I don't know –

TD: Katherine Dreier was the youngest, and she started the first Museum of Modern Art in America with Marcel Duchamp. And her older sister, Dorothea, was probably a much better painter, and painted abroad, lived abroad many years in Holland. And –

MEH: Did she paint under the name of Dorothea Dreier?

TD: Yes. Yes. And occasionally there have been exhibitions of her work. We heard of one just accidentally about ten years ago and went to see it. Some man had a great collection of her works and decided to show them in a gallery in New York. And they were mostly small paintings.

BLD: She painted in Spain as well as Holland.

TD: She painted in Spain.

BLD: And France.

TD: And Holland. And Switzerland. Switzerland. She had these things in Zurich, you know. And where Katherine lived in Paris a great deal, and she also – also in Germany. And she – they were all fluent enough in German so that they were considered natives, practically, in Germany.

BLD: The two older sisters went into social work, so to speak.

TD: No. The oldest and the next-to-the-youngest, Margaret and Mary.

BLD: Oh, yes. That's right.

TD: And Margaret was considered a flaming beauty in Brooklyn Heights and had dozens of suitors and wouldn't marry, never saw one she could stand,

apparently, until she was thirty-five years old and when Raymond Robins came along—Robins with one "B". And they had both decided never to marry and – until they met each other. And they had a whirlwind courtship. I was there at the meeting, and –

BLD: Age three.

TD: At the age of three. And they were – she was taking me out for a walk in Brooklyn Heights. And when he – There was a famous pastor, a famous minister, in Brooklyn, Dr. Hillis, at that time, and at the Congregational Church. And my uncle had been speaking. I think he was on a tour around the world at that time. Anyway, this was in 1905. And he had been in labor work, and he – I think it was the first settlement house in America, the Northwestern University Settlement House in Chicago. And he was running that for a time after he returned from Alaska in the gold rush. And he – I ought to tell you this, mention a little about him. Anyhow, they – he was on a speaking tour and spoke in Brooklyn. And they happened to meet. Dr. Hillis met my aunt on the street when he was out walking with Raymond Robins and introduced them. He understood, just seeing me there, assumed that she was my mother. And he was very struck with her, and they met again the next evening at dinner, a dinner party, and sat next to each other. And then he found out that she was Miss Dreier and not Mrs. Dreier. And he says, "The world was saved". Anyway, he – They had a great talk, I think, the couple of evenings they met, and found they had tremendous interests in common, and so forth. And he went to – He said

whenever a real crisis came in his life, that he had to think over, he went down to Florida, his boyhood home. And, well, he came from Kentucky, originally, but then he went down to Florida. And he had bought this place down there, Chinsegut (as his wife later named it). And he thought things over, and he said, "By gosh, this is it after all". And he had a very close relationship with his older sister, who was eleven years his senior, who had later moved to England and became – she became quite a famous actress. She introduced Ibsen on the London stage. I had two aunts who were quite famous actresses, and they were both Aunt Elizabeth. One was Uncle Raymond's sister, and the other was my mother's sister. And she – Aunt Elizabeth, my uncle's sister, was much older than any other member of the family, and she had sort of brought him up as a child. And he didn't have a mother. His mother died. And the family was broken up already before he was born. And he was a late unwanted child and was shipped around from pillar to post and sent down to Florida as a poor relation. And I think he had three years of schooling and spent the rest of the time driving cattle and planting orange groves, and things like that.

BLD: Magnificently self-educated man, just incredible. Everything he read counted, and he knew what was –

TD: Yes.

MEH: Now was this before or after his venture in the – what was in Russia, I mean, the Soviet Union?

TD: Oh, this was –

BLD: Before that.

MEH: Before?

TD: This was in 1905. Yes.

MEH: Okay. Then this is where we are in time.

TD: Yes. This is –

BLD: After – it was after Alaska.

TD: It was after Alaska.

BLD: He already had made his fortune in Alaska.

MEH: Oh.

TD: His background was – his father – his foster father in Kentucky balled him out, because he ran away from home and got a job as a water boy carrying at a construction job at the age of seven, I think. And they said, "Gentlemen don't work." and he's never forgot that, and never forgave his family for such an attitude. And he later became a coal miner and organized the first union and started to organize the first union in the Appalachian mines in the West – in the East and was blacklisted and driven out. But he had talked with a man from Colorado, who worked in the lead mines there, and who told him about unions and how that was the only way you could get a good deal. And he tried to organize the miners, and as a miner himself, and then went West to Colorado when he was – couldn't get a job. And every – no mine would let him work. And he was too dangerous a character. This was after he was grown up. And he

had quite a career that I've never quite traced out, I mean, as a miner, a prospector down in Florida first. And he was on his own ever since he was nine years old, practically. And his chief teacher was an old Negro who had been a slave. Uncle Fielder Harris we called him. And I knew him well.

BLD: We were surrounded by Harrises.

TD: I was with him on his death bed. And he taught me how to chop – way back in 1914, he taught me how to use an axe. He could chop down a pine tree this big in five minutes. And I've never seen anybody, you know, who – he was a beautiful axe man. And he was – And recently – I went back to Florida again in 1916 and helped my uncle survey the place there. We have a two-thousand-acre tract, and it was all wilderness. It was all grown up by then. And Fielder was one of the men whom we worked with. And later, in 1924, I was there with him on his death bed. But he was such a – he had been a slave before the Civil War. And when my uncle – and my uncle told him as a boy, he said, "When I grow up, I'm going to get a place down here, and I'm going to put you in charge".

BLD: And I'm gonna build you a house with a chimney".

TD: " And I'm gonna build you a house with a chimney". That's right. That was the height of luxury in those days. And when he came back from the Klondike, he wrote to every post office in the State of Florida trying to locate this old darkey, as he was called then. And he finally found him up in South Carolina. A letter got forwarded to him. And he brought him down, and he put him in charge of this big place. And, oh, they had quite a

time almost. They burned down his barn for giving this Negro such a good job, and everything. And he went out and faced the community, invited the whole community to come and hear what he had to say about it, into a church. And – on Lake Lindsay down there. And he was a – And he came on horseback, and hitched his horse there, and every – The whole community came. And he said, "I come from Kentucky. I grew up here as a boy. I know the way you feel about these things. And I admit that I made a mistake. I didn't mean to do something that would be offensive to all my neighbors here". He had given him a horse and buggy and a better house to live in than most of the whites had nearby, and it just wouldn't go. And he knew it wouldn't go. And he said, "I – this man is a human being, and he is my friend. And I'm going to leave him in charge. I am not – ". The horse and buggy had already been burned by then. And he said, "I do not intend to be offensive here in any way, but I intend to keep him here. And if you don't like it, you can shoot". And he got on his horse and rode away and didn't look back. And from then on he had no trouble. And Fielder was in charge from then on. But he didn't – in other words, he didn't try to go the way the Communists did, to make as much trouble as possible and to make political hay out of a situation, or anything like that. And he worked into a community. He was a single individual there all by himself with no help from anybody. I mean, forty years – thirty years later, the place was being shot up by a sheriff [UNINTEL WORD] agree with him. And everybody was scared to death and finally managed to beat him at the

polls, I mean, put in a candidate who beat him. Now this was down in Brooksville, Florida. And, anyhow, he – way back, he had gone to school there in a little one-room schoolhouse at Istachatta, Florida, which is on the Withlacoochee River where we have a place now. And he – and by chance, there was a civil engineer and surveyor there named William Fulton, who was a real guy, running this school. And he said, "I learned things you really needed to know in school, and I only had three years of schooling". But –

BLD: He "opened his mind". That was a phrase that he used. He opened his mind. He said you should use your mind.

TD: He "opened my mind". And I knew William Fulton later in 1914 and his children. And he – my, his mouth was all so full of tobacco. He always would (whoot) know, and it would go about a half a mile off to the left, (whoot) and it would go off the other direction. But –

BLD: But he had a mind, and he showed him how to use it.

TD: He had a mind, and he showed him how to use it. But he was – I remember the whole family of Fultons very much in 1914. And that's where we spent the night even when we first arrived. When we first went to Florida in 1914, it took two and a half days to get there from New York by train. And you had to spend the night in Jacksonville. And the end of the – and from Croom to Brooksville was – you went – travelled with a wood burning locomotive with a wide funnel. And I think it was all of fifteen miles, and I think it took two hours. So it got there. But my uncle and aunt were determined to have father and his family, who were

used to city life in New York, see what the country was really like to –

MEH: Your father stayed in New York? Your father –

TD: My father lived all his life in New York.

MEH: – and his children.

TD: In Brooklyn. In Brooklyn.

MEH: In Brooklyn. What did your – ?

TD: In Brooklyn Heights.

MEH: What did your father do?

TD: Well, my father didn't go to college. He went to – He thought that was a waste of time. And he went to work in Naylor and Company, his father's business. By then, his father was head of the firm, I guess. And he went and opened up the Pittsburgh branch of the business and worked there for – until his father died in 1899. And then he had to come home to settle his father's affairs and was executor of the estate. And his father left a sufficient fortune so that all the five children had –

BLD: Independence.

TD: Real independence for the rest of their lives, you might say. And contrary to the custom in those days, the women of the family were given the money outright after a certain age, so that they were allowed to do anything they wanted with it. And they did. And some of them lost some of it, but others didn't. And the father really looked after them, all four sisters, did all the – took care of them, you might say, for all their lives, so that they could do what they wanted to do. And they did and became famous. And father, having left Naylor and Company after

– I think he worked there about ten years, or so. Then he bought a little business called the Lock Stub & Check Company, which was a ticket printing business in New York. And it became a highly competitive thing. It was a small company, and he bought a controlling interest in it. And –

BLD: He did that until he retired, didn't he?

TD: Made a certain amount of money in it for – he was quite successful for a while, and then he was offered – and then Naylor and Company, which was actually controlled by a British firm, a large British firm, asked him to come in as Vice President with a chance of becoming President of the firm. By then it was incorporated and no longer a partnership. And so he did and made a great success of it and became President. And until World War I, that's what he did. Then during – then after that, why, the iron and steel business had developed so highly in this country that importing was no longer important. And they had to – and they branched out looking for other things to do. And I don't know. They went into fluorspar mining. I went into – was a miner, myself, one summer in Southern Illinois, Cave-in-Rock, Illinois, and mining fluorspar and surveying and working in laboratories there before I went to college. And then – but, finally, they decided that none of those new ventures were going to be sufficiently lucrative to warrant going into, and they liquidated the firm. It didn't go bankrupt, but it – while it was still in good shape, they liquidated. And then father went back to the Lock Stub &Check Company and was trying to run that again. By then, it had become so highly competitive and a cutthroat business that he no longer was able to make any money out of it. And not only that, but the man

who had the minority interest in it and who had been vice president, went crazy. And some shyster lawyer got hold of the widow of the wife and sued my father for paying himself a decent salary, and practically drained the business. They spent years in lawsuits, and everything, trying to stay on their feet. And father finally decided it just wasn't worth the candle anymore. And I think the judge allowed him – the judge wouldn't allow him, as president of the firm, more than the maximum of a three-thousand-dollar salary, which even in those days was so picayune that it was ridiculous. And he – I know mother used to say it was just incredible the way father stood all the really terrible things that were being said about him. And there were things he was accused of that had no validity whatsoever. Until – But he never brought any of it home.

BLD: He was a perfectly wonderful charming man, but fairly inarticulate, spoke with a somewhat German accent, because they had been brought up listening to their parents. But he had a wonderful faculty of being just to those with whom he could differ, you know. His sisters' activities he didn't agree with. He had all kinds of

TD: He was much more conservative than they were.

BLD: But he didn't interfere either with us for making a wildcat college, or anything. I mean, he allowed people the liberty of their own choices, made it possible for them. We stayed out of jail. We did what we wished. And he listened with accuracy to whatever we had to say. And he had a very unworldly sound way of judgment. He knew what was right and what was wrong, and he knew there was a variety of it. He was a perfectly charming

man. I mean, all the women thought he was just charming.

TD: His idea of right and wrong were not in any limited way. I mean, it had a sort of deeply – well, he was almost implicitly religious without ever being articulate, let's say. And –

BLD: A very fine father figure. Very intense. Very –

TD: Thoroughly nervous. I mean –

BLD: A burst of temper that he couldn't control. There was always an explosion in the air. But –

TD: His children were a little bit terrorized by his anger. For instance, on opening a soft-boiled egg at breakfast and having it squash in his hands, nobody dared say anything for ten minutes.

BLD: It wasn't usually directed against them, but he was not an educator, and he really didn't know the effect of that on children.

TD: No. He had no idea how he scared us. And we had to speak German at the breakfast table always. And he would let us tell a whole – We tended not to say much as a result. Then he let us tell a whole long story in English, and then he'd say, "Nun, auf Deutsch". And then you'd have to repeat the whole thing in German. And we had German governesses.

MEH: So you were expected to carry on the family tradition.

BLD: Right. To be bilingual.

TD: And he had – his family had gone back to Germany every other summer when they were both children.

MEH: Oh.

TD: And he had gone to school himself in Switzerland at Geneva, and a French school. And when he was a young man, he spoke German, French and English equally fluently, although he forgot his French later.

BLD: You'd better tell about your mother.

MEH: Yeah. That's what I was about to ask about.

BLD: She was much more on our line of innovation and activity. And she was head of the New York City Club

TD: Yes. Mother was quite a personality, and she had – she was the –

BLD: Beautiful looking.

TD: She was a lovely lady. Her mother –

BLD: The rose of Brooklyn,

TD: Her grandfather Storrs, Augustus Storrs – I can never remember whether it was Uncle Augustus or –

BD: Augustus.

TD: – or Uncle Charles who –

BLD: Or Charles.

TD: Charles and Augustus were two brothers from Mansfield, Connecticut, originally, who settled nearby and –

MEH: What was her maiden name?

TD: – created the name of Storrs.

MEH: Oh.

TD: Her maiden name was Valentine. And these were – her Storrs ancestors were on her mother's side. And she – her parents were divorced, which

was an incredible scandal, practically, in those days. But – and she had a difficult childhood. She was one of five sisters. There were five children – five girls

BLD: She was the oldest.

TD: And she was the oldest. And she had – she was her mother's confidante during all the difficulties and shouldered – helped her mother, who was not a very strong character, I think – shoulder the difficulties. But mother was a strong character. And she was president of her – She went to Packer Collegiate Institute, which was a school that started at kindergarten and went up through two years of college already in the 1880s. I think it was probably the first junior college in America, Packer Collegiate. It's still going on Joralemon Street in Brooklyn Heights. And it was a very fine school and sort of a sister institution to the Polytechnic Institute of Technology across the – just a block away, also on Joralemon Street, where father went to school. And she was president of her class all the way through, I think. And when she married into this German family, why, it was quite an event. They were both – my father and mother were born next door to each other on Monroe Place, Brooklyn, and then they moved across the street later. But there were stories about how father used to climb along from one window to the other outside the houses on the face of the house on the third story up as a child, and so forth. They used to tell – but, anyway – Mother married into this family and found these four sisters who worshipped father and –

BLD: Fearfully dominating types.

TD: And terribly dominating people and who were bent on improving the world. And they were so grateful for what America had offered to their father, to their family. And when they began to find out what a hard time many other people were having, they were so appalled they just said, "My God, we can't let this go on." and devoted their lives either to art or to trying to improve social conditions.

BLD: Working conditions for women were what they were mainly interested in.

MEH: Which of the sisters were really interested in this?

TD: Margaret, who is the oldest, and Mary –

MEH: Right.

TD: – who was the youngest sister. And Dorothea, who was in between, who was –

MEH: The painter.

TD: – who was the painter. And Katherine was the youngest. She was also a painter.

MEH: And your mother was very involved in civic things and – ?

TD: Well, yes. And she felt she had to prove herself in a way.

MEH: To four sisters-in-law.

TD: She was sort of a natural leader, anyway. And she became – oh, they had a club called the ASAKOG Club, which all sorts and conditions of girls –

BLD: Kinds.

TD: All kinds and conditions.

BLD: All sorts and kinds.

TD: All sorts. No. All sorts and kinds of conditions of girls. All sorts and kinds of – ?

BLD: Girls.

TD: ASAKOG. Of girls, I guess. Yeah. And Mary was in that, too. And that got you to know people who lived in New York City.

TD: And mother was – my mother was president of it. And Mary was a little street urchin who just loved to play with everybody and just was [NON WORD]. I mean, she was just in touch with everybody instantly and was an extraordinary loving person.

BLD: Like Mark. She was a little like our son Mark.

TD: She was blond with bright – with very blue eyes. And Margaret, her older sister was brought up with Spanish blood and my German side, and was dark – black hair and dark brown eyes. And they were a great contrast, but they were very – they worked hand and glove all their lives. And later Mary wrote a biography of my aunt.

MEH: And your mother's name was – ?

TD: It was Valentine.

MEH: No. But your mother's first name.

TD: Ethel. Ethel.

MEH: That's what I thought.

TD: And her middle name was Eyre, E - Y - R - E. And Eyre comes from –

was it John Eyre?

BLD: Benjamin.

TD: Benjamin. John Benjamin. No. Benjamin Eyre, who – maybe it was his ancestor who –

BLD: Lifted the visor of the king.

TD: – lifted the visor of the King of England on the battlefield and saved his life.

BLD: Giving him air.

TD: And that's where he got the name Eyre.

MEH: Oh.

TD: Because in those days – this was about Chaucerian tames, I guess – it was E-Y -R-E. And but because of the terrible time they had with her father, Mother, when she married, dropped the name Valentine and was called Ethel Eyre Dreier. And I didn't – until when in Mexico, I had to give my mother's maiden name, as every man is supposed to give his mother's maiden name – And then you're called often sometimes by that. And my – and when I was an immigrant in Mexico, my official name was Theodore Dreier Valentine. And it's not always clear whether that – usually, if they know it's your mother's name, they don't call you by it, but sometimes they do by mistake. And I found myself being paged as Mr. Valentine in the Mexico City airport once. And I had no idea it was me. Suddenly, I realized it was me they were paging.

MEH: Your mother was involved in the Museum of Modern Art in the early founding years, was she not? Or – ?

TD: No. She wasn't. Oh. Wait a minute. No.

BLD: Kate probably rang her in on it, though.

TD: But, no. But Kate had nothing to do with the founding of the Museum.

BLD: Oh, you mean the real – ?

MEH: I'm talking about the –

BLD: The impostor one?

MEH: Uh-huh.

TD: The –

MEH: The other one.

TD: Yes.

BLD: Kate was very – Only artists who had been dead for fifty years.

TD: Well, let me very briefly just tell you a little bit more about mother. Mother – just was she organized – she was head of the Woman's Suffrage and helped – And later she was – became president of the Woman's City Club of New York and built that up into an important – She followed Mary Chapman Catt.

BLD: Carrie.

TD: Carrie.

BLD: Carrie Chapman.

TD: Mary – Carrie.

BLD: Carrie.

TD: Carrie. Carrie Chapman Catt. Excuse me. Whom I met way back, I know. And then Miss Hay wasn't president then, was she?

BLD: I don't know.

TD: Well, anyway. Anyway, Mother was – became president, and then was president longer than anybody else they ever had and built it up into a really important political organization in New York. And she had – she resigned, finally, and then they made her come back a year or two later. And so she had two long spells. And she was –

BLD: She managed Mayor Laguardia's campaign.

TD: And she was – when Mayor Laguardia was – his campaign for reelection, he had two chairmen of his campaign – one for the men and one for the women. And Mother was chairman for greater New York women.

BLD: A very able – very able organizer and a loving person

TD: She seemed to combine a wonderful femininity with a very good administrative sense.

MEH: What about – how did you, coming out of this, when you went to school at – ?

TD: College prep.

MEH: College.

TD: In Brooklyn. And to –

MEH: And then where did you go do your college work?

TD: And then I went to Harvard in 1919 after my stint as a miner in Cave-in-Rock, Illinois.

MEH: What – I mean, what were your expectations, coming out of this family background?

BLD: Self-defense.

TD: Mostly. I think. Yes. I was – I had been surrounded by such strong

personalities and who –

BLD: Expected so much of you.

TD: – expected so much, that I –

BLD: Did something

TD: I guess I thought it safest to strike out in new directions. And my uncle, because I was good in mathematics, Uncle Raymond, whom – I mean, Bimini. Well, Margaret, my Aunt Margaret, whom we call – as a child, we called her Aunt Gay-Gay. She was called Gretchen, which is a German name. And I couldn't pronounce that as a two year – old and called her Gay-Gay. And then later, she was called – given the name Bimini. And we now always refer to her as Bimini which meant "the spirit of eternal youth." "the fountain of eternal youth." which is – Anyway, he was – and they were all given Seminole Indian names. We were all given Seminole Indian names in Florida. And my uncle, first, was Cathusahoochi [PH] and she was [UNINTELL WORD]. And then she changed to Bimini, and he was called Ahhochee, which means "the planter". And, anyway, where was I?

BLD: Ahhochee.

TD: Ahhochee encouraged me in the idea of my interest in science and in mathematics and thought it would be good if I got into something practical. I was – I had a terribly sheltered bringing up. I mean, I learned to play the piano. And I bounced balls off the stoops in Brooklyn. And I did play cops and robbers at night on roller skates alone. And during the day, both in the backyard and all over Brooklyn Heights. But on the whole – And got into fights

with the [UNINTELLI WORD: Micks ?] sometimes, they were called. And – but we never – I must have lived in some kind of a protected dream world of my own. And I never really felt I came to grips with things, except when I got out of doors, out in the woods, or something like that. And I became very fond of birds, and I used to spend – In the country n Long Island, we'd go out there, and I would simply disappear at 4 a.m. in the morning and not come home for either breakfast or sometimes not even for lunch. I'd come back at one o'clock and just spend all that time exploring on my own with the birds and the wildlife.

BLD: These were very intense people you had to come back to, and it was a relief to be out of their vibratory system for a while, I think.

TD: But –

BLD: Did it help you to get on with the –?

TD: But, anyway, I was a good student in school, and I skipped the sixth grade with two other members of the class. And so when I got to college, I was only seventeen. I was barely seventeen. And then I piled into things there. I was terribly excited by the good teaching that I was fortunate enough to run into at Harvard. And the best teacher I ever had was a lecturer, which is unusual. I mean, usually, you don't pick a lecturer as a good teacher, but this – But Haskell, Professor Haskell, was so simply extraordinary. I've never forgotten his lectures in History I from the fall of the Roman Empire to modern times, and especially the late Roman and early medieval. And I still have his notebooks. I've just found them the other day and was rereading them. Harvard really

opened my horizons a great deal. And after – it was two years there before I began to find my own friends. And I ran into a Boston and Milton group that – We became very good friends, and we became lifelong friends. And that's where I met J. Malcolm Forbes and his wife Ethel Cummings, whom I was in love with before he was, and so forth. And, anyway, we became very – we became lifelong friends. And I always used to go back there and feel at home and welcome. And they came and visited us on Long Island, and all that sort of thing. And I was essentially very shy and didn't get into the club life, and that sort of thing, at Harvard the way most of my friends did. But I got into – I started in mining engineering and in my junior year I threw it all over and considered seriously going into the ministry and decided that was "the bunk". And, finally, I –

MEH: Decided the ministry or mining engineering was "the bunk"?

TD: The ministry.

MEH: Oh.

TD: Well, I mean, it was no way to spend your life, I mean, that you had to get out into the world and do things after you knew something about life, instead of living in sheltered protection of being a minister, while you might – I mean, I felt I had had a sheltered protection, and I wanted to get out into things. And I wanted to become a workman and do just – And it was pointed out to me that you can't become a workman if you've been brought up the way you have. I mean, even if you are, you know you're – you know you could get out of it, and so you're not really stuck there the way – And that sort of thing. But

I remember I took all kinds of courses in economics as well as in literature and French and Spanish and German and Latin. And, oh, I took –

BLD: He took all knowledge to be his province.

TD: And I took – studied the fine arts, and everything. But, anyway –

BLD: We've got a lot of books.

MEH: You transport from Mexico to the United States.

BLD: And these are more recent, more specialized, psychological books.

TD: So, I mean, and I was just brought up in a way that made it seem perfectly natural for me to subscribe to forty – five different magazines, which I've had trouble cutting down.

BLD: It's also a way of getting even with your family, who had limited themselves, and focused a little more on the social scene or the art scene. You really wanted to know a few other things. You got very interested in psychology, which they had not been interested in. Their practical psychology of how to handle you was most inadequate. They let you be scared to death and over – pressured. And you wanted to get some kind of insight into what that all added up to. So you got going with Dr. Ames, who really opened your mind.

TD: It was through – it was really through my friend Mac Forbes and Charlie Cummings, who had gone partly through law school while I was going through engineering school. And they decided to change their whole careers and go into the ministry, which I objected. And they went to Union Theological Seminary in New York, and after a year there decided to go into psychology instead of the ministry. And Mac wrote me about psychoanalysis and what a

wonderful thing it was. He had been in a terrible state of mind and had had a great success in trying this. And I was in a very torn up frame of mind. I had been – Well, I had – There was a fellow named Bill Simpson about the time I left – was getting through engineering school, who had given away everything he owned. He was a minister, and he'd been thrown out of his church during World War I for being a pacifist. And he decided to – he just felt that to live the way Christ said it was possible to live, you had to just do without possessions. And, like, he even went barefoot and became a carpenter. And when he spoke to college students up at Silver Bay, why, I thought, "Well, this is the most beautiful person I've ever seen. And anybody who could talk like this and be like this, it's – this is what I'm instinctively looking for." So I started giving away all my things. And when I was at – I was working for the General Electric Company by then. And I remember the first morning after I went to work, and I had given away all my clothes except some old work pants, and everything, and told my father – I had inherited this. He had given me a few thousand dollars stock – my fortune, so to speak – and I had told him to give that all away, I didn't want it, and so forth. And I'd like to – And when I went to work for the General Electric Company in work clothes in the office, why, I somehow expected –

MEH: Now is this what Bucky Fuller told me? And a lot of things Bucky Fuller tells you are very exciting, but he had said that your father had given you a million dollars and that you had turned this down.

TD: Oh.

BLD: He didn't have a million dollars.

MEH: Right. This was –

TD: No. No. No.

MEH: Right. Okay. That's –

TD: No. Well, I mean, that's an exaggerated tale. I mean, like [UNINTELL WORD] Williams saying – he was told when we went to Mexico that we had six million dollars.

BLD: Yes.

TD: If I had a fraction of one, why, I would be happy.

MEH: Right. Well, I was just curious, you know.

BLD: No. No. Not at all. We wouldn't – Not only that, we wouldn't accept anything.

TD: My grandfather was a millionaire. We – and that meant something in those days. And, I don't know.

BLD: He was his family all –

TD: And Father left a sizeable fortune, too. But by the time these state taxes were taken, and everything, why, it was cut down to size, you might say. But –

BLD: And deflation and other taxes take the other three-quarters.

TD: And so to now we –

MEH: Okay. I just – I wanted to check out Bucky's tale.

BLD: No. No. No. Bucky

TD: Well, Bucky, Bucky did know that I had given everything away, and so forth.

MEH: Right. This is – when you said this, I realized this was probably what this

came out of.

BLD: Right.

TD: So it probably – Yes.

BLD: It was a few thousand, rather. Wasn't it?

TD: Oh, I think – Yes. I think I had thirty thousand dollars or something like that. And in the end, why, he gave it back to me, and I accepted it.

MEH: Good.

TD: By then I had some children, and so forth.

BLD: By then he began to notice why he was giving away things, because he had analysis.

TD: By then I had gotten myself psychoanalyzed and began to see that

MEH: Why were you giving things away? Why – I mean, what was your conclusions?

BLD: Putting your parents down. Wasn't it?

TD: Well, I was in a certain way getting even with my parents for – and trying to establish my independence, to get out from under them. And I was – that I didn't want things that I received from them. And then I didn't realize this was what I was doing, partly, and – I mean, very, very interesting. It's a deep, very deep experience with me was when I – after I had given all my things away and shocked the General Electric people, my bosses and others who thought they were pretty idealistic in more scientific ways, and so forth, why, I undermined their confidence in me, I guess. So, anyway, I hitchhiked home for Christmas, Christmas Eve. And I got down there, and when we – And Father, and my

Uncle Raymond, and Father and Mother all tried to dissuade me from doing – from giving things away and from heading in this direction. I hadn't gone barefoot, or anything, yet, but – I had considered it.

BLD: To get attention in this family took something.

MEH: A little ingenuity here and there.

TD: Well, I mean, I realized I was just determined to do anything to get independent and to be myself, you see. And – I mean, I didn't look at it this way. I was following my ideals, but –

MEH: Right.

TD: But it took this kind of form. And I took many of the sayings of Christ very literally and tried to – You know, you pick which sayings you will take literally and which you won't, and so forth. Well, anyhow, I'd been in love, and that hadn't worked. And I'd been – Oh, and I've had a great, a very strong belief in God, and then I suddenly realized that probably I was – that this was an unfounded thing. And then I was just an atheist for a short while. And later I was – The question whether you believe in God or not is a fake question. I mean, it's a wrong question. You either understand there's a deeper reality in life and see it, or you don't. And I don't believe in my finger or that I say, "Oh, no, I don't believe in my finger." even though I see it. I mean, it's just as silly as that. And, anyhow, I kept in touch with Mac Forbes, and he persuaded me to come down. And at this time, we were still in love with the same girl and

BLD: But he straightened out.

TD: And this was pretty ticklish for the psychiatrist. And he had – Mac had offered

to pay for my psychiatrist. The psychiatrist was smart enough to know that I'd see through that. So –

BLD: She was a wonderful girl, and she just became one of our very best friends. She's an absolutely fabulous girl. She's one of our – She's died now.

TD: She died of cancer about a year or two ago, but –

BLD: He was quite right to be in love with her.

MEH: And this was the mother and father of Steven Forbes?

BLD: No.

TD: No. No. No. No.

BLD: This was –

TD: No. It was the same family, but –

BLD: Their father –

TD: There were five Forbes brothers.

MEH: Oh.

TD: And then the first cousin of these five was my friend, Mac.

MEH: Okay. But this is not the same as Malcolm? Or it is Malcolm. This is Malcolm.

TD: This is Malcolm. This is Malcolm. We called him Mac.

MEH: So Steven Forbes is a nephew of Malcolm Forbes?

BLD: Of Malcolm. Yes. A step-nephew.

MEH: A step-nephew.

TD: No. He was a –

BLD: His half-sister was his mother.

TD: He was a first cousin once removed, I think.

MEH: But it's all the same family?

BLD: You were going to tell something about your father when you came down at Christmas. You were going to tell her about your father.

TD: Oh, I –

MEH: You were giving things away then.

TD: Yes. And I – This was what really paved the background for my looking – going into psychoanalysis, getting myself psychoanalyzed, because I knew my father well enough to know his absolute integrity somehow, you know. And we took it all so for granted. And my sister said recently, she said she never could understand why Father – my mother used to say Father had such a wonderful integrity compared with anybody else I ever knew. And she said, "Well, what's that? Of course. I mean, any decent person has integrity." And she didn't realize until later how few people really have it, what Mother was talking about. But, anyway, I went – I hitchhiked down. And we always had a Christmas Eve German celebration with singing songs, and so forth. But by this time, I think, well, hardly anybody – There were two or three other members of the family there, but nearly everybody had flown the coop, so to speak, and were married or away. No. They weren't married yet, but they were away – elsewhere. And was always a time when they rang the bell for Christmas at 5:30, and we went down there, and we sang Christmas carols, and before that we sang Christmas carols. And we had trees with candles on them, real candles, and so forth. Well, anyhow, this had become somewhat simplified by this time and –

[SIDE TWO OF TAPE BEGINS.]

MEH: And you were dressed in khaki.

TD: And I was dressed in a khaki shirt and a khaki pants and old shoes, work shoes. And Father said, "Well, you'd better put on your coat, and we'll go down to dinner". And I said, "I don't have a coat". And Father looked at me and said, "You don't have a coat?" He said, "Well, I don't think much of that". And he walked out. And I followed him down to dinner. And I could tell by his manner of contempt, utter contempt, that he thought I was just putting on a show and being a hypocrite. That was almost more than I could take from Father. I mean, an ultimate judgment, in a sense, on my – what I considered my highest ideals. And somehow or other – maybe it was from mother's side of it – I was always – when I did receive criticism – criticism was always very hard for me to accept, but I had sort of learned as a child to look at it in spite of not liking it. And that's all I remember about that Christmas, really. And it just stayed with me. And I thought, "My God, is there something in what Father said?" I mean, "Am I really kidding myself? Was I trying to impress them, or something, by this?" And this was the first time that anything like that had dawned on me I'd lived in such a closed world, closed in by my dreams and ideals, and so forth. I'd read lots of philosophical statements that – about the fake quality of youthful idealism. And I realized – I recognized it in others in many a case. But I was too pure for anything like that. And then to be hit by myself as maybe something that I was doing, well, it really appalled me. And it was later that year that Mac Forbes told me – I went and visited him over a weekend at – from General Electric down – I

hitchhiked down again, down to Schenectady, and from Schenectady to New York, and stayed with him over a weekend at the Union Theological Seminary, and when the old Coffin, I guess, was head of it then, the father – the uncle of the currently famous one from Yale, Henry Sloane Coffin. And he told me about this psychoanalysis, and so forth, and what a tremendously revealing and extraordinary experience it was. And it had just liberated him. Well, I finally decided to try it, and it had just the opposite effect with me. It depressed me. I mean, it made me – oh, it just – I could hardly stand it right from the beginning. I mean – but –

BLD: You didn't want to be liberated from Ethel, particularly.

TD: Well, it wasn't just – Yes. Well, that implied a great deal more –

BLD: It gave you a tremendous insight, though, into the fact that it didn't matter much what you thought you were doing. You had better just know what you were doing.

TD: It did open up a whole new thought of looking at myself and of the possibilities that you were controlled by things inside yourself that you didn't know. And, well, I didn't get the full benefit. I had the – I got – I went and got a leave – of absence from the General Electric Company for two months. And instead of one day a week for a couple of years, I had two hours a day for two months, which was the equivalent of a couple of years. And the next year, I took another month the same way. So I had a very extensive going into. And –

BLD: It helped some.

TD: It helped –

BLD: It wasn't as good as Rosen, but it helped some.

TD: No. Oh, no. It had nothing like some of the later insights I got from psychoanalysis. I went into this much more deeply later and got to know many psychiatrists. And down at the college we had psychiatrists on the staff, and I talked with them about all kinds of student problems. But, I mean, this opened up the whole world so that I –

BLD: Could get a coat again.

TD: Hmm?

BLD: So that you could get a coat again.

TD: Oh. Get a coat. Well, anyway, I – This was a very revealing thing that happened. In the meantime, Mac and Ethel did get married. And shortly after that, I met Bobbie, and –

BLD: And didn't take any of it all that seriously. I was a laughing one, and nobody laughs at any Dreier unless they're out of their mind.

TD: Well, anyhow, we met on the ice in the middle of Lake George skate sailing and got engaged the third time we saw each other. The third time, I went camping down on the Bryn Mawr campus sleeping out under the trees. And, well, from then on, things started to – my life – I mean, the psychoanalysis really did help me to get hold. In the meantime, I had before that and while I was giving things away, I had started to – At the General Electric Company I heard about an advanced course in engineering that was being offered and that was really equivalent to taking a doctor's degree in engineering. And so I

took the examination for that. And I think up 'til then, nobody had ever gotten above 50% in the entrance examinations. And later there was one man who got 98%. But I got permission to take it, and to everybody's astonishment, I got a hundred in it. And the thing was that they had emphasized fundamentals of science, and that was the one thing that I was concerned about. And I had thought about it and the others hadn't. And so it was all duck soup for me, and I got a hundred percent. And twenty years later, when I left General Electric Company, twenty-five years later or thirty years later, when I wanted a job back at General Electric Company, why, there were people in high positions who remembered that hundred percent I had gotten. And it helped me get a job thirty years later. Anyway, I did – this was a three-year course, but at the end of – In between, I took a lot in between and went to work in the General Electric Research Laboratory, which was a wonderful experience. And I got to know some of the really top-flight scientists they had there, and especially Irving Langmuir, who was the first Nobel Prize winner in America in industry or anywhere in the world, I guess, in industry. And I – we became skiing companions, and I became – back in 1927. And this opened up the world of science in a way that never had been at Harvard even to me. And I was too immature.

BLD: There were great men there.

TD: What?

BLD: There were great men there in the GE lab.

TD: Yes.

BLD: And they had fundamental science research.

TD: And they were –

BLD: And not research for practical application right away.

TD: Yes.

BLD: But just to [OVERTALK]

TD: It was under the direction of Willis – Dr. Willis Whitney, who had gotten these top-flight scientists there and given them a free hand to do anything they felt like. And –

BLD: They don't do that now.

TD: And they don't do that now.

BLD: They do less research.

TD: And they – But it gave a spirit in the land that made you feel that this is a true alma mater, almost, in the sense that – the best sense, in which you would feel about your university could be. So that I had quite a loyalty to them. And then when I went back and found how the company had changed later in the direction of commercializing everything, why, it was –

BLD: Less fun.

TD: Oh, there was something pretty vital that was missing. And, well, I pitched in and played the game, you might say, the way you have to earn a living.

BLD: But that helped you with thinking about Black Mountain, that kind of experience of fundamental freedom to explore –

TD: Yes.

BLD: – had been impressed on HIM there as a supreme and excellent value.

TD: So, I had this training – advanced training in engineering and also association with the research men in the research laboratory there. Research there was thought of, not in any superficial way, or not the way Albers says in Search Versus Research, but in the – research meaning really digging in very deep to fundamentals. And it was very carefully distinguished from the word "development," which was the later working out of the principles that you discovered by research. And it wasn't library research or anything like that. It was fundamental laboratory research based more on the kind that Einstein did or the physical scientists did.

BLD: It was search. Search.

TD: What?

BLD: It was search.

MEH: Right.

TD: It was real, real search. Yes. Exactly. And I was filled with scientific ideals, and all that, when I went to teach science at Rollins College. Mac Forbes, really, got me that job and persuaded me to take it when I wanted to – I had thought of staying at the General Electric Company. I thought I ought to have at least ten years of practical experience before I went into teaching. But I was determined to go into teaching eventually. This was a theoretical idea. I wasn't a natural teacher, and I had a hell of a time learning to teach. And the things that seemed so elementary to me, that I – and I was ashamed of not understanding better, I found were so far above the heads of everybody, all the students that I was talking about, that I couldn't – I just couldn't imagine

them not understanding what I was talking about, all the problems I was raising. And it took me a whole year to get to where I could talk on their level, and so forth. But then I began to really enjoy it. And my second year at Rollins was a wonderful year, because I really began to get into it. Well, anyhow –

BLD: Let her ask you what she wants, also.

MEH: No. This is sort of –

TD: Well, I –

MEH: The question that was on my mind and that Duberman mentions this and several people: To what extent did your family play a role in the financing of the college? I know that Forbes was helpful at times in –

TD: Malcolm Forbes was the key man who made it possible.

MEH: Yes. But what did – ? Did your family play any role in the financing of the college in terms – I mean, the idea sort of, you know –

TD: No. Well, they –

MEH: The midnight crisis they would come through on.

TD: I'll tell you.

MEH: Is this true?

TD: No.

MEH: Or is it not true?

TD: No. They – I think they – Well, of course –

BLD: They didn't put an addition on their house. They gave you two thousand dollars at one desperate point, instead of building something they

needed.

TD: Of course, to understand – I'll give you some figures –

MEH: Okay.

TD: – which will make it simple. But you have to realize how much one could do with how little in those days.

MEH: Right.

TD: In fact, we ran the whole college at a – the living expenses of fifty-six people that first year at a total cost of twenty-four thousand dollars, which is not much more than five hundred dollars a person to live on and have all their education and all the art and drama and everything that we had that year, the light and heat and food and everything. And at that time, as I told. the man yesterday, I didn't know how we were going to meet our budget when the cost of food per person per day went up from ten cents to eleven cents. And, I mean, that was a terrible shock. So you have to have that perspective. So when we started the college, as you'll read in that thing I gave you, why, I insisted that we had to have a budget and know how we were going to meet a budget before we could tell people that we would have a college. And Mr. Rice was against that. I said, "We've got to start, and then people will come in flocks, and then we will have enough money". And when I insisted on the other, Aydelotte was there, so – and was an older brother-in-law to Rice.

MEH: Right.

TD: And Aydelotte said dryly to Rice and the others there, "I think you'd better make Ted treasurer". And that was a terrible shock to me, and I didn't want to be

treasurer. I wanted to teach. I didn't want to have anything to do with the business end of it or administrative end of it.

MEH: Yes. Now this we went into in detail in the other tape.

MEH: You know. The founding of the college and becoming treasurer.

TD: So I don't need –

MEH: So let's go on.

TD: All right. So I don't need to go into that.

MEH: Right.

TD: There was a point I was going to make?

MEH: You – How much –

BLD: How much money your family gave.

TD: Oh, yes. How much money – ?

MEH: Yes. To what extent your family was actually involved in the financing.

TD: Yes. Well, my – And at that point, I made a budget and said if we had fifteen thousand dollars from students and fifteen thousand dollars in underwriting in case we didn't have more students – in other words, a total income of thirty thousand dollars, that then we could run. And I managed to hold them to achieve that full value. And now I'll tell you where the fifteen thousand dollars of underwriting came from.

MEH: Right. Okay.

TD: Ten thousand of it was from Mac Forbes anonymously, and nobody knew until after he died where it came from. So he was simply the anonymous donor who had – and he pledged ten thousand dollars.

BLD: On Ethel's initiative he said.

TD: Yes. On Ethel's initiative, and in one account. I wasn't there at the moment, but –

BLD: It was on account of Ted he gave it, of course.

TD: They wouldn't have done it if it hadn't been for me. And they talked – We went out to the World's Fair in Chicago with Mac and Ethel together, and spent ten days there together, and while we were organizing the college, and I reconvinced them that it was a sensible thing for them to do and not to withdraw from this. And so –

BLD: Ten from them.

TD: Ten from them. One thousand dollars from my father, one thousand dollars from my mother. That's twelve thousand.

BLD: Twelve.

TD: One thousand dollars from Colonel Dwight, who was the stepfather of Anne Chapin, who was one of the original students. One thousand dollars from William S. Barstow, who was a close friend and associate, who utility financing plan from – and who also lived at Great Neck, Long Island, a friend of –

BLD: The Dwights.

TD: Colonel Dwight's. Colonel Dwight, the evening he – we – Rice and I were staying with him, he said, "I'll give a thousand dollars, and I think I can persuade my friend, Mr. Barstow, to do it. Let's go around and see him". And we got in the car and drove around to his house, and he gave us. And he promised a thousand dollars then. So that made fourteen thousand dollars.

Then I got five hundred dollars from Mrs. Draper.

BLD: Mary Childs Draper.

TD: Mary Childs Draper, who was a friend of my mother's and head of the Brooklyn charities in Brooklyn and a remarkable woman. And then the other – Let's see.

BLD: Another five hundred you've got to make now.

MEH: This is like a marathon.

TD: In all, we got sixteen thousand five hundred, finally.

BLD: So you got another fifteen hundred to make.

TD: So –

BLD: No.

TD: No.

BLD: Another thousand dollars.

TD: I'm not sure that I know all – Maybe we only had sixteen thousand. But, anyway, we had – I've accounted for fourteen thousand five hundred. Then we got – No, I didn't get five – hundred from Mrs. Draper. I only got two – hundred from her. I got two hundred from Mrs. Draper, and three other hundreds. That made fifteen thousand – that made fourteen thousand five hundred. And then Eddie Warburg came along with a thousand dollars, and that made fifteen thousand five hundred. And that was the total. And it was when that came through that we decided to announce the college.[1]

[1] The underwriting was in the amount of $14,500: $10,000 was pledged anonymously by Malcolm Forbes; $1,000, by Col. Arthur S. Dwight; $1,000 by William S. Barstow; $2,000 by Ethel and Edward Dreier; and $500 in small gifts from Mary Childs Draper, Margaret Lewisohn, and others. Edward M. M. Warburg, a trustee at the Museum of Modern Art, and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller each donated $500 for the travel expenses of Josef and Anni Albers and for his first year's salary. Warburg gave an additional $500 as a gift to the college. Harris.

MEH: Right. So, essentially, the only big contributor to that was Forbes.

TD: Mac Forbes.

MEH: And then your parents, I mean, with two thousand dollars.

TD: They gave –

MEH: But that was –

TD: – two thousand, that's all.

BLD: Then they later gave us another two thousand.

TD: I think –

BLD: Or whatever.

TD: Yes. I think they gave us another two thousand. And I'll tell you, there was – it turned out to be a big difference between Forbes and the others, because Forbes was the one who really intended it only as an underwriting and took Rice's word that we would not need it, but it was to back us up. And he said he knew that it would be needed. But we actually got through the year without using one cent of any of the underwriting. And then – but we had asked for 40% to put in the bank, and the 40% they made a gift of. But my parents – and I think my parents made a – I think they only made – I think they only gave the 40%, too.

MEH: And so you returned the other 60%.

TD: And so we – the other – No. We never got it. We only asked for 40%.

MEH: Oh.

TD: We never got it.

MEH: Oh, I see what you mean.

TD: It was a pledge.

MEH: And then you made – Right.

TD: It was a pledge.

MEH: Right. And the other 60% would be given you if you needed it.

TD: As we needed it.

MEH: Right.

TD: And we never called for it. And we offered to send back the forty. And, but they all said, "Keep the forty". And both Colonel Dwight and Mr. Barstow, who were extremely well-to-do – they were multi-millionaires even in the Depression—they said, "Oh, we meant it as a gift".

MEH: Right.

TD: And Mary Draper gave her two hundred. And every – and the only money that we returned was to Mrs. Gertrude Margaret Lewisohn, the wife of Sam Lewisohn, who gave the Lewisohn Stadium.

MEH: Ah-so.

TD: And she said – and she wrote me and said, "Well, Sam says that if it was a loan, it should be returned". So I sent her the check for a hundred dollars. And it was one of the best things that ever happened, you know, because it became a symbol.

MEH: Right.

TD: It proved that anybody who wanted it back, got it. And one person did want it back and got it.

BLD: And then there was a later time, the other two – Aunt Mimi lent us some, which

we also paid back, to the astonishment of Peter Vorhees.

MEH: When – now when did she lend this?

BLD: That was later. That was much later.

TD: You see, my family were very badly hit by the Depression and [UNINTEL WORD]

BLD: They did send us two thousand dollars, though.

TD: And Father managed to hold things together. My uncle went practically bankrupt. My aunt had tried to save a bank, and it turned out to be a bottomless pit, in Brooksville, Florida. And he had speculated on and got caught on margin, and – anyway, that's a long story.

BLD: They didn't have any money.

MEH: Right. Uh-huh.

TD: They didn't have any money. And they normally would have given us thousands of dollars to help start the college. And I know that it hurt her bitterly, the fact that she couldn't.

MEH: But can you remember at what point – You know, I'm really interested in specifics, because there's so much speculation.

TD: Yes.

MEH: And so your –

BLD: There wasn't any money around.

MEH: Right.

BLD: There just wasn't any money. And the fact that they'd had it in childhood, didn't mean that they had it then.

MEH: Right.

BLD: Or they would have given it to us. We raised it, and we were proud. Right?

TD: Yes.

BLD: I mean, you know, you were doing this – Their parents, in the first place, didn't believe in the thing. But they believed in their son, but they wanted – They didn't like Mr. Rice. They didn't recognize in him anything. And they weren't interested in that kind of educating, anyway. They didn't like psychoanalysis. They didn't – you know, they couldn't understand why –

TD: They just could hardly take it what I had done to them what I was doing, you know.

BLD: So that they –

TD: I mean, I really got even with them.

MEH: When you got even, you did a good job of it.

BLD: But – So that –

TD: Oh, I'm so grateful I had twenty wonderful years with them at the end.

BLD: Yes.

TD: I mean, it was –

BLD: So there wasn't any flow of – Every time anything being the matter, we could help – we – I mean, the –

MEH: So this wasn't –

BLD: Rice's book saying that he was born with a – money in his blood. It was money, but he got it out of his blood.

TD: I had a good instinct for the necessity to make ends meet.

BLD: That's it.

MEH: Hopefully, we all do.

TD: And that's all I had, really.

BLD: And we lived on nothing. I mean – and I was proud of being able to live on nothing. We just didn't have any money, and it never occurred to us that we had to have any or that it was – He didn't want the responsibility. He didn't want to do what people with money did. The last thing he wanted to do was to live in any society place. I'm so grateful for

TD: I wanted to live in the woods. I made her promise she'd live in Hudson Bay with me if I wanted to

BLD: Not quite a promise. I went along with your thought that you might love me.

TD: You thought you could change my mind.

BLD: I thought that I could do it. I hoped I didn't have to do it. It would be cold.

TD: I know that some of the places I suggested to you, Schenectady, that we might live, I think I had in mind the tenements.

BLD: You were testing me.

TD: The tenement house.

MEH: The true test?

BLD: Yes.

TD: The tenement house in Chicago where my aunt and uncle lived.

BLD: But when did they give us the two thousand dollars? When did we ask Aunt Mimi for something? Was that when Rice left, or was that at Lake Eden?

TD: I don't remember.

BLD: Maybe Lake Eden.

TD: Did – ? Are you sure we asked Aunt Mimi? Do you mean to say I've forgotten that? **BLD:** I think – And Peter thought that it would never come back and that she wouldn't sue us because it was a charity gift. And you paid it back.

MEH: Now who is Mrs. Voorhees? How does that relate to this?

BLD: That's his sister.

MEH: That's your –

TD: My sister, who –

MEH: Oh, that's right. I knew –

TD: My younger sister.

MEH: Okay. Right. The one who lives in Brooklyn.

TD: Yes. That's where you came to see us the first time.

MEH: Right. Right.

BLD: And Peter was her lawyer husband handling Aunt Mimi's affairs, and said, "By the way, this is outstanding, and how about it?"

TD: That was a small amount, or something.

BLD: Fifteen hundred maybe.

TD: Was it?

BLD: Yes.

TD: Well, was it a personal loan to us or – ?

BLD: No. No. It was to the college.

TD: A loan to the college?

BLD: I think so. She –

TD: I don't think so.

BLD: It wasn't in the building program, was it?

TD: No. Oh, now wait a minute.

BLD: I think –

TD: Yes. The other time we tried to – we were desperate for money was when we started the Lake Eden building program.

BLD: I think it was then.

TD: And maybe at that – and started the building – the whole Lake Eden building program with only two thousand dollars in the bank, one thousand of which we – what I said last night – spent on cement, a carload of cement, and another thousand on the

BLD: It might have been that.

TD: And maybe she – Yes. Maybe she –

BLD: But I know that Mother wanted to make that addition to the bedroom very badly in Long Island, and they put off doing that so – to give you that money, at a time when they were kind of strapped, too, you know.

TD: Isn't it awful I've forgotten.

BLD: Yes. Well –

TD: But I still have a psychological block against remembering some of the things my family did for me. I mean, I deeply shocked my father by twitting him, as I thought, because he had never given me a hundred dollars, which his father

had given him when – for not smoking until I was twenty-one. I never smoked. And he looked it up in his old checkbooks and found he had.

BLD: And the check had been cashed.

TD: And the check had been cashed. He told me. And I had absolutely no recollection of having received it. I was bored at the idea, "Well, if he wanted to give me a hundred dollars – ". I wasn't going to smoke anyway. I had nothing to do with it. I mean, I could not get it through my mind.

MEH: And your family were not contributors to the college or – ?

BLD: No. They contributed a piano, which Olson sold.

MEH: Your family was –

TD: Darling, we paid your family four hundred dollars for that grand piano.

BLD: That's right.

TD: We bought it at the then cash value.

BLD: That's right. I forgot about that.

TD: See, she has the same tendency.

BLD: I didn't have – By then my grandmother had died. And the aunts were very New England types.

MEH: And this was the Morrow family?

BLD: No. This is –

MEH: This is what family?

BLD: This is the Loines family.

MEH: Loines.

BLD: Barbara Loines was my name. But the Morrow family was the one my sister married into.

MEH: Okay. Right.

BLD: That was Senator Morrow's family. And they were well-to-do. But we were well out of Black Mountain's needs by the time they came in. I mean, she – they had no concern with education.

TD: They had no concern for

MEH: Right.

BLD: Very conservative. Uninterested in that kind of thing. They were Smith College oriented, and his sister was the temporary president of Smith and –

MEH: Right.

TD: She was Acting President of Smith.

BLD: Very political, nice, conventional people.

TD: They were lovely people.

BLD: Trying to make it from Ohio, you know, trying to be New Yorkers. And a lack of insight that was incredible.

TD: I – Your Aunt Hilda contributed how much toward the Quiet House? A hundred dollars.

BLD: In memory of Mark.

TD: In memory of Mark.

BLD: Aunt Sylvia also sent us three or four hundred dollars, what she thought would be funeral expenses. And we didn't have any – much, and so we gave it to Bill

Reed to put a better roof on.

TD: I think my mother and father gave a small amount, you know. I know we had a small – We – that was built in memory, and we didn't want the college – and not one cent was paid for by the college. And that was somehow financed by [UNINTEL WORD]

BLD: So, you see, the thing that interests me about this is that in some way, because you'd worked five years and saved money, and we had pocket money at a time when most people didn't, that we could hire Gertrude with at a time when most people didn't –

MEH: So you paid Gertrude? The college didn't.

BLD: No. We paid Gertrude.

TD: Well, the college did give her room and board.

BLD: Uh-huh.

TD: And that was part of our salary. I mean, she was included in our household. It never came up as a problem, because room and board, as we said, cost ten cents a person a day even for the [UNINTEL WORD]

BLD: But the rumor that was – We had real money, and were just pretending to be there, and all, is a burden that the later ones cooked up for themselves. I mean, he looks like someone who knew what money was like, but that he had chosen not to have any and had never been interested in earning any and wasn't really thinking about it much.

MEH: It seems where your backgrounds might have made a difference was in approaching foundations.

BLD: Um-hm.

MEH: You know. Like the Guggenheim Foundation and the Whitney, and these, in that it simply –

TD: Well –

BLD: You knew what you were talking about.

MEH: You had a certain credibility with them when you walked in.

BLD: That's why he got the money –

MEH: Right.

TD: That's right.

BLD: That kept the college going, so that they could complain about us, you know. Well –

TD: Yes. I mean, they could –

MEH: No. But I think this is important –

BLD: Right.

MEH: – having approached foundations myself.

BLD: Right.

MEH: – not having my own credibility, you know. I mean, having a credibility –

BLD: Except your work.

MEH: No. I mean, I have my work, but they – really people – foundations really want – I haven't published at this point. They want someone who has published or whom they trust to vouch for me, essentially.

BLD: Right.

MEH: You know.

BLD: Right.

MEH: This has been a help. But by being from a family with an established name, you know – your parents were known, you know – Katherine Dreier was known.

BLD: They had a bank account way back.

MEH: Right. And so when you said, "I'm Theodore Dreier to the foundations – "

BLD: They could look him up.

MEH: They could look you up. Exactly. There was a credibility which was helpful at that time.

BLD: No. And that's why Aydelotte said, "You'd better make Ted treasurer."

MEH: Right. He understood the –

BLD: Because nobody else had ever had a nickel.

MEH: I mean, if Wes Huss had gone to these same foundations – I mean, besides having other problems –

BLD: Um-hm.

MEH: – he would have been Wes Huss. And this makes a tremendous difference I've learned in going for grants, you know, that –

BLD: At that time, you couldn't get very much money.

TD: Well, it was through my contacts also that we found Albers. I mean, it was through –

MEH: Exactly. I mean, you know, many things came through.

TD: And, I mean, my mother, when my mother found out about Albers –

MEH: This is why I had associated her with the Museum of Modern Art, because he had come through Warburg's Committee, and I thought that it was through her association with the Museum of Modern Art that you had been directed to Warburg.

TD: Well, she had – Mother did have a lot of friends on the staff –

MEH: Right.

TD: – on the board there and knew – But I all – It's funny. I have some kind of a curious mix-up has gotten in my mind between Margaret Lewisohn and – what was the name of the famous woman editor, Patterson, Sue Pat – No.

BLD: Somebody Patterson from Long Island.

TD: Alicia Patterson –

BLD: Uh-huh.

TD: – was the daughter of the owner and publisher of the New York Daily News, you know, Colonel Patterson.

MEH: Right. I know the name.

TD: And that was the biggest paper other than the New York Times in – I mean, it was the most successful, financially, I guess, even more than the New York Times, at that time, in New York. And his daughter, Alicia Patterson, who did she marry? She was Peggy – No. She's married a Guggenheim, didn't she? Who did she marry?

BLD: You know I wasn't there.

TD: I know – I can't remember. In some way or other I got Alicia Patterson and Margaret Lewisohn mixed up.

BLD: Totally different types.

TD: So that I – They're totally different characters. She started the Long – that big paper out on Long Island or bought it and made a big thing out of it, you know, that's published in Long Beach. You know, it's the biggest paper in suburban New York. I mean, the whole of Long Island takes it, practically. It's a really big paper.

BLD: Can't think of the name of it at the moment.

TD: I can't think of the name of it. Anyway –

MEH: But it's a big paper.

TD: I guess she just – she was another close friend of mother's. And she came – I guess she didn't con – It was Margaret Lewisohn who – I can't remember which one it was that was on the board. Margaret Lewisohn, I'm sure.

MEH: Margaret Lewisohn's name rings a bell with me.

TD: She was on the board. She was on the board. And I think Alicia Patterson – Alicia Patterson came down to Black Mountain in our first year to see Albers. And that's why I somehow – I think that's what got me mixed up, because they were both –

BLD: But when they found it out –

TD: They were both sources of interest in Albers. And I never knew them well. And Mother –

BLD: But do you think it was through Mr. and Mrs. Lewisohn that Mother heard of Albers?

TD: I think it was through Mrs. Lewisohn that mother heard of Albers.

BLD: And Philip Johnson.

TD: And said that Philip Johnson knew this man and that he was available, and a wonderful teacher, and told me about it. And then Rice and I went to see Philip Johnson, and he showed us – he told us about Albers, showed us pictures of Albers' students' work –

MEH: Right.

TD: And we said, "He's the man we want".

[END OF TRANSCRIPT. END OF INTERVIEW.]