

STAFFORD COUNTY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW OF GEORGE L, GORDON, JR.
BY MOLLY PYNN

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GEORGE GORDON, JR.

Stafford County Oral History Project.

Q: Mr. Gordon, could you give us your full name?

A: George L. Gordon, Jr.

Q: What does the L stand for?

A: Lawyer(?).

Q: Thank you. When were you born?

A: 1918.

Q: What month?

A: November.

Q: November. And where were you born?

A: Albermarle County.

Q: Albermarle.

A: Virginia.

Q: Were you born in a hospital or were you born at home?

A: Born at home.

Q: And had your family lived there very long? Did they live in Albermarle or-

A: They had not lived in that particular house very long, no.

Q: Whereabouts in Albermarle?

A: At Mt. ...

Q: If they hadn't lived there very long, where was the family home? Where did they come from before they went to Albermarle?

A: Both my mother and father were natives of Albermarle County, but their family home was not where I was born.

Q: Where was the family home?

A: One of them was at Ivory(?) and the other over next to...

Q: When did they come to Stafford County?

A: About 1919, I think.

Q: Why did they come?

A: My uncle was a doctor here and my father--they needed surveyors so my father came here.

Q: And what kind of work did your family do?

A: He was a surveyor.

Q: He was a surveyor? Did any other members of the family work?

A: No, my mother was a substitute school teacher occasionally, but no--

Q: Was she a school teacher before she married or--

A: Yes.

Q: Did the family farm?

A: We used to farm. Had...

Q: How large was the farm?

A: Wasn't a farm--a truck pass.

Q: Okay, how large through the truck pass?

A: Had about one-half acre we'd cultivate.

Q: About one-half acre?

A: About one-quarter of an acre in strawberries.

Q: How many acres in the whole place?

A: About eleven.

Q: Did you use mules or tractor?

A: Neither.

Q: Neither. Do you remember if there was any sort of farmer's organization in the county?

A: Not when I was a small boy that I knew anything about it.

Q: Well, if you didn't know anything about it, I guess you weren't a member either. Okay, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

A: One brother.

Q: One brother. And were you the youngest or the oldest?

A: The youngest.

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Q: The baby of the family. And you are not married, so we can skip all the rest of those questions. Well, in what areas of the county have you lived?

A: Just in this general of area here.

Q: And what general area is that?

A: I lived in Garrisonville. When I first came here. Then we moved to our present home in about two years after we came.

Q: Which is where?

A: About a mile north of Stafford Courthouse.

Q: Is there any name to this area here? Courthouse area or--it's Bellshill Road, but-

A: Oh, Bellshill(?) was the name of the Byron place. There's no other name that I know of associated with this area.

Q: How did you get to work?

A: Well, I--when I first started to work, I worked on the road and I caught ... I came to work at the courthouse. I sometimes drove and sometimes walked.

Q: Was there much crime in the county when you were growing up?

A: Very little. Oh, an occasional murder or two or something like that, but they didn't count that much. Almost no thievery.

Q: Mr. MacGregor said an occasional fight, but you let that run its course. Do you think Stafford County was a good place for children to grow up?

A: I never knew any other place to grow up so I imagine it's fine.

Q: Good answer. Did people move in and out a lot or was the population pretty stable?

A: It was pretty stable mostly.

Q: Were there any community activities?

A: Not--very little when I was small, that I know anything about.

Q: Why not? People were too busy working or--?

A: Well, there just much community activities. The church was right much a source of the social contact. And the rest of the time, you were busy.

Q: Things like Red Cross and so forth, when did they start up?

A: Red Cross first started out in the county in--World War 1--1918. Started on Miss Anne E. Moncure's front porch.

Q: It did?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: And who started that chapter? Who was the nucleus of that?

A: Anne E's family was the real nucleus of it here in the county.

Q: Any other activities later on that you think of besides the Red Cross?

A: Not a great deal. Even the Red Cross, after war time was over--wasn't very active. Later on we had a (Stafford) Association, but--and then the Home Demonstration Club started out.

Q: Was your mother a member of the Home Demonstration Club?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: She went to some meetings, but she was never one of the Home Demonstration Club people, no. One thing, she didn't have any way of getting to the meetings, mostly.

Q: Is it a possibility that was why there weren't many community activities?

A: I don't know.

Q: Was there any sort of War Bond effort in the county?

A: There was, yeah, in World War I and, of course, afterwards in World War II, but of course, I was too small to know much about World War I.

Q: Yeah. Who spearheaded that effort?

A: It also started on Miss Anne E's porch, I understand.

Q: Famous front porch, huh? What church did you attend?

A: Well, again, my mother was Presbyterian and my father was an Episcopalian and we attended the Methodist Church.

Q: That was a happy compromise. That was as a child--

A: Well, I attended there as a child until we had transportation of our own. You see, my father never had an automobile. And the church was--Register Chapel was the closest church we could go to.

Q: You walked to it.

A: Later on when I got transportation, I went to attend the Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg. And then when my mother could no longer get up the steps at the Presbyterian Church, I started going to the Aquia Church.

Q: And you are a member of Aquia Church now?

A: Yes.

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Q: Well, how did your father get to work if he didn't have an automobile?

A: People who wanted a survey, they came and got him.

Q: Good way to do it. Did he ever ride horseback to work?

A: We didn't have a horse.

Q: You didn't have a horse either. It was either walk or get picked up, huh? What kind of medical facilities were there here in the county?

A: A country doctor, that's all.

Q: Were there--well, who were the doctors in this area?

A: Of course, my uncle, Doctor Churchill Gordon, there was a Doctor Payne up

in that area, and Doctor Patton(?) and Doctor Lee(?) was the main doctors that I know up in that area.

Q: Did you go to their house or did they--he come to yours?

A: He came to yours.

Q: How about dentists? What did you do for a toothache?

A: We went to Fredericksburg if you ever went to a dentist.

Q: No dentist in the county?

A: No.

Q: Were there any midwives that you know of?

A: I wouldn't know. They had--I knew--I had a general knowledge I knew there were right many of them around, but I don't know much about that.

Q: How about electricity? When did it first come to the county? Do you remember?

A: We got it when I was about--oh, must have been seven or eight years old.

Q: Was that a big day in your household?

A: Yeah, right much difference, you know. Electricity came to Stafford and came up just about as far as our house and stopped. It didn't go any further for a good many years. I can remember when the man wired our house and he ran an electric wire through an antique picture frame my mother had up in the closet. And she couldn't get it off for years.

Q: Remember when they brought that blasted(?) telephone in?

A: Telephone was here about all along. We didn't have any. But the telephone was the Fredericksburg Toluca Telephone Company.

Q: It was the what?

A: The Fredericksburg Toluca Telephone Company.

Q: I didn't know that.

A: And it went from Toluca to Fredericksburg. And the central was there--Jinx Gallahan's wife and mother were the central.

Q: And where was Toluca?

A: I'm shocked and grieved that anybody doesn't know where Toluca is.

Q: I know where Toluca is, but someone else might not know.

A: Now, you would say it was at the entrance to Garrisonville subdivision.

Q: Where did it get its name, Toluca?

A: We think it was an Indian name. But I've never been able to find out where it came from.

Q: Where was the telephone office up there? Was there an office up there?

A: It was in the--the switchboard was in the Callahan's home.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: You can see, the two Misses Gallahan manned it 24 hours a day and the switchboard was in their home. A small switchboard--wasn't more than, as I remember it, more than three by, oh maybe, four--was all the board was there. And it was--that you rang--all party line. But it was wonderful system. On the Fredericksburg Toluca Telephone Company, Miss Annie's people owned the company to start with.

Q: They did?

A: And when I was a boy, they had two people that were employed--Mr. Gill and Mr. Harrison did the work on the lines. And I remember Mr. Harrison was a great character. I remember that he told me of the success of his son. That he had worked so hard and done so well and got up to be next to the head man. And then I found out there were only two men working.

Q: Can you remember--do you know who had the first phone in the county?

A: No, I don't know. That was before my time.

Q: That was before your time.

A: Incidentally, though, the records of the phone company are in Miss Annie's third story of the house right now.

Q: Okay, you mentioned that the switchboard was in the Callahan home. Whereabouts was the Gallahan home?

A: On 610 - right in the house back of where Ralph and Susie Callahan live. In old Gallahan house.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Almost next to the Brafferton Shopping Center now.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: It was the home of William E. Gallahan--known locally as Jinx.

Q: As Jinx Gallahan, okay. Okay, let's switch the subject and do you know who had the first farm tractor?

A: No.

Q: Don't remember.

A: Wasn't anybody close to me.

Q: Wasn't working on your place, huh? Okay. Where was the first paved road? Remember that?

A: Number One Highway was the only paved road at that time.

Q: When was that paved?

A: I don't--

Q: Or built?

A: Well, part of it was the old road that's been there many, many years, but it was built in stages and I don't remember on when it was first concrete.

Q: Do you know about when it was? 1920 or--

A: I wouldn't have remember 1920.

Q: That's right. You were--

A: Well, I know it wasn't paved in 1920.

Q: You were playing with your blocks then.

A: Yeah.

Q: Where did your family shop? Where did they get groceries?

A: Mostly at the Stafford Courthouse.

Q: Was there a grocery store there at Stafford Courthouse?

A: There were several grocery stores there.

Q: Who had grocery stores?

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A: Oh, I can't remember the earliest one--Bob Smith had a store there. We used to buy feed and stuff from him. And the Massey store--I've forgotten who was running that before Massey--but then the Cooper's had a butcher shop there that we used to get our meats from.

Q: Where was the butcher shop located?

A: It's in the parking lot of the courthouse right now.

Q: Oh, okay. And Massey Store is, too. That was a little bit north of that butcher shop.

A: And then later on, the--during that period, the store that used to be MacGregor's Store--was also there... I don't remember who owned that before. I think Miss Shacklette ran it before MacGregor.

Q: Where was the feed store?

A: Up where the electronic TV place is now.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Radio Shack.

Q: South of the courthouse.

A: Yeah.

Q: How often did they go to get groceries? Frequently? Daily or--

A: Well, we didn't buy many groceries.

Q: Just the staples?

A: Well, we didn't buy many staples. Coffee and kerosene and--

Q: Flour and sugar?

A: Sugar and flour were about all we bought. Some ...

Q: Raised your own.

A: Raised our own vegetables--canned them all.

Q: Chickens, meat--beef. Where was the closest firehouse?

A: There wasn't any.

Q: What did you do in case of a fire?

A: Watched the place burn up.

Q: Well, of course, everybody was required to fight a fire, weren't they?

A: Yeah.

Q: Get the water out of the ponds. Well, do you remember when the first firehouse was built?

A: Oh, must have been recent years.

Q: When was recent years?

A: Oh, ten or fifteen years ago.

Q: The one down by the courthouse, too? Well, when did they form the voluntary - volunteer fire department? About then?

A: About then, yeah.

Q: Before then, it was just neighbor helping out neighbor?

A: Of course, the Falmouth Fire Department had organized before then. That was organized around 1942 or '3 in that era of time. But that was the first in the county. It did not serve this area though.

Q: Who was the postmaster or mistress?

A: Oh, the postmaster was E.S. Moore. He was succeeded by Miss Vergie Dent.

Q: Well, where was the post office?

A: Where they bulldozed down the--

Q: Bulldozed out from what?

A: No, it was right there--I think it's an apartment building now--Mr. Moore built it. While he was still postmaster, he built that square brick building there on just this side of what used to be the Sunoco station--just this side.

Q: Right there in the courthouse area. When did they start home delivery of the mail? Remember that?

A: We got our mail delivered home early. I think we always did have it because we were on the Star Route. The carrier went from Stafford to Garrisonville and he passed by our door. There wasn't any RFD--Rural Free Delivery. You went to the post office. The post office didn't deliver the mail.

Q: Did you attend school?

A: Unwillingly.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: In Stafford.

Q: And how far did you go?

A: In school?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I--got through high school.

Q: And you managed to graduate from high school. Let's talk a little bit about a typical day.

A: What period of my life?

Q: Well, after you're grown and you started working. But what time of the day did you go to work?

A: When we talk of the days when I worked on the road, I got up at 4:30am and milked the cows, caught the truck about six o'clock and got back home about six o'clock in the evening. And then milked the cows and went to bed.

Q: Okay, after you worked on the truck and you started working at the courthouse--

A: Well, then I went to work between 8:00 and 8:30am, got home between 4:00 and 5:00pm. That was the normal hours. But, of course, when all was appraising, i wouldn't come home until dark. I'd work until dark. But I had a rule that I never got but one set of people out of bed before I went home.

Q: What did you do for amusement? In your young days?

A: We read, we played all games. Like my brother and I played chess, we'd walk. Walk in the woods. Had out own games that we used at home. There was--I don't think I went to the movies more than about an average of once a year, if that.

Q: Of course, there was no sports and recreation and that sort of thing at the time. No organized activity for young people. How much spending money did you have? On an average? Did your folks give you an allowance or what you earned or-

A: Oh, I made some money picking strawberries before. We used to get two cents a quart for picking them. And I--that was the--I made all the spending money I had.

Q: If you did any, earn it, there wasn't any extra for you?

A: No, I never heard of such thing as an allowance. It was depression days. There was no surveying and my father was--actually there was no work. And as I said before, we did trucking--we had a strawberry patch we raised strawberries. My brother and I worked in the patch--weeded by hand and worked it by hand. And we would make--or our family would make about \$200 to \$300 a year selling straw - berries. And that was our cash crop. And ... some years ... all the money we had coming in at all.

Q: That was pretty lean. Lean years there. Of course, you could grow your

own food so you did eat.

A: Yeah, we had a cow and some years we had a hog and ... And we would start with when we--my father would cut the hay with a scythe and rake it with wooden-hand rakes, loaded it on a cart and pulled it up by hand and put it up in the barn.

Q: That's the hard way. Can you remember any humorous experiences of your childhood or young adulthood years?

A: Not particularly.

Q: Play any tricks on your brother?

A: No, we didn't do too much of that.

Q: Can you tell us about the rooster?

A: You mean Dingle Hooper?

Q: I guess... Dingle Hooper.

Q: Well, it was a bared rock, I reckon you call it, ...some cousins of ours came up from Mississippi, found him walking down the streets of Fredericksburg ... in the middle of the street, walking along by himself. Where he came from, I don't know. They picked him up and brought him out to us. We had some hens. And then developed into a very fine rooster, anything that moved and he--when he was just a young rooster, he used to fight the ducks. He'd jump over top their heads and spur them as he went across. He used to fight the sheets on the line-- the wind would flap them, the rooster would go up there and spur at them and hop up there and peck them. And we used--of course, my brother and I used to aggravate it; we'd both throw rocks at it. Things like that. And he would get all--maybe 25 yards from you so it was a little far--he could see the rock. He'd crow and look at you and you'd throw something at him. And he'd crow some more. And--such a find good-looking rooster. My mother couldn't go out the back door without the dog with her. The dog had the ups on the rooster. The dog would roll the rooster on the ground and the rooster would pay some attention to him. So mother had to have a broom with her or the dog with her when she went outside the back door.

Q: What did your mother say about her sheets? We don't want to put it on the tapes, huh?

A: We had a cousin who raised chickens for a living. A Miss Connelly(?)--came down from Spotsylvania--cousin Mary Connelly. And she admired that rooster--a fine rooster--one of the best looking roosters you ever saw in your life.

And she said she would take him and take him home to her flock because he was such a fine specimen. Well, the other--later on that day, she was staying a couple of days with us, we happened to be out in the yard, she bent over to pick up something, and the rooster landed between her shoulders and she fought for some reason, you didn't fight him off just one time, you know, you had to keep a battle with him. But she came back to the house and said she wouldn't have the pesky thing.

Q: Was the...

A: He lived right long life. He finally went the way of all roosters, but he--I reckon with the most survigorous rooster I've ever seen.

Q: What was that word you used?

A: Survigorous rooster.

Q: You want to spell that for me?

A: No, you spell it like it sounds. But it means one that one who survives with vigor.

Q: Okay.

A: And that described that ... rooster to a T.

Q: I take it we're going to have a problem here.

A: Of course, we used to fight with the rooster a whole lot. He'd fight back. Sometimes, we'd chase him and he'd just stay right out of your--oh, one or two inches from your hand he wouldn't try to go any further. You just do that--you'd run him and he'd run right in front of you and he'd stop and crow. And so one day, I got a switch and held it behind my back and chased him and he started doing the same thing--staying out of finger-tip reach, so I hit him with the switch and Dingle was awfully insulted. But, while I learned a lot about roosters, I-but we have the expression "blood in his eye."

Q: Uh-huh.

Now, if you look at a rooster that's going to fight, you'll--always his eyes will turn red. You can tell a rooster if he's going to attack you is that he almost--everytime, his eyes will change color and the color will be red.

Q: A good bit of information.

A: Oh, I used that tremendously going around assessing 'cause I've never had a rooster attack me yet. I know what to expect. And of course, a rooster will zero on--anything that moves. He comes up to you and you should move a foot, he'll keep his eye right on that foot. But if you wiggle one foot and then kick him with the other, he won't see it coming.

Q: Did you figure that out?

A: Yeah. Well, I had a lot of practice.

Q: Sounds like he was your amusement... in your spare time.

A: He was a great character, that rooster.

Q: Oh, yeah.

A: Of course, it served me good stead because when I used to appraise going around from house to house, people had farm flocks that ran loose--all kinds of rooster will attack somebody that came up to it didn't know. And I kicked many a rooster by shuffling one foot and kicking him with the other. And when you see a rooster out in the yard and he comes up toward you, look at his eyes--if they're red, you'd better watch out.

Q: Stand on one foot and get the other one ready, huh? Did you ever take an important trip anywhere?

A: I went as far as Falmouth occasionally.

Q: You must have gone outside of the county.

A: Well, I went to Richmond some. Once I went up to New York--when I was late teenager, but that's all.

Q: Why did you go to New York?

A: World's Fair.

Q: World's Fair--1939. Is that when it was?

A: Huh?

Q: '39, wasn't it?

A: I don't remember.

Q: other than that, you just didn't travel around very much? Were there any annual

events that you traveled to, such as fairs or church homecomings, or reunions?

A: Not during the time that I can remember...

Q: Not much going on around here, huh? What was your family's reaction to strangers who came into the community?

A: About the same reaction to them as it would be to anybody else. My father and mother, both, traveled right much and were accustomed to meeting people.

Q: Of course, you didn't have many people moving in, did you?

A: No, but a few. You see, my mother had taught school in various places in the South and had been to Europe. And my father had worked all over the United States, and even in Central America surveying. They were perfectly accustomed to meeting people.

Q: Was there any rivalry between your community and another? When you were a boy?

A: I didn't take part of it. You heard tales about it, but it, but I didn't--it had just about died out largely by the time I came along. Prior to that, I've heard tales of right much rivalry.

Q: Who--what sections?

A: Any, any.

Q: Any?

A: Any neighborhood and any other neighborhood.

Q: Uh-huh. Who were the local leaders when you were growing up? People that you all looked up to in the community?

A: I don't reckon many prominent people, but I don't know that I looked up to any of them.

Q: How about ... Well, your mother and father were prominent people in the county.

A: Yeah.

Q: Anybody else?

A: Well, there were people who were politically prominent, but of course, the

Moncure family was prominent in church and politics, Frank Powers was prominent, Jim Ashby was, Dan Chichester and so on, but they were mostly in politics.

Q: Politics? Were there any characters in your community? Someone who acted in an independent manner, for instance?

A: Most everybody was a character in his own right in those days. People didn't try to conform to be just exactly like everybody else.

Q: No one stood out from the others?

A: No, they didn't stand out because they were all characters and they didn't stand out from the crowd because they were all independent souls more or less.

Q: You don't have any humorous tales to tell about?

A: No, I don't know of any particular humorous tales to tell you, but let us say everybody you met was a character in his own tight.

Q: Well, this is true. Okay. Church activities--well, you went to the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian and now Aquia Church. Who do you think was the best preacher that you ever had?

A: You shouldn't ask me that because I haven't ever been a particular admirer with any preacher. I expect Mr. Campbell was the--I admired him more than any other.

Q: Mr. Campbell was at Aquia Church?

A: Aquia Church.

Q: Who was the worst you had?

A: Mr. Boyd.

Q: Mr. Boyd? Where was he?

A: He was at Aquia Church also.

Q: Aquia Church also. Any tales you want to tell about the best or the worst preacher?

A: No, there was one preacher down in Falmouth, but that was during the flood down there. That he came down--he lived up on the hill, a very nice home. He came down there where we were working on the flood and all. Started praying ... and

standing around with his hands folded. And Mary Gordon Garrison was putting a box of clothes--worked for the Welfare Department--she was pulling a great big box of clothes out of the car to carry them up there to people who needed them. And Mary Gordon was real slim and light and weighed 90 pounds soaking wet and

(A: continued)

the preacher stood there, watching them. The box was twice as big as Mary Gordon. He watched them and he said, "You'd better watch out--the bottom's going to fall out."

Q: Which flood was that? 1918? Well, it wasn't 1918--'42 flood?

A: Probably no--yeah, probably '42. Later on, when I went assess the man--the preacher--he folded his hands and looked real pious and told me that my predecessor had appraised him and never assessed him for personal property. So I looked at him and I was just as proud and sanctimonious as he was, and I told him that I didn't think it was right for me to deprive him of the privilege of helping to support his government. So I assessed him just like everybody else.

Q: He was pleased with you. Mr. Gordon, who were your school mates?

A: I don't remember them all, but in our graduating class there was Randolph Knight and Quentin Knight and Hilda Heflin, Hilda Haynes, now, Mac Moncure and myself, and Vernon Shelton, those were the more prominent ones I guess, and Edith Fleming, Stamper she was then.

Q: You had a good size graduating class.

A: It was, I think it was sixteen of us, but the odd part about it is most of us stayed with in the county usually those who graduated that went somewhere else like to Washington or somewhere else to work. But in our class, more of us stayed here than was normal.

Q: Quite a few of you worked at the courthouse.

A: Yeah. Randolph Knight's wife is clerk of the court, Mack has been treasurer and I've been Commissioner of the Revenue. Edith Fleming worked for me for twenty years as deputy, and Hilda Haynes still works some for Mack in his office.

Q: Where did you go to high school? Where was the school located?

A: At Stafford.

Q: At Stafford. And where was your graduation exercise?

A: At the courthouse itself.

Q: In the courtroom?

A: Yeah, they were doing some work at the school at that time and we had all our graduation things in the courtroom. We sat in the jury box.

Q: That was quite unusual. Maybe that's why you all ended up working at the courthouse.

A: Might have been symbolic. I don't know about that. I think we were about the only class that I can remember that graduated--had the ceremonies right in the courtroom itself.

Q: What year did you graduate? Okay, you say it was about 1935?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: That's about 50 years ago.

A: Yeah. Our class had the first reunion we ever had was our 50th reunion.

Q: And how many came back for the reunion?

A: Let's see, I think there was eight of us I believe. Three girls that were living all didn't come--two, three didn't come.

Q: I heard tell that you graduated valedictorian of your class. Is that true?

A: I squeaked by.

Q: You squeaked by? Any school shenanigans you can think of?

A: I was innocent. Perfect little angel when I was in school.

Q: I don't think that's what I've heard. Mr. Gordon, can you tell us something about being Commissioner of the Revenue? When you started working?

A: I started working... on April Fool's Day in 1940. I always thought that date was probably symbolic. And I became Commissioner in the summer of 1942. Been Commissioner ever since.

Q: Were you elected?

A: I was appointed to start with.

Q: To start with.

A: When the other man left. And I've been elected in succeeding elections since then.

Q: How many elections has that been?

A: One every four years. In those days, the job was intirely different than what it is now. Very little income tax to fool with because nobody had any money. And we used to go from door to door appraising things and, of course, I got to know the county right well because I went to every house every year. And of course, I got a lot of information about the neighborhood, localities, and whatnot as I went around. The conditions, the attitude of the people was different in those days. You could drive all day long and never find a locked door. And the people were honest. Of course, you had your whole share of people who tried to avoid taxes like you always do, but not as much a problem as we have now. People were honest. The People's Bank, when it was first organized in '21, went for about ten or twelve years without losing a single cent on a... loan during that period. If you look at what the banks do now, why you'd think that's a ninety-day wonder. But the character of people that they lent to, local people in this area, were honest. They paid their debts.

Q: This was through the depression years?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Was it a one-man office? When did you start getting some help?

A: Oh, I--I was deputy for the first year and a half and as deputy, I assessed one-half the county and did office work. Then after I became Commissioner, why I had to do the whole county and office work. I hired Lillian Knight(?) as my deputy. She worked up until the time her daughter was born.

Q: And then you got Curly.

A: Yes.

Q: And---

A: Then Edith Fleming came to work and as the office got bigger and bigger

and bigger and I hired more and more people. Edith came aboard about 23 or 24 years ago and stayed with me about 20 years. The job is actually easier now than it was then because you don't put in as long hours. And it's more diversified-you can train a person to do a specific job whereas before everybody had to know how to do everything and that required a whole lot more knowledge than it does now

Q: And how many employees do you have now? So you think you have about thirteen?

A: Well, if you count--part-time people.

Q: Depending on the season?

A: Seasonally--what extra help I have, I have in as part-time.

Q: Uh-huh. And you have personal property and real estate and--

A: State income.

Q: State income. And still assess the real estate assessments?

A: Yeah, I do the... real estate assessments.

Q: Well, things have changed just a little bit then since you first went to work there?

A: Oh, a different world. The experience that you had and what you learned in the first 25 years,

doesn't mean a thing now 'cause everything is new.

Q: I suppose you have computers now, huh?

A: We've got computers. They don't take the place of knowing what you're doing.

Q: The human brain, right. Thank you very much, Mr. Gordon.