

ORAL HISTORY --DR. ALFRED HOLMAN INTERVIEWED BY DR. FRANK ERATH.

Dr. Erath: My name is Frank Erath. I'm a Professor in the English Department here at the English Department at Trenton State College, and I have been here for eighteen years. I have come today to interview my former boss, the man who hired me here, Dr. Alfred Holman. I remember the day I came for my first interview___, and when I went home my wife said to me, well, how was the chairman? And I said to her, if there ever was anybody who looks like he ought to be chairman of the English Department, he's it. That was my first day here. What about your first day here? Where did you come from?

Dr. Holman: I was at Buffalo State Teachers College, and in those days this was called Trenton State Teachers College, and as we were saying before there are still many people in the area, old-timers, who still call this State Teachers College, and in my later years here I would say, come on, it's called Trenton State College now. Anyway, I had a comparable job in the English Department there, although I was only an Assistant Professor in those days, and I heard that there was an opening here, or might be an opening, and this school had English majors, so that's why I preferred coming here.

Erath: Buffalo had no English, majors?

Holman: No, primarily Art majors, Industrial Arts. So, when I was going to the National Council of Teachers of English meeting in Atlantic City, I made an appointment for the day before to stop here and to meet the President.

Erath: Could you tell us that better story about your first day here?

Holman: That was in 1946 when I came. We were met at the railroad station, Lyda and I, by Raymond who preceded Harvey...and he had a station wagon and he brought us, and when we went out of the city, we asked him if it was going to be a country campus, and he said, "have you ever met President West before?" and I said no, and he said, "you're going to be surprised." And Lyda said, "what do you mean we're going to be surprised?" And he said, "you wait, you'll see." So as we drove out and came in the campus, and he went around, and I think the President and vice-president were over near Kendall Hall in those days, he said, there he is, look. I said, oh, is that the president? I said, sure he does, and he was. He was the BOSS, and you know all through the years I was at Trenton State, I was under 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Presidents, West was always THE BOSS. He controlled things so and in those days things were much less democratic too. But, he was a nice man, and he listened to you, and although he controlled the conversations and wasted no time ever...My first day he showed us where we were going to stay on campus, a little house on campus which I guess later became the president's house, down on the lake.

Erath: It eventually became one of the headquarters of the English Department.

Holman: That's right. It was one of our numerous offices, so it was very pleasant, and he was pleasant, and we talked. He knew the new and former president of my college. We had a long conversation, he was a great conversationalist, and he always reminded you he was a Harvard

man, which I wasn't, I was University of Cincinnati, but we got along great.

Erath: He hired you the spot?

Holman: Yes, just about. So I went back to my college, and told them.

Erath: So you came here first in the fall.

Holman: In the summer of 1947.

Erath: Okay. What was it like then? How many students, how many faculty?

Holman: The place was so different. There were about 700 students in those days, and about 70 faculty. There were 7 full professors in those days, and I thought West was going to hire me as an associate, but he hired me as a full, which I was delighted about and extremely pleased.

Erath: Weren't there a number of people who were hired that same year?

Holman: Oh yes, that was a big year.

Erath: Was there an expansion in the student body or retirements? Why were so many people hired that year? Who were some of the other people who were hired that year?

Holman: Roy Van Ness, Hope Jackman who just retired, Leon Walcott, who retired ahead some time ago. Anyway, there must have been about 9 of us.

Erath: Bernice Casper and Jessie Turk?

Holman: That was a big crowd.

Erath: People who stayed a long while, ---and Herman Ward...

Holman: Oh right, Herman came in the same year. He was in our department, Professor of English, only he was an associate. He was always a little angry that they gave me a full. He had a prestigious Ph. D. from Princeton, and I had my degree from the University of Cincinnati, but Herman and I were always good friends. And I always respected him. I thought he was just great. There were five of us in our department, old Dr. Hewitt, (Mr. Hewitt) Miss Cunningham, Dorothy Barton, and I guess the first year we hired Miss Martin. That was the whole department, and Miss Cunningham retired, Charlie Hewitt retired, and he told me, he said "I love the department, but it's too new for me." Did you ever know him?

Erath: No.

Holman: Cute, cute.

Erath: There were 700 students you told me and 70 faculty and as far as the English Department

was concerned, what kind of courses were you mainly teaching in those days?

Holman: Well, there were pretty standard courses, and the college really was a teacher's college, so that they taught a lot of books--weird really--that they were going to teach in high school. These people were all going out to teach. Herman and I broke that pattern almost immediately, and we hired Arthur Tiffany pretty soon, and Arthur Tiffany was very very interested in the world literature course.

Erath: There was no world literature at all when you got here. (Silas Marner) The world literature course you started almost the first year you got here.

Holman: Almost immediately. We made every sophomore, take it and Arthur Tiffany, as you know, was always interested in film, so we instituted a film program very early. All students--we could control the department--it was a small group, and so we could determine what we would teach. We would get together, we were only 1-15 people in the department, and we would determine what would be the core books. And that was part of the delight because the students would talk about the books in their dormitories, and we thought there was a great deal of interplay.

Erath: When I first came it seemed so unusual to me that all, even department heads, would not only teach English, but also would teach world literature. It was absolutely overwhelming--I think that is something that is quite a serious deficiency now. That same feeling of interplay outside of the classroom. The first department meeting I attended I was sure I was never going to survive. It was a shouting match.

Holman: Remember when Vivian--somebody--was there. Her husband taught at Princeton for a year, and she came in and Doug was on one of his usual Sabbaticals or he was on a Fulbright some place. Vivian came in to teach, and she said "Al--I love your department, but those department meetings are the worst headache. You were a screamer." We all were screamers.

Erath: It was a shouting match. You had to make yourself heard over the din.

Holman: That was another thing when the College was small. I always had my classrooms in the same room over there in Green Hall and right next to it was a little office where 3 or 4 of us in the English Department were. I could walk in open a door to my classroom. This idea of moving around was so different, kept growing and growing and they kept moving our offices. We were on the first floor of Green, we were in the basement. On the first floor of Green Hall we were near Vernetta Decker, Dean of Women, and Vernetta said, "Al, I love you, but you scream so I hate your office near mine."

Erath: I heard that about you.

Holman: Oh, you too. (laughter)

Erath: Let's talk about your years as Chairman for a minute. You were saying some of the things that were taught in those early years. How about Freshman English in those years? Why don't we

talk about that

Holman: I thought that was very exciting because one of our basic texts was the New York Times paper, and the daily paper that the people read, and then we used Hayakawa to take the linguistic approach, and the kids really liked the course because they thought. It made them think about things. We told them we don't have any answers--you have to determine them and reason through it, and we also thought the writing was helpful, and people who came into the department later who thought really that it should be more a literary type, and I think that is why we broke up eventually, but I liked it, you liked it. You were always an "L and C."

Erath: It was real interesting after we changed, I think in the late sixties, we broke Freshman English up into 3-4 separate courses that a number of us went on teaching--what is it called now, "Communication in Writing," which I still teach, and Alex still teaches and Fred and several other people. Now again we have begun to talk very seriously the last six months about going back to some common English course. Maybe we can recapture some of the intellectual stimulation that we all had. Being able to sit and talk about things together.

Holman: And you know that wasn't when we were 5 or 10 in the department. We had it even when we were 25 and 30.

Erath: My first year there were 16 of us. The department meetings sounded like there were 66 (there were really only about 16). That interchange was very helpful to me, especially when I was new, both to the campus and new as a professor. Anyways, we were still in you early days a teacher training institution, so the subject matter courses, were they still being taught primarily with the attitude, okay, the students are listening--

Holman: No, by the time you had come—even though both Herman and I were always interested in the methodology and worked with the Education Department, and we both went out to supervise practice teaching in English. Our department had pretty well become a liberal arts type English Department, and I was criticized for having people like you, Bob Mehlman, Jack Thomas, -- the whole bunch that came from Rutgers because some of the other chairmen said, and they said it to the others. "You know you hired too many people who are straight Ph.D'ers." Well, this is a college—that's what we want. Well, they haven't had any experience in high school how can they be in a teacher's college, and I said even way back then--of course we know that too that we would eventually to become a general purpose college, but there was resistance even downtown--the Commissioner downtown _____ (pg. 4) was fighting the idea of liberal arts students, and when we started liberal arts here he only allowed 50 students to come. He struggled against it, and you know we had a wonderful relationship and the department did too. And Lahna Diskin came in (pg.5). She was one of our students too. She went out to teach in high school. Even though we had a good relationship with the education department, we were a strong liberal arts.

Erath: Immediately preceding my arrival here you had hired people like Milton Levin, Henry Beechhold, Fred Kiley, and Doug Ford, all of whom came out of Ph.D, programs, we talked a bit about faculty change--how many years was it that you served us as Chairman? How many years did we let you be Chairman?

Holman: '47 to '68 --21 years. I remember when. I went on sabbatical, and we always had an appointed chairman. I was chosen by West. I was the chairman so I had to remain as the chairman. That was true in every department. So in 1968, when I was going on a Sabbatical leave--was going to the Pacific in Japan, I thought this is a great time to step down, and so we talked it over in the department and the department decided that they would like to elect the chairman do you remember this? We had a meeting with Gillenwater--in the president's office, -- the whole department.

Erath: Yes--that's where you told the whole department you were going. We knew you were going on sabbatical and that is when you told us you were resigning the chairmanship which left most of us kind of limp, kind of surprised.

Holman: You remember most of us talked it over president with Gillenwater, the president. He said okay, you can vote your chairman in, providing I have a veto power, and the department said all right. So you chose Milton Levin who is now the present chairman. He's the chairman for the third time.

Erath: He's doing another stretch right now. He was a bad boy so we had to punish him.

Holman: He's a good chairman.

Erath: Yes he is--absolutely--just great.

Holman--so after that --you see that was the beginning of something in this college then. Being active as you and I were on the Faculty Senate, we asked the whole college to go on an elected chairman system, and some of us who were on that committee had to go around to different departments, and we got resistance in Phys. Ed and in music at first, but we finally got them. Well, the president stepped in and said no, we want the elected chairman and everybody agreed and now that is standard.

Erath: it's part of the contract now.

Holman: I was going to say another thing we were the first to do was the evaluation of classes by the students of the professors.

Erath: When did you start that? Do you remember?

Holman: Way back. It was on a voluntary basis and then the department decided everybody must do it, and you remember several times when we weren't keeping people and putting them on tenure, we used their poor evaluations against them. See we had that evidence so then a few other departments started it, and then finally I think the Senate made it a requirement. And it is a good thing. You should know what the student thinks.

Erath: Absolutely. The students ask you sometimes, well, what do you use these things for?

They say for example, you're a full professor (p.6), you're not up for tenure, you're not going to get promoted.

Holman: What do you say?

Erath: I usually with the first thing I want to know--this is especially true of the writing courses--what worked well? What did you think didn't work well? Do you want me to change something and sometimes I have resisted making a change because it is something I think they ought to have that they might not agree with.

Holman: Many years ago I had an experience with a very bright class--I was teaching Faulkner classes and five students ... one was the editor in chief of the paper, and one was the president of the senior class. Everyone of them that came in to see me, and they said "Dr. Holman, you're a fine teacher, but --you do it all--we want to do it." I said, "all right, how would you want to do it" And they said, "well can you help us", and so I gave each one of them a time to do it, and then we'll let the class decide for themselves whether they would want to do it with their method or go back to mine. And I sat all through the discussion in back of the class. They said we know it, but you know too damn much about Faulkner, and we get that, and we like to sort of ferret those by ourselves, so they had five classes, four of the five taught classes, and thought they were great--the fifth one didn't want to do it. The others loved themselves, so they wanted to do it again, and we had the class vote and they voted me back in, and I became the teacher once again. I guess compared with some of the teachers in the department, I am not sure you're not this way too--they tend to be a little more conservative than I. Well Bob Mehlman was sitting on the floor in his classes. Bob was in the wrong class the first day. Ken Williams was a minister---the whole bit---And he noticed Bob with his beard and carrying on with the students the way he does, and Ken comes in and Bob is sitting on the floor with his students, and Ken says, "what's going on here?" and Bob said, "Isn't this my class?" And Ken said no, so he had to ask him to leave.... But I have to admit and you do too, I started in and nobody else did – I don't believe it – put my class in a circle--so I was in the class in a circle with them, I wasn't standing up in front of them, and now I think that most people do it that way.

Erath: I think it's gone back to fifty. I don't do it anymore. Not for the past few years.

Holman: But I like that idea because then you are one of the group.

Erath: This is probably a loaded question, but I am going to ask it anyway. What is your fondest memory in terms of...

Holman: I guess the thing I enjoyed most and had the most fun with was always teaching, teaching more than running a department. I always thought a major concern of department was teaching, even if we did have a lot of _____. You directed a lot of plays, Doug wrote books, Herman wrote books, Fred published a lot; Fred published a few things of mine, but basically--but Herb Shapiro--I don't think Herb was a teacher. I loved my Faulkner-Hemingway course and...

Erath: Was that the one you enjoyed the most?

Holman: No--the one I enjoyed the most--several departments came in and taught seminars--We did something that the very conservative members of our department didn't like--we took subjects we didn't know terribly much about. We took the Soviet Union one year. Bob Burns did the music, the art I mean, we had someone in the music department--Berger I think--who did the music, and Del Botts who was really an expert in Geography did the geography, and we had a social studies person and two literature -- and that working together with other departments -- I loved it...it was wonderful.

Erath: ?

Holman: We finally abandoned that. We had one on blacks, one on the Soviet Union and two or three others, and then I had a "heroes in literature" course which I did with Mike Smith. Mike did the psychology of the hero (he was chairman of the Psychology Department), and it was a long course--6 hours a week and we lectured 3 times together, and we had separate classes. And I just thought that was beautiful and I learned, Freud---and I learned them all, like when we did Moses in the Bible, you know he did Moses in Monotheism, so Mike was teaching me Psychology. I didn't teach him much literature. And he was very good. We were at each other's throats in a kind of amusing way. Once we were teaching Don Quixote, and I was carrying on because Don was one of my great heroes, and Mike suddenly interrupted me and said to the class, now look, don't listen to Holman. He's carrying on about how good Quixote was. What do you think of a book that has a madman as its hero and his best friend is a moron? Well, the class jumped all over him and they had this big argument and then after that class some of the students came up to me and said "Dr. Holman, we're so sorry. Will you and Dr. Smith ever talk to each other?" and I said "we always carry on like that."

Erath: I'm sure you were very close friends. What were some of the things you taught in that heroes course besides ...Quixote?

Holman: We started back with Ulysses the Greek, and then ended with Bloom who was the modern Ulysses in James Joyce. Then we had a hero known as the "troubled man" Hamlet; the "hero as a criminal," Raskolnikoff, and we went all through the literature. Very, very exciting course, I loved it.

Erath: You gave that pretty much each year?

Holman: Yes, we did.

Erath: Once a year? You always had a full registration.

Holman: Yes. You know one thing, Frank, about my teaching? I never taught a graduate course, did you realize that? I guess I enjoyed the others most. A friend of mine, Joe Colavera, who was at Michigan State. When he went to Yale he was required to teach an undergraduate course, and so Joe had gotten snobbish by that time you know--Yale wanted to do upper grade, and he said to me, Al, how can I do it, and I said, Joe--I have seen you teach and I've seen you on the air with Michigan State's wonderful program, and you were one of their stars, what are you talking about? Let me tell you about a story--Joe was visiting me down from New Haven, and presently,

that's what I really...and he said to me what is this trouble you are having with your president, and I said, "well, he is a troublesome guy. He's bright. I think he is quite a bright man, but he thinks we are all dirt under his feet. He'd rather be President of Princeton University, and he said, what's his name, and I said "Heussler," and he said I wouldn't let Bob Heussler run a boy scout troupe with five boys in it. I said, oh, Joe, he isn't and he said he was fired by Ford Foundation. I said, what do you mean? I was the only one who knew that. I said that didn't show up on his record and he said they never let it show on the record of an institution like that, so he was probably one of our brightest presidents, but one of the most difficult. We got rid of him--the students helped us get him out.

Erath: I was going to ask you next if you would comment on some of the presidents. You've already talked about Heussler. He was a terribly bright man. He was probably the most articulate president I can remember.

Holman: Remember his first speech, how good it was?

Erath: I remember a speech he made from the steps of Green Hall, in which he said the college could run without students, it could run without the administration, but it couldn't run without a faculty. And unfortunately there was a terrible gap between the theory behind it and the practice of it as it turned out.

Holman: That didn't fit with his philosophy at all.

Erath: Not at all.

Holman: Remember he boarded himself so you couldn't get in or see into his office. The former presidents had glass so you could look through. He would tell his secretary no one was to interrupt.

Erath: Did you know him at all?

Holman: Karras, your special friend, and our friend in the Senate, a very fine teacher and student of Greek, had a great admiration for him.

Erath: He really did. John and I spent a lot of time arguing about that, and I bet if he came in this studio right now we could get another argument going.

Holman: And Mike Smith, the same way, in the Psych Dept., he admired him, so there were people on campus who liked him, very much, but I didn't think...

Erath: How do you think he failed on campus as a president? We both agree that he did.

Holman: Well, he couldn't get along with people, and I remember when I was on the Senate Committee, for the redoing of the president's house, the Green house, and he had the plans, and I went in to see him, one day, and I said that's nice, you know I am a member of that committee, in the Senate, and we've been looking over your plans for the house, and I said you couldn't even

entertain the way you have it designed that living room, all the people on the board of trustees, so how could that be a president's house? Oh, he said, the president's house, MY house, I want it to be comfortable for me, I don't care, that was his attitude. And you know he got fired from his next job? He was chairman of a history department up in one of the New York State schools, very troublesome man, and he got in trouble as a flyer, remember he flew under the George Washington bridge...

Erath: At least that was a myth. How about President West-how about an anecdote or two about President West?

Holman: He was my boss, and I just thought he was wonderful.

Erath: How many times did you resign when you were chairman under President West?

Holman: And under that woman dean. She would say to me, Al, have you submitted your resignation yet? No, I got madder really under presidents after him. Under Gillenwater, Martin and before Heussler came, and they'd make me angry about something and I would say _____, and I'd write a nasty letter too.

Erath: Do you still have your file of letters?

Holman: I love them. I look over them once in a while, and when I do it of course I'm always smiling--people can see the smile in my eyes. West--had a little card and I'd go in and I told him I had five things to talk about, I said, honestly, this faculty--. He said the first thing--he'd say yes; the second thing, he said no, I don't think we can do that, we'll have to wait a couple of years. And then he'd get to the third, and then he'd say my fourth and fifth, and I said how did you know. And he said I sort of know what you're going to say, and then he'd say okay, and then okay Al, nice seeing you and out I'd go. Now, when I had Martin as President, he would start talking to me endlessly and I'd say, Ed, I have all these things to do and he was always an agreeable president, when he came in following West, but he came in for something bigger, and he did, he got the Commissioner up in Connecticut, and it's interesting about the Presidents: Brower, Gillenwater, and Hill are all together out in Arizona, because Gillenwater left--he was a pretty good president by the way--he was elected chairman and got along all right with the Senate, but I think he loved Arizona and wanted to go back to Northern Arizona State and now he's retired, Clayt told me, and Clayt of course was the last President, a good friend of ours, but Clayt was a good friend of mine until the whole crowd went to Pinehurst to play golf, and I called Lyda and she said how did you play and I said I was terrible, I tied Clayt Brower, and he's never gotten over it, and now he beats me. Clayt surprised me when he retired so early. Did you think that was a surprising retirement? Before he got Social Security.

Erath: Partially, I guess I was somewhat surprised. What didn't surprise me was that he was leaving even after about 10 years, because the pressures of the job were increasing all the time, and I think that had something to do with his deciding to retire. On the other hand, College presidents do have a way of staying on and on and on, and I suppose in that sense, I didn't expect him to retire and I suppose you didn't either, and I thought that he was such a young man.

Holman: Brewster of Yale was a great president/quit after 10 years.

Erath: He quite to become ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Holman: It's interesting, you knew the presidents better than I did because you were very active in the Senate, and you knew the Presidents after West and you met with the President almost every week because you were very active in the Senate, and you knew the Presidents after West and you met with the President almost every week because you were very active in the Senate. Well, you did know a lot.

Erath: Well, I think with Heussler you and I were on the same side, in fact, of that issue. I remember very clearly when we came to develop the document that ultimately came to be called the Petition, and asked the Trustees to remove him, you were the first person to sign it.

Holman: Wait a minute.

Erath: Your John Hancock on it, then there were 47 more of us who signed it, and then we went on--that was in the summer, it took us to the following February.

Holman: You know, he never would have gone if it hadn't been for the students going on strike.

Erath: I suspect that that was what did it.

Holman: You know our offices were interesting. There's a funny story about West. There was this little office. I just love it. Herman Ward and Arthur Tiffany were all in it and we were the whole English Department--there was one other lady, Miss Cunningham down the hall--West came in one day and there was this old broken down chair, you've seen the one on the stairway in Green Hall?

Erath: It's still being used.

Holman: We were all in there, West came in one day, I was out of the office, there was this old broken down, comfortable chair that Arthur was sitting in, and West said to Tiffany, tell Holman to get rid of that chair, and Tiffany said, yes sir. And when Herman told me, I said did you tell him it was your chair? And he said no, why should I? I said, all right, get rid of it.

Erath: Arthur told that same story at his retirement dinner, just about two months ago. Exactly, and I had never heard that one before. I remember the story about Herman picking up the chair that was out in front of somebody's house, waiting to be collected by the trashmen, on his way to work, and he brought it in.

Holman: He brought it in to this office.

Erath: I guess that was in Gable House, when we were in there. How many times did you move, do you think?

Holman: We were way toward the Library side of Green Hall, then we were in the basement of Green Hall, then Vernetta Decker _____? she moved us, then in the middle of Green Hall, those

were all there, then we moved where, the Garden House?

Erath: Well, when I came here, we had half of us in Gable House and half of us in Lakeside. Remember Lakeside, the _____?

Holman: Then did we move to Garden?

Erath: We moved to Garden House when the president moved out. Lakeside got condemned, you knew that?

Holman: And I remember watching the digging of our new building.

Erath: You are sitting on the site of Lakeside right now.

Holman: You know what was in there in the very old days, you call it the barracks, a lot of our faculty like Herb **Trevling?**, Bill Goldstein and Bill Hausdoerffer, were to come back from the war, they were really after these fellows, because we got them I think from the Army, they lived in these barracks and we used to have big parties down there, it was very exciting, and pretty heavy drinking too, and it was a pretty young crowd too, and there was a Mrs. Brauer, who actually swam there when we were squirting hoses there, about 2 o'clock in the morning. She had gone in to West, and so I happened to see West the next day, and he said, Gee Al, I'm glad you're not part of that gang. I said, yes, Mr. West. And Quimby's Prairie, in those days, you remember we couldn't walk on it? The library on one side, the lake way down here, and he teaches at Oxford. He defied Quimby's Prairie and marched right across, and West could be looking out his window and he'd walk right up there, and West was so funny with Weems. He called Weems in and said we have a hundred per cent who have given to the Community Chest _____?; and he said will you give? And Weems said no, I'll give my own way, when I want, and he said there's money out there, beggars, everybody else, crazy! to be so generous. He won't give to organized charity, so West said, May I give in your name? And he said I don't care what you do, he came out and said, damn it, Al, why did he talk me into that? I don't want him to give, and after I told him no, I told him he could. Anyway, lots of fun things. So in Gable House, I didn't want to tell you until sort of towards the end, Bob Mehlman and I had a little office together, we were pretty crowded, and we separated with file cabinets, 80 when he had students and they'd want to talk, you know that personal stuff, I'd leave, and he'd leave :if I had students, so I could look out and see them digging that thing for the Humanities Building, and I got my camera one day and when the first column went up I took a picture, and I took that column before they hung the sides to it and then the second column, and then I had the skeleton of the building, and then I took it when it was finally finished. So I knew you knew about it long before I did, because you and Alex Liddie started all that, but I had submitted my letter of resignation to Clayt Brower, and I knew one night he'd gone to the Board of Trustees meeting, so he called, and he said to Lyda, tell Al to come to the phone and tell him to sit down, and I said why did you tell Lyda to tell me to sit down, didn't they accept my of resignation? He said yeah, I asked that the Humanities Building Alfred P. Holman Hall, and I said, oh come on. He said, they just did it. I said when did this happen, did you know about it? He said Frank Erath and Alex Liddie have been working on it, all the students have been petitioning, then after it was named, people on the faculty wrote Mrs. Jensen who teaches in speech pathology, she said I'm so glad that they took my suggestions

because you've been a student of mine, that was very exciting and my whole family came down.

Erath: That was when the—

Holman: the day of my last class in 1975, that's when they dedicated it, that was the big celebration. The second celebration was later, the first one that was the dedication of the building, Brower came over and (Erath: that was when, 1975) 1975.

My whole family came in, my sister came in from Cincinnati, Marilyn Rosenthal, she came from Puerto Rico, --oh it was wonderful. And you started it, the great thought, then Herman, were you first? Then Fred with his riotous talk which started they had all been saying great things about Al Holman, and I just want to tell you he keeps a neat desk, he's usually punctual, he's only been arrested once, and I said how did he know that? I was arrested for speeding and jailed. Then we had a big reception, that was a beautiful thing. Then, a year later Bill took some pictures of me, Bill Hausdoerffer and the Art Dept., Kern who was --Norval--is he still there? Norval Kern made an etching on that beautiful stainless steel, with my crazy smiling face, and I was looking at it to see what it looked like I think my glasses were darker ...

Erath: I think you had different glasses. It does look like you.

Holman: it was beautiful, beautiful. And also the department established the Alfred P. Holman fund for the outstanding English major, which you still have.

Erath: that's right.

Holman: I was delighted, the first two years it was given, one was a student of mine who did special work, a girl, Alex Liddie's wife, his present wife, was one, wasn't she, Miss Alexander?

Erath: I don't think she was. She was a very, very good student.

Holman: One of your honor students. Erath: You'll probably be pleased to know this year the fund is in such good shape, we can double the amount of the award, and this year's winner is Beverly Schrupf, who I think is in an honorary graduate program.

Holman: We'll review the key points. First we had the big --we started out the fund with a big garage sale up in your yard, and everybody joined in, and Dave McGrail who is great on old things helped with that sale, and then he's been selling books ever since. Still going?

Erath: Yes, still selling books, no more garage sales, never again.

Holman: I'm not doing any. I loved teaching. Not given my age and my condition, falling apart at 73. Someone asked me why I didn't join a University club in **Winter Park?** and I said because they're all too old. They all look so old. I swim a kilometer every day, which means I go around the pool, about 34 times an hour, and in the winter when I go to a heated pool in a nearby motel, I only have to swim 17 times because it's a bigger pool. But, I don't quit. I play shuffleboard and I'm not as good as these old men, I can tell you a funny story about shuffleboard. My grandson came down, he was at Harvard, and he said I want to go up and play shuffleboard, so we were

playing together. Two old duffers, well in their eighties, maybe one of them—actually had Parkinson's disease, said do you want to play a game?

You want to play a game? They murdered us, Chris has never gotten over this. My grandson said I don't understand it. I said that's an old man's game. It was wonderful. I play golf.

Erath: I'm glad that you're not into shuffleboard, it shows you are not aging.

Holman: Right.

Erath: How's your golf game?

Holman: I played Brower and he beat me by 10 strokes.

Erath: No, maybe you can make a comeback. And what have you been writing?

Holman: Just interesting little things which Russ Copeland and myself have and by the way the had in my class, now at the Philadelphia Inquirer, he and his wife know very well, publish a little pamphlet that goes out to all retired people, by American Express, and they've been publishing all my stuff. One on whales and I've never seen a whale. I went to the Pacific for two months watching whales, one day at Vero Beach, someone came out and said there was a whale spouting out there, and I said oh no,--so I've never seen a whale, and my next one is on "Have a Good Day," you know the line.

Erath: I was thinking about that the other day. Somebody said "have a good day," and I think it was William Safire who said, he got tired of hearing that, and he said "I have other plans."

Holman: Oh yeah, I love that, we had one when we were young, Bill Martin and I, we were both very talkative. We met some people who said, "What do you say?" That was the expression in those days, we held them by the lapel and we would say, and as long as we had politics and sports and, and said why are you saying all of this.

Erath: We have 45 seconds left on the piece of tape, is there anything you feel like you want to say, finally?

Holman: Trenton State College is just so much a part of my life and all you people who work here, I just love it, and I'm so *pleased* at that building, that's named for me. And my children and grandchildren will be so happy about it, and when my brother-in-law came to see it, he said, take me out Al, I want to see your building. And I came by a little building and he said, Al is that it. I said no. It's one of the new buildings, and he said, Oh, I don't believe it. You didn't give a million dollars. How did you do it? I said I have friends on the faculty.

Erath: What you gave us was your life and leadership, and that's why the building is named Alfred P. Holman Hall.

Holman: I'm very pleased with that and very pleased with you and Milt and all the others.

Erath: AI, it must feel good to be able to sit down and talk like this. We've had a lot of good things to talk about for the Archives.