

THEODORE SHERMAN

Second Interview

Interviewed by:

Sam Schragger

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

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THEODORE SHERMAN

Moscow, Boise; b. 1901

professor of English at University of Idaho

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with Sam Schragger

June 17, 1976

II. Transcript

SAM: ...George Morey Miller.

T S: Oh, yes. He was I think ^{probably} if there was any one person on the faculty that everybody knew, it was George Morey Miller. He'd been here a few years before I came. But I met him on the day I enrolled. And we had quite an argument because I wanted to take a course that freshman weren't supposed to take. But he, it was a course in journalism and I had some practical experience. He said okay. He forgave me when I went out for debate. And then we stayed good friends up until the time of his death. He came to visit my folks in Boise. And he gave me lots of good advice when I was first getting started. I think the, Bill Banks summed George Morey up in a nutshell. He said ^{that} he was a combination of Falstaff, Sam Johnson and Mr. Pickwick. He said he has Falstaff's love of the good things of life, and Sam Johnson's intellect, and irascibility, and Pickwick's benevolence. And that just about summed it up. He was rather heavy, He had a scratchy kind of a voice. He was interested in everybody and in everything. He wanted to know, if you had an unusual name, he wanted to know where you got it. Liked to know where you came from. And I, when I came to Moscow on the faculty, course, in his department, the first contact I had with him, I was on Third Street, and I had my two children with me. And heard this old cracked voice from across the street oh fifteen, twenty feet ^{farther} along, "Hey, Ted. Wait a minute!" And I looked over, and there's George Morey. "Just wait a minute. Don't go anywhere." I just had parked the car. In a minute or two he came back across the street with ice cream cones for the two kids, and shook hands and welcomed me to town. But that was the start with George Morey. I think one of the, everybody in town knew him as well as everybody on the campus. And you can see how well known he was, when at least fifteen or twenty years after his death on one very bad winter day, I was in the Moscow Hotel barbershop, and somebody said, this has certainly been an awful winter, and somebody said, yes its about the worst one we've had since George Morey

died. Didn't need to say Miller. And everyone of the four barbers and two of us who were in the chairs, I think there was only one person in the shop, two or three waiting, everyone of them ^{had something he} remembered and wanted to talk about George Morey Miller. That was what happened when you just got the kind of cross-section that's in a barbershop, everybody knew the old boy.

SAM: He made that kind of an impression on people that everybody remembered?

T S: Everybody remembered him. He had idiosyncracies, but he was warm-hearted. His home was the most hospitable place that anyone could ever hope to find. His wife was a very sensitive, very talented woman. She wrote a good deal. I never had a chance to read what she wrote. Some of the people that did, Cushman, for example, thought she had a real talent with writing. And George Morey was absolutely devoted to her, and she to him. The, I imagine the year that George Morey died, one of the most dramatic things I remember about him was ~~that~~ that the last two Christmases ~~affin~~ ^{uring} which he was alive my wife and I and ^{our} daughter were guests at their house for Christmas dinner. I think the reason that we were picked out of anybody in Moscow as his friend, the reason ~~we~~ were picked out I think, we happened to be the only people in town that knew the young man that, one of their sons was spending Christmas with. This young man happened to be a cousin of mine and he and Smith Miller, one of George Morey's sons were spending Christmas together and we were the only ones that could talk to him about this Lewis Shaw that his son was with. And so he asked us. And the first of these two years, everything was perfect. Mrs. Miller was a wonderful cook and served meals beautifully and so the people were coming in all the time we weren't eating, everybody wanted to come and see the Millers on Christmas. And the turkey was perfect. When the plum pudding came on it was blazing beautiful and, it was just a storybook occasion. The next year, George Morey had had a heart attack in early November. I can even come up with a date, November seventh. I'll tell you why I know the date in a minute or two.

And he had had to stop teaching and hadn't been back on the campus and was in bad condition. And, but nevertheless, against doctor's orders, he put on his robe and came down. They asked us to Christmas dinner again. They didn't want to have it seem they couldn't have Christmas dinner just because he was so very ill. And this time, things seemed to go wrong. I can't remember everything, but some little thing wouldn't be quite perfect the way it had been before and Mrs. Miller for the first time in her life I ever knew that she didn't have everything so she could cope with it perfectly. And at the climax, when they brought in the plum pudding, they couldn't make the brandy light. And so the plum pudding wouldn't blaze. And the difference between those two. Well, George was so striking. He came down, he insisted on coming down even in his dressing gown when he wasn't supposed to. But he would keep on acting the, keep on going no matter what happened. If he wanted to do something, he'd do it. And that was the last day I saw him alive. Within the next month, he and Mrs. Miller were both dead. I never saw either of them alive again. She had a cancer that was incurable, and he didn't even know it at that occasion. Neither did anyone else.

SAM: What year was that?

T S: That was, I think, the winter of 1936 and 1937. I'm pretty sure that was right. The reason I remembered the date, the exact date when he got sick ⁵⁰ well, was that I got a call at eight o'clock on a Sunday evening asking me to take his class in Victorian literature which met the next morning at eight in the morning. And he said, "Ted, I want you take my class in Victorians, I'm sick and I can't make it!" And I said, alright, but that's not very long to get ready for it. It was his pet class and he had faculty members, one local clergyman and some faculty wives in it. But he said, well, talk about Browning. You can always talk about Browning without any time to get ready. And so I went in.

SAM: Were you a Browning specialist?

T S: I'd done a good deal of work with Browning. I'd written my Master's thesis on Browning and he was my hobby as George Morey knew. George Morey said, "I've been talking about Tennyson, its time to start Browning anyway." And he said, "You can probably keep up with Browning until I get back." Well he never did get back. And I finished the semester out of the course and taught it the next semester and actually went on teaching that course til the time I retired. But I remember the date so well because that stuck in my mind that from November seventh until the end of the semester, I was teachin George Morey's Victorians.

SAM: Was his son and your cousin in Boise?

T S: No they were both in Los Angeles. This was a cousin of mine, a first cousin once removed named Shaw. He was living in Los Angeles and that's where Smith Miller, he got acquainted actually through Talbot Jennings. ^{Because} Jennings was a good friend of this cousin and his whole family. Jennings was also a very good friend of the Miller's. And through Smith Miller, this cousin of mine, and, through I mean Talbot Jennings, Smith Miller got acquainted and hit it off very well. And I think for a while they shared an apartment, but I'm not sure of that.

SAM: Was George Morey overly concerned for his son?

T S: Oh, no, he wasn't concerned, he just wanted to know more about the man that Smith Miller had shared an apartment with. This good friend of his son's down there. No, he wasn't worried about him. Nobody ever needed to worry about Smith Miller. He's very capable. He could take care of himself anywhere. And so I think that's why there was something a little bit special that we had that nobody else had. I don't mean that I was his closest friend, we were close friends, but a great many ^{other} people could say the same thing. And...

SAM: What made him a great person, what was so special about him?

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T S: Well, course, there was his scholarship. And I respected George Morey as a scholar. But I think it was the interest he took in everybody else, and the warmth of his personality. And his hospitality. But perhaps more than anything else, that Geogre Morey took an interest in you. He knew all of his faculty, he knew all about their children, he wanted to know, if he met somebody, he wanted to find out more. Oh, you could go on about George Morey forever. He loved to go hunting. And I can remember, he came from Indianna of course, and his dog, his hunting dog was named Hoosier. And both George Morey and Hoosier were getting pretty well along toward the time when they weren't going hunting any more. And I can remember on one occassion when he called his office at the university and said to the secretary, "I won't be in to work this morning. Hoosier died." And hung up. That was, I think he probably, I don't mean he wasn't attached to the dog, but I guess he felt that this was the begining of the ending of an era. He used to go out, ^{held} get his ^{shot} gun and go out in the hills within three or four hundred yards of his house even when he couldn't go anywhere else. I got, oh, thinking of his hunting, he loved to go fishing too. And one episode of his in fishing involved ^{one of} my closest friend, Geoffry Coop. And another member of the department, John Beckwith, and George Morey. George Morey had gone hunting until they told him, the doctor said "If you go out and try to climb those hills again, you'll probably have to be carried back." But this time George Morey wanted to go fishing. And Geoffry and John Beckwith had gone fishing with him before and so they took George Morey fishing. They went out to one of these streams, I don't remember which one, and they had this understanding, that Geoffry would start downstream and John would start upstream, that each one would go quite a distance up or downstream as the case might be, and George Morey would fish between them. And they suggested that. They said, well, we can't all fish in the same place and this was closer, so you take this and they

didn't mind they do it that way, because if anything happened to George Morey, one or the other of them would catch him, would find him. Well, they carried out their plan, one fishing up^estream, one fishing downstream. And finally they met. And neither of them had encountered George Morey. in the meantime. And they were just worried to death. They knew he had angina. They knew that he could have a heart attack. They didn't see how they could have missed him. But there they were. Just ^{worried} to death and they went the first few hundred yards up^{and} ^{down stream} again and then ^{didn't} know what else to do but they just stood where they'd met. And both yelled at the top of their voices, "George Morey, George Morey." "Where are you?" And from oh, a hundred, hundred and fifty yards off in a field somewhere, George, "I'm right over here, I'm right over here. Nothing's the matter. Don't get excited." They went over there. They wondered how, he was heavy, how they'd ever carry him out if, and there was old George Morey, he was sitting in the shade of a rock drinking beer. He said, "I busted a blood vessel in my leg," he said. "So I decided I better not fish any more." And they looked down, at the blood on his sock there, that was all, he didn't get excited, "A busted blood vessel in my leg." But they said that they were almost mad enough to ^{beat him up} because they had just been sick and they been wondered, what had happened, and there George Morey was, perfectly happy, sitting in the shade, drinking beer. Nobody that knew him would ever forget the old boy.

SAM: Did he hold forth as a speaker?

T S: Well, when he really took the time to prepare, he could give a wonderful lecture. Lots of times he really didn't do justice to himself in the classroom, but he could give a fine lecture and he could give a very fine talk. But I don't know that he had any special reputation as a speaker. He wasn't one of those, (unintelligible) was the one that had the reputation as the university's speaker. But, I had another lucky break with George Morey when

He never lost his interest there. I had a seminar with him once. I can remember that when he wanted to explain his ^h theory of continental origin of the popular ballad, that he would explain ^{how} a bunch of primitives around the fire, they were acting out really the things that they had done and that one of them would say, "I'm the great bear of the mountain and jump into the middle of the circle." And someone else, brandishing a weapon, "I kill the great bear of the mountain." And that would be the way that the ballads, talking in lines like that would be somehow, ^{that} ballad would be put together. And he always used that same illustration, "I kill the great bear of the mountain." So we had the seminar up to his house before Christmas. So we bought him a Christmas present. We bought a teddy bear and we stuck a spear into and spread red ink all around it and said that we had, for his benefit, we had stuffed the great bear of the mountain which ~~we~~ had killed ~~so~~ often. He thought that was more fun. Once in a while, someone would get him just a little bit provoked. Howard Pakenham, one of the early old timers, a member of our department, a good friend, we were supposed to do something about reports on these ballads in this seminar and Pakenham I ~~don't~~ know whether he had time to prepare anything serious or not, but he started, what he said was an attempt to find racial traits in the versions of the ballad as they differed from race to race. And Dr. Miller thought that was fine. And then it turned out that Pakenham had ~~done~~ such things as see whether the Scotch version of a ballad showed their tendency to be stingy by cheating to money more often, that sort of thing.

SAM: He didn't go for that too much?

T S: Oh, he stayed good natured but you could just see that this was serious business, this ballad. And, let's see, ^{Pakenham} asked for some of the ballads that were supposed to show what would be done with them in various circumstances. I can remember one, ^{is version} Pakenham, "Oh, mither, mither, make me a pie. And make it soft and gooey. I feel ^{that} I must have pie tonight or I will go kafflooy!" Through the whole thing you heard one ballad or a

I said he got a little bit angry with me, when I wanted to take this course in journalism that freshmen ^{were} supposed to take. But he felt there were certain books that everybody should read. He used to lecture to the whole freshmen class in English once a week. He put copies of three books on Reserve and everybody was supposed to do some reading in those. And the **old** boy went in six weeks later and I happened to be the only one who had ever taken any of those books off Reserve and done any reading in them. From then on he forgave me for wanting to take a journalism class.

SAM: Do you remember what those books were?

T S: Oh, let's see. I think one of them was Alice in Wonderland. I can't remember what the other two were, though. One of them I do remember was Alice in Wonderland. And...

SAM: I had read that downtown there was a place that he used to hang out and hold forth, was that any place in particular?

T S: That was Jerry's.

SAM: Jerry's.

T S: That was at Jerry's. Jerry Jelwake was the man that operated it. You may have heard other people referring about Jerry's. Do you know where it is? Its, oh, what do they call it now?

SAM: Was it Mexican...

T S: Casa de Elena, or something like that now. Its had other names. But that was where George Morey was hanging out anywhere downtown, that's where you were very likely to find him. He, his enthusiasm was contagious, As you I think mentioned when we were talking before, this ^henthusiasm about ballads and anything that came close to folk literature or anything of that sort, he created a whole interest in the town, maybe I should say the university and the state on that particular time.

SAM: He really maintained faithfulness to balladry and folklore.

T S: Oh, yes, he was enthusiastic about that until the day that he died, I think.

another that starts, "Oh mother, mother." Pack [redacted] had his own sense of humor that he was in a class by himself. But, no Miller never gave up his love of ballads and folk literature.

SAM: Ballads were the centerpiece of his interest in folk literature?

T S: They were. The popular ballad and his theory that one person would write them but they would be sort of ^{brought} ~~in~~ existence by a little bit ^{from} here and a little bit from there. And that, no you couldn't say who wrote them because they weren't the work of an individual, they grow out of an authentic folk situation.

SAM: Could Miller get outrageously angry when he got mad?

T S: Oh, he'd get, I don't know as he was ever thunderously angry but he'd get pretty hot and pretty hostile. I never happened to be there when he would really, blew his top as they say now. But if he felt [redacted] somebody was on the wrong track entirely, he would not hesitate to say so. He used to love to garden. ^{He} Turned up once, I know on the campus, in coveralls. He had a class to meet and he hadn't had time to change clothes. Chinese exchange student wanted to take his picture. He said he wanted to take it back to China to show that in the United States, that college professors really worked. No, he was a very colorful character.

SAM: Do you think his friendship extended in helping his students find a career in English, an interest in their own development in work in literature?

T S: Yes, I think so. Of course I think it was through Miller's recognition of Talbot Jennings's ^{ability} [redacted] that Jennings really got his opportunity to study under George Pierce Baker which of course was the beginning, which may have gave him the contacts which launched him on his career.

SAM: Who was George Pierce Baker?

T S: He was probably the best known man in the country in drama and drama workshop and that sort of thing. And Miller was so pleased with Talbot's work on the pageant here. Let's see. Baker was at Yale for a while and at Harvard

for a while, and I don't remember where he was when Talbot went back. But that was, he was the best known man in the country in that and he was a man who ^{could} give a person the opportunity to make contacts with people in the theatre.

SAM: Was that pagent the most important work that Talbot did when he was here?

T S: Well, that was the first splash. That was the thing that established him as a man with a great deal of talent in writing. I don't know whether, the only other thing that I know about that Talbot wrote while he was here that drew much attention was a treatment of "Romeo and Juliet", which was done here. And then out of that he developed the treatment that I believe it was Leslie Howard acted in later in a movie version. And I wasn't here when he did that, so I can't speak with so much certainty about ^{just} when he did it.

SAM: Were you here for the pagent?

T S: Oh, yes. I was on the book committee that wrote the pagent. I didn't contribute anything, but...

SAM: Can you tell me any background on the development of that pagent?

T S: Well, it was Dr. Miller's enthusiasm. He decided we should have a pagent. And what would have come of it if he didn't. This was before he realized the talent that Talbot Jennings could bring to it. That Dr. Miller decided that we should give a pagent on the early development of Idaho. And so he was instrumental in getting the committee ^{book} to work on it. See, Jennings was on the committee, I was on it. I don't remember if Ruth Hawkins ^{now Ruth Boas} was on it or not. She might ^{have} been. I can't remember, oh, Cushman was on it. Course, he was in charge of drama at the university at that time. And we had to meet quite regularly at Saturday morning at eight o'clock. After I missed a couple of meetings, George Morey got the habit of having me called at seven thirty ~~in the morning on~~ Saturday so some freshman answered the phone at the house and he said, "If Sherman isn't up". "Go and wake him up. This is George Morey. Tell him to get over to my

office at eight o'clock, there's a meeting." But it soon turned out that Talbot was the one who had what it took to produce the pageant. And I can't say, I can't remember that much of anyone else wrote much of any part of the pageant. I know that I didn't contribute anything except applause now and then. But Jennings really had quite a, he had the natural talent and he had the background for it because his father had been an Episcopal clergyman here, in early times and he was named after Bishop Talbot. He was an early Episcopal bishop in Idaho and so he, his background made him really appreciative of Idaho and ~~imagine~~ made him real interested in history with his parents having, his own father having contributed to it in that manner. And whether Talbot discovered himself then or whether he knew he could write all the time, I don't know.

SAM: Where in Idaho did he come from?

T S: Nampa, originally. I'm pretty, it was either Nampa or Caldwell. I think Nampa though. But I wouldn't, I would not swear to that.

SAM: So the first performance of the pageant was quite a big thing?

T S: Oh yes. It had to be big. They brought in the Nez ~~Pearce~~ Indians up from the Lapwai, that reservation and they, I don't know how many people were in that, but it was a, they had a big cast, and of course they had dancing and I don't remember if they had singing. The chorus' oh cowboys singing a ballad on the range. They had E-DA-HO, The Light of the Mountains. Abe Goff was the first E-DA-HO and they had an old artificial horse that they had from a harness shop and at a certain time, there comes this thunder of the drums and the light would turn up and there would be Abe Goff on the horse. Nobody could recognize Abe. He was way high above the crowd. And it was a big and ambitious job.

SAM: How was it staged?

T S: Well, it was staged on what was then the football and baseball field which is where the women's physical ed building is now. And it was kind of a

natural amphitheatre effect. They waited, the land came up behind it. So that people could sit there and watch it in that manner. ^{But} It took an immense amount of staging to do it. But given four times. Once here and once about oh, it was given here in the spring of 1923. ^{And} given in Boise then in the fall of either '24 or '25. 24, I'm sure. And then its been given here twice since then. And the original idea was they'd give it once every four years. But that turned out to be impractical. It takes an immense amount of organization and enthusiasm and pooling of talents to make it go. And quite an expenditure of money too. But...

SAM: I'm sure George Morey Miller was very pleased with the realization of his idea.

T S: Oh, yes. He was delighted about that, there's no question. That was really one of the great events of his time here was having that pageant which of course was produced three more times before his death. And I don't remember when the last year was. I think it was done here or 1927 or 8 or somewhere along in there. And then a third time, the third time it was done in Moscow, that is, was somewhere in early 30's. I know I was on the faculty at that particular time. Bits of humor would come. I think that one of the dances was the dance of the spirits that ^{were} trying to bring down the rain on the dry places. And it'd been raining all through the pageant up until the time the spirits of rain got out and began to dance and try to bring down the rain and the rain stopped. And then a scene in Idaho City, I believe!!!

(End of side A)

T S: ...then of Idaho City where somebody was saying, "Get your bets down, gentlemen, ^{have} your bets down. Everything down, gentlemen, everything down." Just then the wind blew over one of the pieces of scenery. You can't give a thing of that size and not have time to go through it fifty times to perfect it, without ^{having} a few little quirks. But that didn't spoil it, it was a wonderful experience. I think in connection with doing original things in general, that when people see something original, I think of this because

of my own connections with musical comedies, writing lyrics for musical comedies and that sort of thing, that when they see a professional production on Broadway or after its been on Broadway, they're seeing it after it has had a trial run in Boston, another in Philadelphia and they've juggled the cast, they have eliminated what they thought was weak. They've built it up where they thought it was good and could be a little more emphasized. And what they see is not the first production. What they see is after its had the work of professional experts and has been in front of an audience time after time after time from that you can see where it ^{could} be improved.

Whereas if [^] you do something that is put on the stage before an audience for the first time, when you actually see it, you don't have the advantage of all that. And if you ^{could} take this thing that is done originally and move to, an have a trial run in Seattle or Spokane or so forth and then bring it here and put it on, you would see a vastly improved production.

SAM: Did this have more than a dress rehearsal?

T S: No, that was the first time it had been done before a big audience. I wasn't there while they had all their rehearsals, but its pretty hard to get all those things, to bring it all together. You can't bring up fifty or a hundred Indians, I don't remember how many, and their horses and so forth from Lapwai and keep them [^] here for several ^{dress} rehearsals. Its pretty hard to put it all together, a pageant [^] like that. I don't know if they ever put it all together the night before it opened. I don't remember how many nights it ran. But its just too big a thing to do all at once, until its really prepared, or until you know its the payoff and you have a crowd.

SAM: When did you do musical comedy writing?

T S: Oh, well I don't know ^{whether} that's enough Moscow history to be...

SAM: Well, its about yourself.

T S: Yeah, but then I figure ^{that least} the interesting thing in these talks of mine is myself. Its things ^{that} I can remember in which maybe I played a very small part

but, I'm not anxious to publicize myself. I did along with Geoffry Coop, whom I've mentioned as taking George Morey out fishing, he and I did the book and lyrics to two musical comedies that were produced here. Hall Macklin did the music. And one of them was G.I.^{'s} Right which was done when we had six hundred soldiers and six hundred sailors on the campus during the war. And the other was Sing, Senator, Sing which was done twice, once in 1948 and then again in 1952. And as the name suggests, it had to do with the political problems of the singing senator. And I thoroughly enjoyed the project. And I'm sure that Coop and Macklin enjoyed it too. We managed to fill the auditorium four nights in a row in both cases with standing room only. So I guess the crowd seemed to like it. But I could tell all ^{kinds} of stories about producing a musical comedy but, as I say that's not ancient history ^{enough to use here,}

SAM: No, it isn't.

T S: If you're interest, well some day, when you want to turn the tape recorder off, why, there are a few episodes that are amusing enough to repeat, but...

SAM: Why don't you tell me a little bit about it.

T S: Well, I think the most amusing thing about it that I can remember was that in connection with Sing, Senator, Sing, no, wait a minute, in connection with G.I.^{'s} Right, the hit song was a rather sacherine thing called "Tomorrow and Tomorrow". We wrote the song because we ^{id been} trying to write the best words we could, Coop and I. ^A And Macklin was trying to write the best music he could, the best music that's fitted to a musical comedy, and Coop, one evening when we were together said, "You know, there's one thing that we don't have, we don't have anything that is so obviously a steal that everybody is going to be pleased 'cause he can recognize where we got it." And Macklin and I agreed, oh, we should have something like that, alright. And Geoff and I decided, we'll steal something that everybody recognizes, ^{and} something from Shakespeare. And Macklin, I don't remember where he got

his tune for it, but at least the first three or four notes of it were enough of a theme, ^{that} if a person knew enough music he would have recognized it. I wouldn't have. I'm not trying to take anything from Macklin's originality for that tune, it was a marvelous thing, I must admit. Anyway, Geoffrey and I decided we'd take something from Shakespeare and we got this line of Shakespeare's, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow." And we could only work in two tomorrows but we sat down and threw the whole thing together, just the most slapdash form we could imagine and we thought it was completely trite, completely banal, and just absolutely horrible. And Macklin, I don't know how long he labored on the music, but I don't think he worked too awfully long at it, and it just happened that in the war when people were wishing things as they had been, that song hit them. It was the hit song. And oh, when they took an orchestra, a singing orchestra on tour, they always put that tune in. It was the only song they ever had, it was a finale for the show. And the payoff came, well, when we had G.I. Right, one woman came from Potlatch, not when we had G.I. Right, but when we had this singing orchestra that I mentioned, she came from Potlatch because she said ^{that} she wanted to hear "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" again. And, let's see Dr. Church whose home, now, the museum that we're talking in, went to see it a second night because he wanted to hear that song again. We thought it was terrible. But, then the real payoff came when Reverend Mr. Walter of the Presbyterian Church, ^{the} next Easter told Mr. Macklin that to end his Easter sermon, he wanted to quote the words of "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" while Macklin, who was the Presbyterian organist played the tune, soft music in the background.

SAM: Was it Shakespeare's words of "tomorrow and tomorrow"?

T S: I wish I could...

SAM: I'm trying to think which Shakesperian play its from. Is it "Macbeth"?

T S: I don't remember. I just...

SAM: Its so familiar to me.

T S: I know, to me too. And if I weren't working so hard, I could probably come up with it fast. But Macklin was horrified. He said, "You can't do that." And Mr. Walter said, "I not only can, I'm going to." I might mention that Mr. Walter's son was in that show. But I don't think that's what made him like the song. His son didn't sing it. But he said, "What's more, I'm going to." He said, "And you are going to play that beautiful tune of yours in the background." Macklin said, Macklin has colorful language, said, "Don't you know the words of that song were written by a couple of English profs that ^{almost} throw up every time they think about it?" And Walters said, "If they don't recognize something that is beautiful, that is not my fault." And Macklin...it really was a sucess. He said ^{id} "We write a musical comedy and the hit song sends the audience home weeping because they did cry during this." "And the clergy ^{MAN} used it as a theme of an Easter sermon!" He said, "We really had it made in our field in musical comedy." I did think it was really funny enough to...

SAM: What about that song. What was it do you think/made people feel...

T S: Because all ^{that} they wanted all during the war was to have things the way they used to be. The most unimaginative, worse line I can think of that I ever had any connection with ~~was~~ "We'll do all the things we used to do"! We had an "oo" rhyme, you see. We had to have blue, and true and you and I can remember I said, "What else are we going to do?" And Geoffry said, "We'll do all the things we used to do." Well, that scans, so we threw it into the song. It's just what people wanted. They wanted things to be the way that they had been.

SAM: Not the way things had been in the Depression?

T S: Oh, no this was in 1946 or so, but oh, I can ^{recall} when the war was over and we were able to revive football. I was in charge of the deal at that time, the business side of it. And some of the kids that had been in and

out of the office a lot came in. We were going to have football. And we were going to have Homecoming. And they said, "Oh, do you suppose we can have a fireworks display the way that we used to?" ^{Been} mostly girls in the student body during the war. And I said, "Of course we're going to have a fireworks display. I just finished ordering a couple thousand dollars worth of fireworks and a man down from Spokane to shoot them off." Those kids began to cry. They said, "We didn't think we'd ever have this experience. Other people have had it. We thought we would come and go here and we'd never have the things that the other people had had." That "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" just seemed to get under their skins, I thought.

SAM: Sing, Senator, Sing makes me think of McCarthyism in that era of 1952.

What kind of effect do you remember McCarthyism had on the campus?

T S: I don't, I can't remember anything striking. There was supposed to be at one time, somebody ^{who was} on the campus to, as an undercover person for the McCarthy committee. And whether there was any truth in that, ^{or not} I could not say. But, oh, people would get a little bit alarmed about something once in a while, but I don't recall... I know it didn't affect my teaching. I said what I wanted to say and I don't know of anyone else among my acquaintances who was afraid to say what he thought, whether, I don't mean there was anything in what they thought that was, that should have aroused anything, but you never knew what was going to arouse some excitement, at that time. I can't recall, maybe there are other people who can, who know things that I don't but I wasn't aware of any great impact here. Any fear on the campus or in the faculty or anything like that.

SAM: I don't know about it here. I know where I went to school, and it was rather devastating there. At Reed.

T S: Well, at Reed, it would be. It had a reputation for going pretty far out on some things, and I say that with all the respect in the world for Reed,

which, never let it be said that I don't respect that school, or that some people thought it was radical, means that I think any the less of it. That was never my opinion, ^{that there was ever anything} to think badly about it. But I would think it would think it would be much more likely there to stir up that kind of problem there than here. This has been usually a fairly conservative school and a fairly conservative state.

SAM: Do you think the faculty members were concerned individually [^] about McCarthy? That they felt this was a destructive influence?

T S: Yes, I think the ones that I knew were almost unanimously of the opinion that this was a very destructive thing to do. That reputations were being torn down and alarms being raised without any justification at all.

SAM: That reminds me of a story that you told me in part before about President Lindley's son coming to campus in the 30's?

T S: That was in the 30's, I'm sure. I'm sure it was not in the 40's.

SAM: You told me it was in the 30's. Now, what was the story?

T S: He had, ^{K. Lindley} Ernest [^] of course, was a well known writer and journalist, he'd been a student here when his father was president. Was a Rhodes scholar then afterward. And he was brought back to give the commencement address and came back a few days before commencement just to meet people that he knew ^{that} and his father knew, and spend a few days in the town. And during his talk he mentioned having been, ^{enjoyed} being around the town where he'd gone to school and where his family had lived. And been interested to see what it was like know that he'd been away for a while, came back with a perspective. He said, "One question that interests me, that I have asked a good many times, as I've talked to people, I've asked, are there any communists in Moscow?" And he said, "I've always had the same answer, "No. There isn't a single communist in this town." He paused for effect and then he said, "I consider that most unfortunate." You should have seen the audience straighten up. Because communism, whether we like it or not, is a force in this world that

is going to be heard from. And we had better become aware of ^{its} existence and know something about it. And it would not be a bad thing at all for people to have first hand exposure to what a communist really is. He certainly brought the audience to its feet on that.

SAM: You think they accepted what he had to say?

T S: I believe they took it. I believe as they thought about it, why they realized, why, there's no sense in hiding your head in the sand. If something exists, you better know something about it.

SAM: He was coming at this time from an Eastern experience, right? He was coming from a city.

T S: Oh, yes. He'd already become one of the best known Jews writers in the country. And that meant, he was living in the east and met everybody in the eastern establishment. Everybody antiestablishment in the east, too.

SAM: So he was exposed.

T S: He was exposed. No question about that.

SAM: Did you know President Upham?

T S: Not very well, no. Not enough: that I'd anymore, ^{than just} met him at receptions, and oh maybe talk a few minutes in a group at a reception or something like that. I know enough about him to know he was immensely popular. And that for many years after he left a great many people thought of the years when Upham was here as kind of the "golden age", but I didn't have the experience myself.

SAM: The man who followed was only here for two years. What was his name?

T S: Kelly, man named Kelly.

SAM: Did you know him at all?

T S: I met Kelly when I was teaching in southern Idaho and there was some kind of a banquet in which Kelly was down there as speaker. And I had a chance to meet with him and talk with him a little while on that occasion. I couldn't say I knew him well. But he was gone by the time I came back to the faculty. I never did feel that I entirely understood what were the

difficulties with him, any stories I've heard or any explanations are so far in the past that I don't think I ~~sh~~ould even attempt to recall them now.

SAM: He was committed to the junior college approach, I believe. He believed in the two years of broad preparation.

T S: I think that ~~wa~~s the way of it. That he had in mind, now I could be wrong on this, but he had in mind a situation in which all students would be enrolled in a junior college for the first two years. And thereafter would enter the professional colleges or continue in the liberal arts program. And that he ran into opposition from the deans of colleges such as Engineering, Mines, Agriculture. That's the way I've heard it, but I can't say from personal knowledge that I know that to be the case. I do know that not long after he left, the junior college, of course, was eliminated. And so that seems to make the story sound plausible.

SAM: Was George Morey Miller chairman of the English department the years that he was here?

T S: Yes. From the time he came until the time he died.

SAM: Did being chairman entail much in those days; what did it mean?

T S: Well, it would mean of course, that you would be responsible for choosing the faculty, although you might consult other faculty members if you wanted to. But pretty much that time, the department head acted on his own. They called it head then, not chairman. And it would mean handling the budget. I'm going to have to get a drink here. My voice is going. (pause in tape)

SAM: ...what the shape of the English department was when you were a student.

T S: Well, the chairman was responsible for choosing the new faculty members. He probably had more say than anyone else about who should stay and who should not stay. He did more than anyone else about deciding ~~what~~ courses should be offered and what should not. He assigned the teachers to the courses that they were to teach. And so in that way he pretty much had

control. He handled the budget, of course. Which was for the most part was salary. But in general, he did just about everything except teaching all the actual classes. He ran the show. And at that time in our department, and I think in every other so far as I know, it was not, by any means a faculty participation in decision making that has come to be the natural thing now. And as for what the courses were, I think that, considering the size of the department and the number of faculty available and the number of classes, ^{that} you could fill with students, I think they had a pretty good representation of material. They had, of course, their general survey courses of English and American literature. They had a pretty good selection of courses in the periods. They had special courses in Shakespeare and Chaucer. They had courses, genre courses, you might call them. Courses in such areas as drama or the novel or poetry. They had some work in creative writing. And of course, they didn't have as many in each of those lines as you might have in a larger school but I don't know ^{that} they would have improved the situation if they had had more and more courses because the individual could only take a certain number of credits anyway. And if you only take a hundred twenty eight credits to graduate, there's no particular reason to think that if they brought in some peripheral courses, that which some people had substituted for what you ^{say were} the basics, that many people would have come out with a better, general standing in the field.

SAM: Talking with other people that know about the same time period of history on campus, it sounds ^{like} there was a lot of talent on campus, right around that period. Where was the impetus for creative writing, for instance?

TS : I don't really know where that came from. I hadn't especially thought that we were any more numerous then than we became later. But I couldn't really account for it. And for that matter, I guess there ~~is~~ plenty in writing now, but I can't, don't know enough about what they're trying to get them

to create now.

SAM: I was wondering that if the faculty then had any particular hold on the students then. It seems like they might have pretty good models.

T S: Well, I don't know of either of those two or for that matter, **of** the faculty in general, trying to do much in the way of creative writing themselves.

SAM: I don't mean just the writing. I'm thinking of the literature, newspaper etc.

T S: We had a stimulating faculty at that time I think. But then I don't think it ^{was} anymore stimulating than it's been since then. ^{that is,} As I think, compared to the people who were on the faculty then, those that I knew for the thirty six years, beginning in the early 1930's, I think that we stacked up pretty well later on too. Plenty of people that ^{could} stimulate students enthusiasms. Bill Banks for example.

SAM: Was he a very highly regarded teacher?

T S: Oh, yes. He was. We hadn't better get started on Bill, he's a subject in himself.

SAM: We should save him for next time.

(End of side B)