

Oral History Interview
with

LIBERTY L. (BENNETT) PRESTON
MARY L. (BENNETT) DELOZIER
and
MARY B. (DELOZIER) HARRIS

Daughters and granddaughter of Henry Garland Bennett reminisce about his life (1886-1951) and career as a college president and as the first administrative director of the Technical Cooperation Administration, U.S. Department of State, 1951.

Stillwater, Oklahoma
1971

by Richard D. McKinzie, University of Missouri at Kansas City

The Harry S. Truman Library
Independence, Missouri
February, 1987

Harry S. Truman Library
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Independence, Missouri 64050

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Summary Description:

Topics discussed include the personality, family life, and educational career of Henry G. Bennett; Ouachita College; Southeastern State Teachers College in Oklahoma; and Oklahoma A&M College.

Names mentioned include Henry G. Bennett, his wife Vera, his parents, his sisters, and his children; also Thomas Briggs, Dr. Bezell, Mr. and Mrs. J.V. Connell, Trula Hynds, Marguerite Bright, Randall Connell, William Holloway, Henry Johnston, and Harry S. Truman.

Donor:
Vera A. Preston (daughter of Liberty L. Preston)

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Oral History Interview

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LIBERTY L. (BENNETT) PRESTON (Daughter of Henry G. Bennett)

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and

MARY B. (DELOZIER) HARRIS (Granddaughter of Henry G. Bennett)

Stillwater, Oklahoma

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by Richard D. McKinzie, University of Missouri at Kansas City

MCKINZIE: You told me when I was here before that your father's father was a minister. Is that correct?

DELOZIER: That's right. He was a Baptist evangelist, I would call him. He traveled and never had a church of his own. He would go to small communities, particularly in Arkansas, and most of the time I don't believe he was paid.

MCKINZIE: He was a farmer?

DELOZIER: Yes, my grandfather was a farmer, and Daddy and his mother ran the farm because the father was gone quite a bit with his evangelistic work. In those days the railroad gave evangelists passes. So that was all he needed. He could get his lodging and food wherever he preached, and he had his transportation free.

MCKINZIE: So, your father, then, grew up on a farm in Arkansas?

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DELOZIER: That's right.

PRESTON: There, and then for awhile they were over in Decatur, Texas.

DELOZIER: That was one year.

MCKINZIE: Did you ever hear them say what they were doing in Decatur?

DELOZIER: This uncle, Jim Bennett, was also an evangelist Baptist preacher. I gather he had gone over there to preach and there were farms available, evidently, that they felt were better farms than where they were. They went over and stayed about a year, and then wanted to go back to Arkansas.

MCKINZIE: What part of Arkansas?

DELOZIER: Their farm and their house were on the line of Hempstead-Nevada County in Arkansas. Hope is the county seat of -- I'm not sure which county. But Hope was where they did their county business.

MCKINZIE: Your father went to a country school?

DELOZIER: He went to a one-room country school.

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PRESTON: To begin with.

DELOZIER: Well, for eight years.

PRESTON: No, they moved to Arkadelphia, so he could go to school, before he was ten, because that's where he had the laundry route. He started his laundry route when he was ten. One of these letters, I think, tells about when he ran a laundry route.

DELOZIER: What is this laundry route? Where he picked up laundry?

PRESTON: Students had to have their laundry picked up and delivered to them and he did it for a laundry there in Arkadelphia. There's one letter in these from a person who roomed and boarded with Grandmother. She ran a rooming and boarding house.

MCKINZIE: You mean after they moved from Arkansas?

PRESTON: No, this is from down around Hope -- we moved to Arkadelphia because all Baptist ministers' children could go to school there.

DELOZIER: In Arkadelphia at Ouachita College, and they had

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prep schools for people because the country schools just went to eighth grade. So there was this in-between gap, and the colleges, like here at OSU, had prep schools where you get high school work and prepare yourself for college entrance.

MCKINZIE: So they moved there for the purpose of sending you to school?

DELOZIER: Well, an older sister had gone there to school because, like Liberty says, all of the Baptist ministers' children were entitled to an education.

PRESTON: It was about the time 'Aunt Lois started, wasn't it, that they moved?

DELOZIER: I don't know the year but somewhere along there, they decided that with Daddy going to go to college, they better get in and get located. So Grandmother and Daddy bought the

land right across from the college and built a boarding house. They brought the lumber in from their farm by wagon, and built the house and had boarders and roomers. Most of the roomers were men who were on the faculty, and a part of the agreement for allowing them a room in this building, which was

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right across the street from campus, was that they would help Daddy prepare for the college.

MCKINZIE: He got tutors then who were college instructors?

DELOZIER: He also delivered rural mail.

PRESTON: He was the first rural mail carrier in Arkansas.

MCKINZIE: That was when they were living in Arkadelphia?

PRESTON: That's right.

MCKINZIE: He also then went to Arkadelphia College?

DELOZIER: Yes, but before he went to the college he delivered mail.

MCKINZIE: He must not have been too old.

PRESTON: He was 16 when he got that. They wrote him to call.

DELOZIER: Yes and they had to try to find a telephone to call.

PRESTON: Then it was so new they didn't know how to call long distance.

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DELOZIER: No, there wasn't even an operator. There was just one lady that ran the thing, just a trunk PBX system, I guess. She didn't know, she had never called Little Rock, but the message that had been sent to him said to call. So, they called and he took the job over the phone, and delivered the mail and was quite proud. I think that was one thing he was always proud of. He went to the rural mail carrier's conventions and always kept up with the people that he had known.

MCKINZIE: Many years later?

DELOZIER: Oh, yes, all his life. The man that took his job when he graduated from college and decided to come to Oklahoma retired from that job when I was little and bought the hotel in Wynnewood, Oklahoma. We'd always stop by, coming from Durant to Stillwater, at the Wynnewood Hotel so he could say hello to the man. Every time we would drive off, he would say something like, "Just imagine if I'd stayed with that job I could have been retired and been in the same situation as this man -- own a hotel."

MCKINZIE: When he carried the mail, I assume that was by horse?

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PRESTON: Yes, that's the way he ruined his ankle. He had to wear high-top shoes because a horse rolled with him while he was delivering the mail.

DELOZIER: He crossed the river, the White River, both coming and going.

PRESTON: There is some record about him having delivered the Sears Roebuck catalog, and there was something about his having delivered so many of them. All his were delivered. They said they had a hard time getting these catalogs delivered.

DELOZIER: Most rural carriers didn't want to deliver them by horseback, of course, because they were heavy. But Daddy divided them up, and took them to the people in turns. Then the next time he wouldn't always go alphabetically or to the first five. Of course, the word got around that someone had a catalog and everybody was waiting for the Sears catalogs to get there. So they would be real democratic about delivering those catalogs.

PRESTON: I believe he was with that for about three years, but his ankle finally gave him too much trouble.

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DELOZIER: Well, he really enjoyed it and when we would go back to Arkadelphia, his pleasure would be taking us out on the mail route and telling us before we got to the mailbox whose name would be on it. Those families never changed and he never missed on whose name would be on that mailbox.

PRESTON: He used to say that he could walk down the street and call every second or third person "cousin" and not be wrong.

DELOZIER: Even when I was in college we would go over there, and even though it had been a long time since we lived there, he'd see people on the street and tell you who was kin to who and who lived where.

MCKINZIE: Did you ever hear him say anything about Arkadelphia College; did he like it?

DELOZIER: Ouachita -- loved it.

PRESTON: Ouachita, yes. He went back numerous times.

DELOZIER: Every chance he got. He loved driving through those pines, and he loved the view down to the river from the back of the school. He loved the iron grillwork

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on the homes across -- do you remember the Manahan's home, one of the cousins? It had a fence that looked like New Orleans grillwork; it always had these heavy gates, and it was so pretty. That evidently was the pride of the people who lived around the college. Quite a status symbol if you have a wrought iron fence around your property. Of course, you didn't ever visit there when they lived there, Grandmother and Grandfather. That was before you were born.

PRESTON: No. They had moved to the little red house out there in Hugo where Mother and Daddy lived before they bought the two-story house. [NOTE: Henry G. Bennett's parents were Thomas J. and Mary Bright Bennett. His wife was Vera Bennett. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bennett had five children: Liberty, Henry, Phil, and twins Mary and Tom.]

MCKINZIE: I'm sure if your grandfather was a minister, your father must have inherited some of his moral teachings?

DELOZIER: Well, my father was a lay minister and he preached, I imagine, more than most ministers have ever preached in their life.

PRESTON: Well, he was considered a layman.

DELOZIER: I'm sure he could have been an ordained minister.

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There were very few Sundays that he didn't preach; and he taught Sunday School. He had as many as about 500 at times, I believe, in the Sunday School class.

PRESTON: I think that's in the college department. He had one, and Mother had the other, girls and boys. They had a regular attendance, I think.

DELOZIER: Well, it was always jam-packed -- the whole basement of the church and the college. He taught that Sunday class every Sunday and then usually preached somewhere. He also preached so many funerals. I never lost interest in anything he had to say. Also, I never heard him tell the same stories twice.

MCKINZIE: What did he do after he got his education?

DELOZIER: Came out to Oklahoma as a superintendent of schools of Boswell, Oklahoma.

PRESTON: Don't we have some little pieces of paper where he tells about writing to Aunt Stella or Aunt Lois?

DELOZIER: She gave you one and me one.

PRESTON: I think so. This was when he was selling books

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during the summer-times.

MCKINZIE: While he was still in college?

DELOZIER: Well, to accumulate a library. He was so eager to have some books of his own.

PRESTON: He came through Oklahoma; that was part of his territory.

DELOZIER: Kansas is where he started and they worked down through Indian territory. He liked it. He met this Mr. Boswell who the town of Boswell was named for.

PRESTON: And the Armstrongs.

DELOZIER: Mr. Armstrong was in the United States Department of Education, and he had an office, I believe, that's in Oklahoma City or McAllister. He later was state superintendent of schools.

PRESTON: He had a farm or something there around Boswell, because I know he and Mr. Boswell both were influential in Daddy getting the job of superintendent of schools in Boswell, Oklahoma.

DELOZIER: He loved selling the books. He always worked,

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at first, to get himself some of the books he was selling because he was really sold on those books, and we still have the books.

MCKINZIE: What kind of books were they?

DELOZIER: Well, one set was literature -- world's great literature.

PRESTON: I've got that set.

DELOZIER: That was very valuable in our home. Everybody loved that because that practically got us through school. That was the best set of books I've ever seen.

PRESTON: It's literature of all countries and all ages. It's really fascinating.

DELOZIER: It has guides and the last volume was a synopsis. Not only that, it analyzed the literature and the author and the period it was written in. It told you about some of the art and the things that influenced it. In those days when I went to school, those things were hard to dig out at the library.

PRESTON: Well, they are still hard to dig out.

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DELOZIER: It was all in this little set of books that we had.

MCKINZIE: How did he get around? Did he buy a car?

PRESTON: Walked most of the time.

DELOZIER: He walked and sold them door to door at times.

PRESTON: Frequently, he didn't even have a horse. He was walking a lot of the time.

DELOZIER: One time when I was with him, we went to Cherryvale, Kansas, where he was going to give a high school talk. He drove around by that old brick factory and said, "This is where I sold the most books;" it was in this little town. He said that in the small towns in southern Kansas there hadn't been anybody with books; they were in the same fix his community had been in Arkansas. There weren't people with books and everybody was wanting books. The people would come out in the wagons and all, and they bought all the books they'd like to have. So, evidently they were quite easy to sell. But they delivered the books.

MCKINZIE: I don't know how?

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PRESTON: He just carried one volume at a time as a rule.

DELOZIER: He told me that last volume was his seller for that set that you have. Everybody was impressed. They felt they could speak on about anything because it held the synopsis of everything in the whole set. If he could have just sold that last volume everybody would have bought up the last volume. That sold the set of books. It was unique. I remember many a night finding it quite valuable when you hadn't really studied as much as you'd like for a course.

MCKINZIE: So he was, in short, working his own way through college even though he was working at home?

DELOZIER: Yes, well and of course, he cooked, and they grew a garden and milked the cows, for this boarding house. They didn't buy anything; they did their own butchering. So, he and his mother were jacks-of-all trades, so to say. They built the house themselves without the help of carpenters or anybody as far as I know. This is what I was always told. Evidently Grandmother must have been a very energetic person and of course, Daddy was, too, because he worked right along

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beside her. I understand she never asked him to do anything she didn't do right along with him, from cutting the timber to taking it into town and all. They made a pretty good team.

Grandfather, I'm sure, helped when he was there, but he was usually out at some church speaking. He was a very good Bible student. He was blind when I was little and lived with us. He was a brilliant man and helped us learn to read with the Bible. We'd just stumble on a word and he could immediately tell you what the word was without ever batting an eye. He had that Bible pretty well memorized, and the same with the hymnals. We learned to play the piano, and

we sang a lot as little children. He loved to supervise that with us because he knew all the words, even though he couldn't see the hymnal. He knew every verse, every stanza of a church hymn -- Grandfather Bennett.

PRESTON: Oh, I have a copy somewhere about "handwriting on the wall," or something, and it does have a lot of those old time hymns that you don't find the words for very often.

DELOZIER: Like "Count Your Blessings?"

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PRESTON: No, that wasn't in there.

DELOZIER: That wasn't in that one?

PRESTON: No, these are older than that.

DELOZIER: That was one of Grandfather's favorites.

PRESTON: It's still my favorite. That's one I want done at my services. That's the only one they need to sing.

DELOZIER: Grandfather was determined Liberty was going to play the piano. He always was the planner and supervisor.

PRESTON: Consequently he got to listen to more racket because all of us took some kind of musical instrument, plus piano.

HARRIS: That was a prerequisite to anything?

DELOZIER: Well, Grandfather wanted us to. Then Liberty and I practiced those violins so much that he told mother he would about pay us not to practice.

PRESTON: Well, Phil had cornet.

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DELOZIER: Henry, flute.

PRESTON: Henry, flute; and you and Tom had clarinets for a while, and I had piano for a while.

DELOZIER: Well, Phil had a trumpet that I took lessons on, too. I played in the morning, took lessons then. He could really play it in the afternoon in the band.

PRESTON: Oh, we had a lovely musical family, all of us.

MCKINZIE: This was encouraged from Grandfather on down then.

PRESTON: Yes, and father, too. Poor Grandfather had to sit there and listen to us practice because he couldn't get out until one of us could take him for a walk.

DELOZIER: Well, I think he really enjoyed it, because he felt needed. It gave him something. He really loved my mother and, of course, she was very devoted to him. I think he realized this was something he could do to help her out; and he always had us read the Bible to him. We each felt some responsibility.

PRESTON: And if we didn't read it correctly he knew every

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word, every comma, and every period.

DELOZIER: And you couldn't skip; if you were wanting to do something else, he'd know if you skipped about. He was very bright; I'd have to say that for Grandfather. He had a lot of interests. He always kept up with all the sports, listened to all the ballgames; and knew all the statistics of everybody.

PRESTON: Had a marvelous memory.

DELOZIER: He did; and Daddy did, too, and Mother. They all kept up with every sport. They could tell you about any sport, and the history of it. Tell you about 20 years -- who had done what and when and why.

PRESTON: And what it originated from -- whether it was a war game, or what.

DELOZIER: Grandfather was this way about the hymns, too. He always insisted that we know who wrote the hymn and why they wrote it, and then who set the words to music and who wrote the words.

MCKIN.ZIE: Did he want your father to be a minister or did he have any plans for him?

PRESTON: No, he was very happy that Daddy was an educator. He never called him a teacher; he was definitely an educator.

DELOZIER: I really never knew people didn't think everything other people did was great. I never heard Mother or Daddy or Grandfather, any of them, ever be critical or wish somebody was anything else. I thought people were extremely happy.

PRESTON: The only critical person I remember, though, as a child was my mother's mother. We expected her to be.

DELOZIER: I knew that children were to go in and sit down and be quiet. You were handed a catalog or something to look at, and if you were good, if you did what you were told -- we

always did -- I don't know why they said, "If you're good." But we always sat down and kept our mouths shut and looked at the catalog and then we got a sweet.

PRESTON: Or a piece of divinity candy or sometimes if it was a pretty day we could go out and swing for a while.

DELOZIER: She had a beautiful porch swing. But that was

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just a part of going to Mama Connell's. I thought that was happy, too.

PRESTON: I tell you that little stool got pretty hard sometimes. We went down there after we'd been to Sunday School and church. Mother usually went about 8 o'clock.

DELOZIER: This was to Sunday School.

PRESTON: Yes.

DELOZIER: This was because she usually fixed the altar with flowers.

PRESTON: Then on Sunday, sometimes we went back out to the house and ate. But the year that Daddy was in New York about every other month we got to eat down at the...

DELOZIER: White House Cafe.

PRESTON: Then we could walk up to Mama Connell's; it wasn't too far. Then we got to sit there until around 4:30 or 5 when Mother decided it was about time for us to start getting ready to go back to church again.

DELOZIER: But you know, I liked it. Of course, you were older, but I thought it was great that we were all

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there -- because we didn't have catalogs, so, it was really a treat to look at those catalogs and dream.

HARRIS: What amazes me about all of this is that Granddaddy and Grandmother were both so capable of brainwashing you all -- to think that looking at catalogs. I mean to me, they must have had a real talent at persuasion.

DELOZIER: As we'd walk from town, Grandmother could walk down the street and find great conversation out of a tree or a blade of grass.

PRESTON: A plant formation or something.

DELOZIER: Yes, anything and you felt so blessed. You were really counting your blessings; aren't we great that we're alive!

PRESTON: We were raised on "count your blessings."

DELOZIER: Well, we knew that Grandfather was blind and we felt very lucky that we could see. Also, we knew that he wasn't blind as a child, and this could happen to us maybe tomorrow. You better see what you can see today and enjoy it.

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PRESTON: There was deafness in the family, too, so hear what you can today.

DELOZIER: I felt really happy that we were all able to walk down that street. And she'd always impressed us with the fact we had a big family and we were all healthy, all able to do all these things. I really thought we were quite fortunate. And we had a prayer meeting every night for about an hour or so and sung hymns and said prayers.

HARRIS: Who did that?

DELOZIER: Grandmother.

PRESTON: Grandmother and Grandfather both.

DELOZIER: We memorized part of the Bible, which Grandfather helped us with during the day, that we had to know that night.

PRESTON: That was Grandfather's chore -- to be sure we all knew our memory work.

DELOZIER: We all knew our Bible memory work. The whole thought I had was, weren't we fortunate that we had a grandfather that was so eager to teach us! I remember we'd run from

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school, to get home to Grandfather, whom we knew was eagerly awaiting us, which he was.

HARRIS: But you know so many women would have resented having their father-in-law living with them.

DELOZIER: She never resented him. I think she really felt it was a blessing that we had him there.

PRESTON: It was a very decided blessing.

DELOZIER: It was a blessing because it kept us all close together. And we all did know somebody really was sitting there waiting for you that really loved you, was eager to share knowledge; and we knew that the greatest thing in the world anyone could share with you was knowledge and time. Mother always said, "You're so blessed to have a grandfather like our

grandfather." I'd just pass them all; there'd be a lot of old people on porches and I'd wave and think, oh, I wish I could take the time to say something to these people but we've got Grandfather at home waiting. He really acted excited when we'd get home from school. We hadn't been gone long -- we were home for lunch. We hadn't

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really been gone that long, and he'd listen to piano lessons; he'd listen to anything. You know people tell me about children feeling jealous and all -- we didn't.

PRESTON: We didn't have time. There were too many of us to feel jealous. It wasn't just us.

DELOZIER: We had people living in the house with us.

PRESTON: Grandfather would go back to visit Arkansas at least once a year and sometimes more often; sometimes he'd make two or three trips down there on these passes. Henry had a job for anybody who couldn't go on to college. They could come and live with Henry. So we always had people with us.

MCKINZIE: Did your father have more than one sister?

PRESTON: He had two sisters. One married and one who never married. There were just the three of them. Daddy at one time, before he went to Ethiopia, said he had 54 living first cousins. Then he came back through Little Rock.

DELOZIER: He gave a speech for Sid McMath, the Governor of Arkansas, and up on the stage after the speech a

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lady came up and said, "I'm your Aunt Mary." He'd always thought she was dead.

PRESTON: And found out there were 12 children living in that family.

DELOZIER: That he hadn't realized he had.

PRESTON: So there were 66 living first cousins.

DELOZIER: I can remember always knowing that -- Daddy would say, "If anybody picks on you all at school, you don't need to worry because I've got plenty of cousins." Of course, we knew that cousins love each other; they'll do anything.

PRESTON: You might fight among yourselves but should anybody else step in they met a united front.

DELOZIER: We never had any fear but what we were well taken care of with lots of relatives.

HARRIS: That meant a lot to him because he did tell all of us that. How important a family is.

DELOZIER: Well, he'd always tell us that you had lots of friends in your life and they'll come and go and you'll

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enjoy them and you should have them, but you always have your family and they'll love you regardless of what happens and they'll be there.

PRESTON: This is one time after Joe died, when I was talking to Vita; she commented on that Daddy was so sold on family and family should stick together.

DELOZIER: I think that that impressed me as a little child more than anything. Even the year he went to New York and mother was sick, I always knew that we were quite fortunate to have the relatives that we knew would step in.

PRESTON: Fight for us.

MCKINZIE: How's this business that he was in New York?

DELOZIER: He was getting a Ph.D. On Tom's and my fifth birthday, in October he was in New York.

HARRIS: He'd gone in September?

DELOZIER: The last of September. School started the first of October and we were to all go up as I understood it and he was to find a place, I guess, for us to

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stay. He went up and Mama got sick.

PRESTON: The way I understand it, we were to go up probably when he graduated. He had that year of sabbatical -- for that year.

DELOZIER: They'd enrolled us all in demonstration school? Because I know mother told me that was a disappointment to her when she got sick. That's one thing that worried her at the hospital, that we weren't going to get to go to that demonstration school. Lincoln school is where she'd enrolled us.

PRESTON: I know all this is kind of hazy to us, because right after their birthday mother became quite ill. In fact, she was paralyzed and unconscious for about three months.

DELOZIER: She told me, later, though that she really knew what was going on but she couldn't talk. She was just lying there.

PRESTON: The first thing that she said when she could talk was, "Bennett why aren't you in New York going to school?" And he said he felt like he needed to be there. Mother told him "no," that we were being

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taken care of, and he should get himself back up there and get that degree. He only had until the middle of June in which to get it done.

DELOZIER: He got it and that's the shortest time anybody ever got a Ph.D. at Columbia University.

PRESTON: At least according to Thomas Briggs.

DELOZIER: Yes, that's what he said at that time. Now the last time I saw him was in 1942.

PRESTON: I think he's dead now. But he commented oftentimes when he used to come and visit us, and when I went to school up there, that that was, to him, the most amazing thing that ever happened.

DELOZIER: Well, other men in his class didn't even get their Ph.D.'s. Some of them had been there 15 years.

MCKINZIE: How long did it take him to actually do the work?

PRESTON: He went up before October 1 and he got his Ph.D. in June of the following year. The same school year but the next actual year. Actually he was there less than two weeks in October and then he went back in the middle of January.

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DELOZIER: From what people tell me he worked all night, day and night and never slept. The men that he lived with in his dormitory said that he never slept. That's how determined he was to get it.

HARRIS: He used to tell us you could do anything you want to do if you want to do it bad enough.

PRESTON: You can do anything you wanted to if you have to in a given length of time.

HARRIS: I guess he proved that. Also he used to tell us that sleep was a habit.

PRESTON: A very definite habit.

HARRIS: He didn't believe in that habit.

PRESTON: The doctor has really been giving me fits over that for years. I never slept very much.

DELOZIER: He lived with Mother and Daddy when Mary was a baby, because my husband was overseas when Mary was born. From the time she was born she didn't sleep over two or three hours in 24 and my daddy always said, "Well, that's good. People would be better off if they didn't sleep so much."

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PRESTON: He figured two or three hours a night was sufficient.

DELOZIER: That's all anybody needs.

MCKINZIE: That's all he slept -- two or three hours a night?

DELOZIER: Never any more.

PRESTON: Lots of times he didn't even get that.

DELOZIER: We would drive straight through to Cincinnati or Washington. He'd just take a bath, get dressed, and go on and work all day, and then get back in the car that evening and drive straight through back here and never a think about it.

PRESTON: He did the driving most of the time.

DELOZIER: I never thought of him being tired. I never thought of Daddy as being tired. I just thought he was one of those people that didn't get tired.

HARRIS: He didn't have time to get tired.

PRESTON: The only time I knew that he got tired was in the evening a lot of times sitting around talking and he'd say, "Well, I'll go do the dishes," and you'd offer

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to help, but he'd say "No." That was his time to rest and think.

DELOZIER: He could organize his thoughts. He loved to wash the dishes; also, he got the water so hot nobody else could touch them.

MCKINZIE: He volunteered frequently?

DELOZIER: He did the cooking.

MCKINZIE: For a family of five?

PRESTON: Whoever happened to be there. Very seldom was it ever just us who ate there.

MCKINZIE: This was when he was here?

DELOZIER: Even when he was with Point IV; when he was back here he always cooked.

PRESTON: We had a cook, but he cooked.

DELOZIER: Oh, we had colored people.

HARRIS: You had to get it organized.

PRESTON: He had breakfast ready.

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DELOZIER: He had breakfast ready and he would always have a lot of people knocking on the back door and coming to eat.

PRESTON: He served breakfast at either 4 or 5.

HARRIS: I was going to say when Mac and I were little and we lived at college homes, he'd call us at 4 in the morning and say the biscuits were ready. We loved biscuits so we'd get ready and go up there and eat breakfast.

PRESTON: He loved to have little children around, I think, better than anybody; don't you?

HARRIS: But I also think he liked to have us establish the habit that he got up at 4 in the morning and made breakfast.

DELOZIER: When we moved back here, it was after World War II, and you couldn't get a private line telephone. I don't know how many people were on our phone. But I told the telephone company that we really needed a private line as soon as we could get it. They said it was impossible. Not long afterwards they came out

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and said they were going to put a private line in because everyone's complaining because the phones would ring in their apartments. Daddy would be calling early in the morning and waking everybody up.

PRESTON: He was liable to call you any time of the day or night.

DELOZIER: Yes, because he got enamored of asking you some thing or telling you to come on over, which we were all delighted to do. I know many a night you and I both, and even with Mama, would dash right over.

PRESTON: Usually you could count on him sleeping from 10 till 12, and from 10 till 12 you didn't expect a telephone call. On occasion he'd call then. But any time from midnight on, it wasn't unusual for him to call and ask for some information or ask you to do something, and you did it.

DELOZIER: And we loved it.

MCKINZIE: Do you think he established that habit of not sleeping early in life?

DELOZIER: I'm sure he did, because his sister, Aunt Lois,

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always talked about how he never liked to sleep. He always liked to read, and, of course, they didn't have electricity for years and she said they were afraid he would ruin his eyes.

PRESTON: I know their house in Arkadelphia burned. I used to hear she and Aunt Stella always saying that Henry was going to burn it down from building the fire in the fireplace too big. But he had been gone from home a long time when that happened. They had been worried about it when he was small.

MCKINZIE: You mentioned he went to become the superintendent of schools. This was just after he'd graduated from college, he immediately got a job as superintendent?

DELOZIER: Yes, at Boswell. He had, like I said, come out this way selling books.

PRESTON: This is right after statehood, too.

DELOZIER: They were just starting school systems.

PRESTON: It was hard to get teachers to come to this part; this was Indian territory.

DELOZIER: He brought most of the teachers from their

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boarding house out with him, so he had these people that were with him at Boswell. Then he accumulated more from Arkadelphia when he went to Hugo as county superintendent, and then city superintendent at Hugo. In the summers he would go over to Durant to college to study, I guess.

PRESTON: I don't know whether he took much work there, but mother's family lived there.

DELOZIER: Aunt Lois told me he took some courses. I hadn't realized; because I'd never heard it.

PRESTON: I'm sure he took some if they were available.

DELOZIER: He always brought friends with him. He would encourage people from Ouachita to come on out to Indian territory and get in on the ground floor. At one time when he was president here at the college, the Governor was a person who had gone to the one-room school with him in Arkansas, and had gone on to Ouachita and graduated from Ouachita. That was

Governor Holloway. Every college president in Oklahoma was somebody who had lived with him in Arkansas. So that's how many came to Oklahoma.

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PRESTON: And the state superintendent of schools was also a graduate of Arkadelphia.

MCKINZIE: I take it from what you said that he met your mother in Boswell.

PRESTON: Yes, she had applied there and more or less had been assured by the school board that she would be hired. Her father did not want her to leave home and he didn't want her working. But her mother said she could, so she applied there at Boswell and was so assured of it she didn't apply anyplace else and she didn't hear and she didn't hear. So I guess she phoned the president of the school board and he said, yes, she'd be hired. So she got off the train and in her umbrella she had a contract that the president of the school board had sent her. While at the depot, she saw Daddy and he said, "Oh, Miss Connell, I was going to contact you that we had hired you."

She said, "Yes, I know; I've got my contract right here," within her umbrella.

HARRIS: She always carried her important papers in her umbrella. Fortunately, she never left her umbrella behind.

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PRESTON: Until later life.

MCKINZIE: So how long was he then in the public school system, for a number of years?

DELOZIER: Ten years in Hugo.

PRESTON: Nine.

DELOZIER: How long was he in Boswell?

PRESTON: I was trying to think; he told me one time he could divide his life up into nine. It was nine years in Hugo, nine years in Durant, and I don't know whether he was nine years in Boswell.

DELOZIER: I don't believe so.

HARRIS: That seems like a long time.

PRESTON: Well, it doesn't total out right. So I think really, he was there about two or three years possibly.

DELOZIER: He made lifelong friends everywhere he was.

PRESTON: Quite a few of those Boswell friends came up here.

DELOZIER: I know. The same group traveled this route.

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When we came here -- would you say at least 30 families came with us from Durant? Maybe more.

MCKINZIE: Oh, you mean these were people that your father trusted in education and their ability.

DELOZIER: Yes. They were people who had gone to college with him all along, about like a rolling stone. He always knew he could trust them.

PRESTON: They may not all have come at the same time, but they came within a period of three years.

DELOZIER: Yes, because that first summer he was encouraging most of these same people we're talking about, to go get Ph.D.'s, to Peabody and Nashville, Columbia, New York.

PRESTON: Northwestern, Chicago University.

DELOZIER: He sent them all over, because he wanted people who had exposure to different educators. So, then they all gradually, as Liberty says, came here, but they were the same group of people that always had been with us. As far as I always understood it, it was always because they understood each other. Daddy says it's easier to work with people when they think and

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understand what you're thinking without you sitting down and explaining everything to them all over again. They were oriented to his way of working and they knew that he worked, and he expected the people that worked with him to work as hard as he did. They enjoyed working with him, evidently, and I know he enjoyed them.

MCKINZIE: Then he went to Durant; was he affiliated with the University there?

PRESTON: Yes, he was president.

MCKINZIE: Did he go there as president?

PRESTON: Yes. He came to Oklahoma as superintendent of schools at Boswell. Then he became superintendent of schools in Choctaw County, then he became city superintendent of schools in Hugo, then he was president of Southeastern State Teachers College at Durant, and then president of Oklahoma A & M College.

DELOZIER: While he was president of Southeastern, he was going to Oklahoma City or coming back from Oklahoma City always to attend board meetings. Coming back one night he got on the train with this Dr. Briggs from

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Columbia University who happened to get a seat by him. In those days he always brought a shoe box of ham sandwiches and made them himself. Instead of eating in the diner, he always carried his own food with him. Maybe there wasn't a diner on the train. When Dr. Briggs sat down by him, he immediately opened up his ham sandwiches and offered him some, and they visited all the way from Oklahoma City to Ardmore. By the time he got off at Ardmore, he had news he probably did not think was exciting, but it hit Mama's ears as pretty exciting. Dr. Briggs had said he would like for him to come to Columbia University and work on a Ph.D., which he thought was just like talking about the sky. But after he told Mother, well, of course, she was determined he was going.

MCKINZIE: This was when he was already president?

DELOZIER: Yes, he was president of Southeastern. But he had a master's; he didn't have a doctor's degree. Dr. Briggs was on his way to Dallas. I guess it was the next day when Mama Con, my grandmother (mother's mother) walked back up to our house, which was a mile away, to make sure things were going right early in the

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mornings. If any help was needed, why Mother told Mama Con about it. Mama Con always had a little cash. Of course, Mother had told her that Daddy had said he didn't see any possibility for a man with five children dreaming about going and getting a Ph.D. in New York City. Mama Con said, "You just call the man and tell him you'll be there. If they want him there, he'll be there." So without consulting with my daddy, my mother called and told Dr. Briggs that he would be available.

PRESTON: Very glad to attend.

DELOZIER: To accept. So, that's how he got to New York City.

PRESTON: He got his master's degree at O.U., going up in the summer months. He didn't talk much about that. Well, really he could only go on weekends; so he would go up over the weekends and work on his degree. I think it took him about two or three summers.

DELOZIER: Probably. I don't know because he never talked about that.

PRESTON: I can remember going out for his commencement exercises.

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DELOZIER: Oh, I can, too.

PRESTON: But there wasn't ever too much talk about that.

HARRIS: Why? Because that was before he was here, so he wouldn't have had that rivalry.

DELOZIER: I don't know. He liked Dr. Bezell; had a lot of respect, I guess, for Dr. Bezell. He always talked so nice, and was so nice about everything but that was just a blank. If it was discussed, I must have tuned it out. I know when Phil went down there to get his law degree, after he'd been at the University of Virginia, you'd have thought it would come up then. I never heard Daddy mention it. When I was in school, when we'd go to Ouachita we'd hear all the way back about Arkadelphia and Ouachita.

MCKINZIE: How does it happen that he knows so much about agriculture when his degrees are obviously in public administration?

PRESTON: Well, actually from his living out in rural communities. Grandmother always had a garden. They had to have a garden to run a boarding house. That's where he started cooking.

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DELOZIER: When he was president of the college at Durant we had quite a garden. We utilized all of the land behind the president's home, which was a very nice, small farm.

PRESTON: About two or three blocks.

DELOZIER: We had a nice little acreage, farm.

PRESTON: In most small towns, when I was young and when we moved up here, even, in 1928, people had their cows and chickens and things and it was part of living.

MCKINZIE: The reason I asked that; I knew at the time he got to be director of Point IV, he seemed to be pretty much of a specialist.

PRESTON: He was always a student. One thing we learned early, which you forgot when you got to your last year in high school and they became so dumb -- he was always telling us there was so much that other people knew, that we could always learn from everybody else. And if you could read, there's nothing you can't do. But I still haven't found where they've written up how to use a broom; I still can't sweep.

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DELOZIER: Well, he could.

PRESTON: He could. But, no, I mean you get out and ask people and have them show you. It's better to be a fool for five seconds than it is to be ignorant the rest of your life.

DELOZIER: He'd always say to me, there's no disgrace in not knowing something, but it sure is a disgrace for not finding out after you know you don't know. You'd better get busy and find out. As far as agriculture is concerned, I know he encouraged us. I think Liberty did, and I know Tom and I took agriculture in high school.

PRESTON: I did, too.

DELOZIER: They had passed the Smith-Hughes Act. Agriculture was offered for three years here when I was in high school. We took it all three years, because we did think it was valuable. I remember that was a big topic of conversation for us when Tom and I were talking agriculture because Daddy really knew a lot about it. I was amazed at how much he did know. Up until that point I'd always known that he surely did know

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everything, because I felt he knew about everything anyway. But it was a technical field at that time in my life and I'd lived around farms, too. I was really impressed. At Durant he must have been even quite interested in agriculture, because he would have extension people come there; and Henry took a class, I remember, under Claypots on terracing. They would have specialists come and teach, and Daddy always went to everything that they taught. He'd take everybody that was old enough to the classes. Even if you had no dream of learning to run a farm, you were introduced to it. We went to every short course or anything they offered.

MCKINZIE: When he went to New York to get this Ph.D., then he came back, and he was still at Durant for some time longer?

DELOZIER: It was when I was five to seven -- two years.

PRESTON: Well, actually about a year longer.

DELOZIER: They were starting Texas Tech at Lubbock, and he was offered a job there, so he had to make the decision

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on these two jobs. A man was being released here after he [Bennett] decided he wanted to come up here. So he asked Texas Tech to take that man in the job that had been offered to him, because he didn't want to take this job here and not find that man a job, Dr. Knapp. He was their first president; and he was always very grateful and appreciative to Daddy about doing that because he was just out and he had some children and a family, too.

MCKINZIE: What year was that about?

DELOZIER: 1928, July 1.

PRESTON: You might mention too, that the tenure of anyone as president here was very, very short.

DELOZIER: Longest term was like three years.

PRESTON: No. Dr. Pennell was here nine years.

DELOZIER: But in the period right before Daddy came it had been quite chaotic because of political situations with the Governors. Every time you had a new Governor you usually changed all college presidents of the major

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colleges. No, just here, I guess, because at O.U. Dr. Bezell stayed for a long time.

PRESTON: But this college [Oklahoma A & M] was under the Department of Agriculture.

DELOZIER: State Department of Agriculture. We had our Board of Regents which was the State Board of Agriculture.

MCKINZIE: Did he have any feelings when he came up here about it? Did you ever hear him talk about; that is, knowing that previous presidents hadn't lasted.

DELOZIER: Well, he came with a 25-year plan. The minute that he arrived he started drawing up his 25-year plan. We came to stay.

PRESTON: Nobody would believe it, though.

DELOZIER: Nobody else, probably. I didn't realize. Liberty was old enough probably to realize that. No, I really thought it was a great challenge. I knew we were going to be here for me to go to college.

PRESTON: I was hoping we'd move the next day.

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MCKINZIE: Didn't you like this town?

DELOZIER: We didn't want to leave Durant. It had a beautiful campus.

PRESTON; Well, no it wasn't that. It was the headlines in the newspapers, "The Bulldog President -- How Long Will He Stay -- Six Months, Maybe?"

DELOZIER: [At Durant] Liberty, Tom and I sat up on the main building's steps. We sat up there telling everybody Daddy could move but we were staying. When we did move I reconciled myself to the fact that it was probably all right because Daddy said, "You'll go to college there; you won't make another move." He said, "I know it's hard; I know how you feel, but you'll go to college there and we'll never make a move till you get through college. " I thought that's okay, I could stand one move.

PRESTON: Well, what was real disappointing was that Henry got to stay in Durant.

DELOZIER: Yes, that summer.

PRESTON: And we had to move.

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DELOZIER: We thought that Henry was going to send the dog.

PRESTON: No, we didn't, not until Aunt Trula felt that the dog was dying.

DELOZIER: But Tom and I really thought that they'd send the dog. We were still young enough -- we just lived in our own little world, and I think that was one of the reasons Tom and I knew that we'd get to bring the dog up. But evidently, they hadn't really planned to bring the dog up because they left it with Henry and then the dog was sick because we left it. So they sent it by railway express, and the day the dog arrived was a happy occasion. But the campus was so terrible here. Durant was plush with grass and trees and flowers and shrubs and it just looked like the Garden of Eden. On the campus here, though, there wasn't a blade of grass.

PRESTON: And you know how you came? On clay roads. You slid in if it rained, and you chewed up the dust if it didn't.

DELOZIER: But the day our black "Budgy" arrived, the cracks were so wide in the dirt in our yard that Tom and I

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could stick our feet across in the holes. We were so afraid that dog was going to fall in one of those cracks. Looked like we'd had an earthquake.

MCKINZIE: How many students were on this campus then, do you recall?

PRESTON: Oh, not quite three thousand.

DELOZIER: I'd say about 2,500 and there were about seven buildings, six or seven.

PRESTON: We always overestimated things.

DELOZIER: After living in Durant, it was entirely a different type of campus. Well, another way they got us up here -- Tom and I -- was they had a swimming pool, an indoor swimming pool. We could swim everyday all year. So we were looking for that swimming pool and on the first day Mama took us up there. The swimming pool was in their old gym and they were having class. You went into the pool on the downstairs level, but where people watched people swim was upstairs, up a flight of stairs. We didn't know much about it, so when Mama said we could go swimming, she sent us on up the stairs. We all ran up those stairs

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and at the deepest place it was just eight feet. We got up to the top of those stairs, and there were two banisters. We were real skinny, tiny little kids and we just jumped over that thing into the pool. Of course, we could swim; we'd swum all of our lives. But it about scared the class to death, that was swimming. They were having a class.

PRESTON: You didn't hit anyone. You did look before you jumped.

HARRIS: Did you have your clothes on?

DELOZIER: No, we never wore clothes in the summer. We always wore bathing suits all summer. I remember it was a Jantzen; we all had them alike. Mother always bought everybody's alike. Tom and I had red bottoms with striped tops and a white belt, webbed belt with a gold buckle that snapped. We really looked pretty, and we wore those things day in and day out.

HARRIS: I bet they looked pretty.

DELOZIER: Well, we thought we did.

PRESTON: We didn't worry about the looks so much; we just hoped there weren't holes in the seats.

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DELOZIER: There probably was.

PRESTON: Well, there probably was because we'd go up to the old chemistry building and slide down every little while.

MCKINZIE: What did they think when the new president of the A&M came with five children who slid down the banister and leaped into the swimming pool?

PRESTON: Well, I'll tell you. Some of them got kind of terrified, particularly when we were walking around the chemistry building up here. The wiring you know, went up the outside of the building.

DELOZIER: On the west side of the building we had to cross some electric wires that came into the building. It was quite a step for little people to go over; we were on the ledge around the second floor. We did that several times a day. That was a feat we had to accomplish. Then we'd move on to Morrill Hall, and it was really trickier because it had arches over every door. We had to make it over them. On the backside of that building they had that ivy that birds lived in and it kind of got in your way as you went around. You had to lean.

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PRESTON: It got in the way. The birds kind of attacked every once in a while.

MCKINZIE: There were classes in this building, when you were out on these ledges on the second floor?

DELOZIER: Yes.

PRESTON: Yes. It wasn't the classes that we disturbed half as much as it was people in their offices. They were the ones who would call in and complain.

HARRIS: The kids were probably glad to get something to keep them from going to sleep in class.

DELOZIER: I never realized they didn't like it though. I thought they were all our very best friends. We knew all of them. We would go in to visit them, and if it was hot and they wanted lemonade, we made them lemonade. We were at their beck and call to do what they'd like for us to do.

PRESTON: But we finally got told that if we went around that chemistry building one more time we weren't going to be allowed our skates anymore.

DELOZIER: That's another thing. We skated down those

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banisters. I look at them now and I can't imagine it but we skated down them and jumped at the bottom, and that's how high?

HARRIS: You'd have had a heart attack if any of us had ever done that.

PRESTON: Really, Mother said God was going to take care of us -- He did. Phil broke his arm once time while we were still in Durant.

DELOZIER: Every Sunday afternoon, all the people visited. See, the parents would come to see Mother and Daddy and then we'd have to entertain the children.

PRESTON: We'd have to babysit. They didn't call it that, then.

MCKINZIE: Does your name have anything to do with -- you said May, in 1918; that's pretty close to Armistice Day isn't it?

PRESTON: Well, I didn't get named until Armistice Day. I was "baby girl" for a long time. They had named me one name, but Daddy's mother didn't like it. The name she liked, Mother and her sister didn't like.

DELOZIER: Marguerite was what they really had planned to name you.

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HARRIS: Was that the one that Aunt Lois didn't like?

PRESTON: Aunt Stella.

DELOZIER: Aunt Stella didn't like it. You see Marguerite Bright was Daddy's cousin, who had come to live with Mother and Daddy in Hugo.

HARRIS: What name did she want?

PRESTON: I've never been real sure. But I know that Mother and Aunt Trula did not care for anything she suggested such as Stella and Lois.

DELOZIER: Uncle Randall [Connell] came to see you and that's when you got named.

PRESTON: No, he called up.

DELOZIER: That's what Mother said.

PRESTON: He was inebriated, and he called up saying, "Are you happy in the something or other," and he said, "By the way, have you named the baby yet?" They said, "No." He said, "I've just named her, Liberty Bell."

Mother said, "No, we'll never name her Bell, but now Liberty Loven would be lovely."

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DELOZIER: That was my grandmom's maiden name.

PRESTON: So, that's my name, Liberty Loven.

HARRIS: I think it's a pretty name; I really like it.

PRESTON: It's different. But when anybody asks how I got named, I always think they're kind of halfway kidding me. But there's this friend of Mother's and Dad's that's in a nursing home who is always writing.

DELOZIER: Mrs. Stubbs?

PRESTON: Yes. She calls me Libby Loving; she knows I was born November 11; she just knows it. I was named on Armistice night, but I was born long before that. But she's always sending me happy birthday messages at the wrong time.

MCKINZIE: When your father came up here what did he do to make A&M different? I gather he had this 25-year plan right off the bat.

PRESTON: Well, first of all, see, he knew he was coming up here. Didn't Governor Holloway take over in January or February?

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DELOZIER: Governor Holloway wasn't Governor until after we moved up here.

PRESTON: Well, no, Governor Holloway was the one who called him to come up here. Henry Johnston was Governor. He was impeached. He probably was one of the best and smartest

Governors Oklahoma ever had, but he was no politician. Bill Holloway was Lieutenant Governor, and he called Daddy about coming up here. I know at school they talked about it quite a bit. That's the first place I heard that we were moving. It was at my dancing lessons.

DELOZIER: I can just remember the first I heard of it. It was when I went to Daddy's office to get the mail. Tom and I went up to get it, and Miss Masters, Daddy's secretary said, "How are you going to like living in Stillwater?"

And I said, "I'm not; I've never heard of Stillwater."

She informed Tom and I, so we went right on into Daddy's office. He was in there with John Vaughan who was, I guess, the business manager of the college. We just went on in there and said, "What's this about we're

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going to move?" He said he'd talk to us later about it.

PRESTON: Which he did. Said for us to take the mail home. Which we did.

MCKINZIE: So he had the Governor's backing when he came up here?

HARRIS: Right after he came, didn't the Federal Government or somebody take some money? Something about the agriculture board wouldn't give them any funds or something? I studied that in history but I don't remember.

PRESTON: Well, the Department of Agriculture and the military, I believe, the ROTC group, got bickering back and forth and the funds were withheld.

HARRIS: Yes, that's what we read about in school. And he had to go to Washington; he talked them into giving them back, or either compromise their problems.

PRESTON: Well, actually they were going against the Morrill Act, the way I understand it. That all had to be straightened out and the Army had to be satisfied.

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Then the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture had to be convinced that he was in the wrong. That took a little time but it did get worked out. Then right after that the depression hit and then they were paid with warrants.

HARRIS: I know in our history book it said that he was getting on the train at Perry or wherever he got on the train then, and a newspaperman asked him if he really thought he was going to get the money back. He said something about the Morrill Act, and he knew he would. There's a feature headline in the paper in this history book, and it said he was the most positive thinking president they'd had in a long time. Then it talked about his 25-year plan to develop.

MCKINZIE: He did this before the Depression hit. Between the time he came here and the time of the Depression, had he had the 25-year plan to develop?

PRESTON: It wasn't completely developed, but it was pretty well outlined in his own mind. His first concern was to let people know about this school, and that they could go without money.

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DELOZIER: That was always his pride, that any boy could come to OSU, which was Oklahoma A&M in our day without a penny in their pockets and get a college degree.

MCKINZIE: How'd he handle that?

DELOZIER: He never turned away anybody.

PRESTON: A lot of them lived in our basement.

DELOZIER: He found places for them to live in college barns; he started a rug factory; and a broom factory.

PRESTON: There was pottery.

DELOZIER: Pottery factory, that's right.

MCKINZIE: You mean he got university facilities and use it for the kids to work in?

HARRIS: They still do that. They clean it up; that's part of their living.

PRESTON: A lot of them swept floors and started housekeeping in different homes here in town. They did a lot of things.

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DELOZIER: He would help them find a place, you know.

PRESTON: If they really wanted to come to school they could.

DELOZIER: He always said that every person that wants to go to college can come here. He would take them from anywhere; he didn't care if they were from Oklahoma or where. This college would never turn anybody away. He didn't care about their transcript or even see it.

PRESTON: You didn't have to have a high school diploma, because that's the way I started.

DELOZIER: Well, he never did care really what they had done before. He always thought that everybody should have an opportunity.

PRESTON: When we came up here there was a way for people to take high school work at an accelerated pace so they could go on to college -- those that were not qualified.

DELOZIER: I don't know of anybody that was ever turned away, because we'd even take them in or Mama would find a place for them; somebody's house to live in.

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PRESTON: Never will forget one morning we had this knocking on the door and a boy thought it was a fraternity house. He wanted to know if he could sweep the driveway for his breakfast. He had decided to go to school here.

DELOZIER: He saw Tom sweeping the sidewalk and asked if he could wash the car, because he thought that it was a fraternity house, or something where you could get your meal. He knocked on the right door.

PRESTON: By noon of that day he had his room and board taken care of, and enough yards to take care of, that he had spending money, and could buy books and pay his tuition.

DELOZIER: Well, for the first job he had, Mama called up Dean Talmadge. She knew that her father was getting old and needed somebody to just visit with. She was dean in home economics and had never married, and had a nice home. My mother said, "I think I've found the boy for you. He's a farm boy, very pleasant and wants to go to college." She immediately was glad to have him. There was always somebody like that who Mother and Daddy had heard say they wished they could find a nice boy or girl to help them out. I never knew

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of anybody that was turned away. If they ever got in touch with Mother or Daddy, they'd find a way for them.

PRESTON: People talk about having driven all the roads in the state. They mean highways. Daddy drove, I think, every section line, and then every part of the section line or half section.

MCKINZIE: Just in the course of public relations?

PRESTON: Yes. We never made a trip that we weren't stopping at about every other filling station or every filling station and every fruit stand or vegetable stand.

DELOZIER: He wanted to meet the people and he liked to ask people, "Do you have children who want to go to college?" He was selling the college all the time, anywhere we went. We'd be driving between here and Washington, and he'd stop at a filling station and he would ask the man if he had a child that he was interested in sending to college. The man would say, "Well, I don't have the money." Daddy would say, "Well, I don't care about that; do you have a child that would like to go to college? I have a college and we'd like to have any

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child that wants to go to college. We'll find a way for him to finish."

PRESTON: If they're willing to work.

MCKINZIE: Then as a result of coming here, he got on the Board of Land Grant Colleges Association?

PRESTON: That's right.

MCKINZIE: Then as a result of that he began to have some dealings with Washington?

PRESTON: Well, actually he had dealings with Washington before he started functioning with the land grant colleges because one of the first things that happened after he came here that fall was the money withholding problem.

HARRIS: He had to have known someone in Washington, or either he met them, in order for him to get them to do that, to go ahead and not withhold the money so they could operate.

PRESTON: No, he didn't have to know anybody.

DELOZIER: But he did; he got to know somebody.

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PRESTON: Yes, he got to know people up there.

DELOZIER: He knew some people in Washington because, remember the people that came out and taught those extension courses and then those Chautauqua people and all that came to Durant? The world's pretty small.

PRESTON: While he was in school getting his Ph.D., the president of LSU under Huey Long was one of his classmates. He entertained quite royally up there and had a lot of the Louisiana delegation in New York visiting with him. They had a whole floor of an apartment house, that was usually three apartments.

DELOZIER: Then Mother's father was a Federal judge. So I'm sure he was bound to have met people, and his law partner was the Governor of Oklahoma.

PRESTON: Dad used to say that he started out with Oklahoma, and elementary education and secondary education, and stayed through the writing of those laws. He was in Durant when they wrote the laws for the teacher's colleges.

DELOZIER: He went to Oklahoma City and helped with the

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writing of the secondary education school laws. Also, in Hugo he helped register the Indians, so he surely worked with the Indian Affairs people through that, too.

MCKINZIE: He helped register the Indians when he was there?

DELOZIER: He was the county superintendent. The Indians had to be registered and most of them didn't have names as we have, so they had to give them names to register them. As I understood, that was one of his jobs that he enjoyed and talked about a lot.

MCKINZIE: How do you suppose he got to know Harry Truman? Did he ever talk about that? Someplace along the line -- could it have been while he was working with the land grant colleges somewhere?

PRESTON: I thought he met him in Washington but I understood that he met him someplace else first. In Kansas City, or St. Louis? Kansas City.

DELOZIER: It could have been there, too. Phil was rereading some of his stuff, too. But I think we're all just guessing on that. Did you ask Phil, our brother Phil?

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PRESTON: I think I did and he told me he'd have to kind of think about it. When we were growing up we thought that everybody knew about anyone.

DELOZIER: And if we ever heard their name I thought we knew them. My kids are that way. I take my children to Washington, even Tom, three years old. We had reservations once at the Sheraton Park, and Sander Vanocher was standing out there waiting to do the news. Tom jumped out of the car and ran up to him and said, "Hi." Of course, the poor man thought he was some kid he knew, and he immediately just started talking to Tom and thought he was talking to some child of one of his friends. That's the way I think we were. We just thought everybody you saw was your friend. When Harry Truman invested in that zinc thing over at Miami, Papa Con, my mother's father, had also invested in it. Daddy went up there with him while they had all those meetings, because the people lost their money. Now that's one possibility I thought of.

Another one was when he came out here and invested in that oil company. You remember that Harry Truman did?

MCKINZIE: No, I was not aware that he was in an oil venture. Maybe he was.

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DELOZIER: When he went out to Fort Sill; now this is what I heard, and who from I don't know. All these things are in the back of my mind. You check on that sometime, because I think he invested, maybe not with Senator Kerr or some of those men, but I thought it was with Senator Kerr or some of his friends.

BENNETT: Are you talking about uranium?

DELOZIER: No, no I'm talking about oil.

PRESTON: I don't think he invested in uranium, but I know that he encouraged Senator Kerr in the uranium.

DELOZIER: He sold out. As I remember, Harry Truman sold out. Harry Truman came out here before World War I; he was an officer wasn't he and he came out to Fort Sill?

MCKINZIE: Anyhow it seems logical that your father would have known him.

DELOZIER: You see, my father was a friend of these same men that he was a friend of. You ask where he met him; I don't know.

At least he would have heard the name because Harry Truman was also working in the Democrat precinct

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politics, and county, and state politics in Missouri and Daddy was doing the same thing in Oklahoma, and I would think these people, surely, were making conversation.

MCKINZIE: He surely knew him for a number of years.

DELOZIER: I thought of the same thing myself, because I never asked Daddy. But like as I just said, we always thought everybody was our friend. Daddy never acted like it was a new friend.

I remember when he came home and talked about the caucus where Harry Truman's name was brought up for Vice President. We were all over there and talking about what he said and all and there was real excitement. We were all so thrilled that somebody west of the Mississippi was being thought about.

MCKINZIE: Your father, then, went to the convention in 1944?

DELOZIER: Yes. I just remember that. To me it didn't seem like a new friend. Like Liberty said, I never thought of people being new friends. It seemed like to me that Daddy knew everybody from forever.

PRESTON: Well, I have thought the first time Hilton [Marshall]

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Briggs came to the house that they'd been lifelong friends.

DELOZIER: I always thought everybody was that way. Daddy acted like anybody was somebody you just met. I never remember people introducing and saying, "This is Mr. So-and-So." He always knew all about them and who their children were, and I thought that he knew everybody.

MCKINZIE: Your father must have had a pretty good sense of how to deal with politicians though, because he got along so well with Mr. Truman. He also had to deal with Oklahoma governors, didn't he; quite a series of them.

DELOZIER: He got along very well with them. I think he was a born politician. I think he loved people.

PRESTON: Something that's always fascinated me is that in my own mind. Daddy was a master psychologist. Yet, in seeing his college records, I notice his lowest grade was in psychology.

DELOZIER: But I still think that he was probably a better psychologist than a teacher.

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MCKINZIE: Did he ever teach in a classroom? You mentioned he was a superintendent.

PRESTON: Oh, superintendents taught.

MCKINZIE: Oh, he was a teaching superintendent.

PRESTON: Yes.

DELOZIER: We used to have people come up here to the college and say, "Remember, Mr. Bennett, when you were in such and such a class in Boswell?"

PRESTON: Who has that picture of his Boswell school? I may have it.

DELOZIER: I bet you do, because I don't.

PRESTON: I've got an awful lot of pictures down in the basement. I think I probably have it of his first class.

DELOZIER: I know he taught because I can remember another time we were in the train station in Durant and a boy got off the train. We just went down to see the trains, and a boy got off that he had taught. So I'm sure he taught.

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PRESTON: Now we're talking back before the days of radio and things like that. Your entertainment was actually to go down and watch the trains go through.

DELOZIER: Another thing; Daddy knew everybody that got off that train at Durant. He knew where they'd been, and what their business was. Too, I thought these people thought Daddy was great, and he thought they were great. He'd always wave to the engineer and seemed to know him by name.

PRESTON: They put me on that train going to Hugo enough times that I know they knew everybody on those trains.

DELOZIER: He seemed to. He knew all the men. I remember we'd drive past what they call a dispatcher station there at Durant, because they had several railroads that came in there; and he knew everybody. He'd always wave, and then say to me, you know this man has to come down here at 4 something in the morning, and he always knew all about them. But I thought he knew everybody everywhere.

MCKINZIE: You know that phrase, "help people help themselves," probably was as much his phrase as anybody

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else's. It got used a lot in government after he took the job with Point IV. He contributed that as a kind of explanation of it, and I gather from what you say that he tried to do a lot of the same things here by bringing the kids in and letting them sleep in your house or letting them sleep someplace else, and getting them jobs. You mentioned to me once that he went away to teach people, that he flew some during some of these things. Didn't he do some speaking before farm groups?

PRESTON: Oh, yes.

DELOZIER: Oh, my yes. Now he and Governor Holloway were driving up to Wyoming; they were in a car, driving. That was before the airplane days. That was in the early thirties.

PRESTON: These are some of the places where he spoke. Now those are the press releases. Number 9 has been misplaced and we couldn't find it.

MCKINZIE: When did he go on the speaking circuit?

PRESTON: From the time I can remember.

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DELOZIER: All my life. We would always go over and listen.

PRESTON: There at Durant.

DELOZIER: Well, here, too. He spoke at farm congresses, 4-H meetings, and so forth.

PRESTON: It seemed like he spoke from one to five times a day or more. A lot of times he'd schedule, it seems to me, something like seven commencement addresses in a day.

DELOZIER: I don't remember just how many, but Miss Veta Ware can tell you all that. It was an awful lot. And if it was here in town we'd see Daddy taking off across the campus somewhere, but he always welcomed us to go with him. We'd go with him and sometimes sit up on the stage, or sit on the front row.

PRESTON: He always felt everybody ought to walk on campus. Every teacher and every person connected with the college ought to meet the students, and the best way to meet them was to get out and walk.

DELOZIER: And we knew every student. We knew if their

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uncle had gone to school here, or their grandmother. I think that must have come from a definite love for people. Because he couldn't have known all those people on the train and all that if he wasn't interested.

PRESTON: Well, he never met a stranger. Mother used to like to ride the bus to Oklahoma City so she could visit with people.

DELOZIER: Of course, Grandmother, too. We'd go into a filling station and always, as a little child, I thought that they knew all these people. And Daddy always waved at every truck driver; I thought he knew them all. I thought these were all his friends going up and down the roads.

MCKINZIE: Do you think he was ever disappointed in anybody?

PRESTON: Well, he may have been.

DELOZIER: He didn't ever look at that side.

PRESTON: There's good and bad in all of us, and there's more good than bad -- that was his belief. One should emphasize the good and overlook the bad. If others would overlook your faults, you should always overlook theirs.

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DELOZIER: I never heard him criticize anybody. I never even heard him say about any one of us, that anything didn't please him.

PRESTON: I do remember one time I didn't please him. It was a misunderstanding. I misunderstood something.

DELOZIER: I can remember that, too; but really all he did was tell you exactly what he had said. Just a little firmer.

PRESTON: Yes.

DELOZIER: But that was very kind.

PRESTON: We got over it right then.

DELOZIER: Within two minutes he said what he had to say.

PRESTON: But I tell you what; I think I backed up and down those steps a dozen and one times. What had happened -- he wanted somebody to ride to Guthrie with him. He was speaking over in Guthrie, and we had a whole bunch of people up there from Durant. We had a big evening planned and I finally decided I would go with him. I don't know what all you all were doing up here, but it was somebody real entertaining. So I felt that I'd been a

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martyr to the cause. Probably shouldn't have ever felt that way, but I did. Anyway, after speaking down there, I suggested that we stop and have him coffee and me coke, and he said, "it's too late." So, we got on back up to Stillwater, and all of them were planning to go up to the drugstore.

DELOZIER: We were all sleeping out in the yard. It was summertime and there must have been thirty of us who had pallets on the ground.

PRESTON: So, everybody was going to go up there. I had called Joe, and I knew they were all going so I was going to go, too. He walked up to the corner and was going to meet us. So we all walked under their bedroom and I was right with them, but I was the only one that got lectured, because I was told it was too late.

DELOZIER: He was a stiff one for rules if he said it.

PRESTON: He didn't say anything he didn't mean. He laid down very few rules, but once one was laid down you better not forget it. That was back when we were in Guthrie; that it was too late; I didn't think about it being

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too late up here.

HARRIS: I can see your side of the story.

PRESTON: I can still see my side, too, but I've seen that I did disobey him because he told me very kindly that it was too late.

MCKINZIE: What about his relations with students here? Did he have friendly relations with them?

PRESTON: Having talked to different ones that got called in for disciplinary purposes, they always said they went in expecting to be chewed out. They came out feeling like they had been chewed out, but yet he hadn't said anything unkind to them.

DELOZIER: That's the way I always felt about the incidents you were talking about. Now I think it more after raising six children. He did a beautiful job of never carrying it any further than that minute or two either. It was never mentioned.

PRESTON: You forget it after it's over. But you just don't repeat that.

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DELOZIER: Well, we didn't.

PRESTON: You don't want to. Once was enough. That was the only time I was ever disciplined by Daddy.

MCKINZIE: As you were getting older and school was beginning to grow, didn't life get a little more hectic as time went by?

PRESTON: No, maybe it calmed down slightly, if anything. But I can remember when we first moved up here. Mary and Tom never lived in town or in the country; they lived on state property, or state and Federal probably, until they married. Daddy was of the opinion that this had been furnished to us, so this was just real nice. Consequently, people came we never knew when.

DELOZIER: Really, though we didn't think of it being hectic, because that's all Tom and I'd ever known. I couldn't dream of anything being nicer. So, our whole world was with Mother and Daddy and the family.

HARRIS: I think it's so fortunate that you all were so close rather than spread out.

DELOZIER: Like when Hendry and Josephine had their first baby

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which was the first grandchild. We really felt that was our baby, I mean -- we always felt that way. We would do anything for that little girl. Every grandchild that came along -- I heard people talk about in families, how they were a little jealous or disgusted. I never had that feeling. I always felt that it was great that everything happened the way it happened, didn't you?

PRESTON: Later I did, sometimes. At the time I didn't always think it.

DELOZIER: I just always thought it was perfect; everything we'd want. Like you say, we were certainly brainwashed. I just thought, oh, aren't we fortunate? Of course, Liberty was just enough older that she probably was able to wake up to reality more.

MCKINZIE: Well, how did it settle down then after you began to get older? You were talking about that.

PRESTON: Well, we'd have all these people come in. We'd go to bed in our own beds, but then we ended up, usually, on the floor downstairs, or sometimes in the kitchen. Finally I figured out the safest place for me to get -- now Mary and Tom were a little different, because they

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communicated among themselves a lot.

DELOZIER: But I never did really sleep in a bed much.

PRESTON: No, we didn't.

DELOZIER: We called it my bed.

PRESTON: We had beds assigned to us.

DELOZIER: There were no good hotels here.

PRESTON: And no eating places.

DELOZIER: No, and everybody that came in then, even if they wanted to stay a week stayed with us; we loved it. We put pallets here, there and everywhere.

PRESTON: For years I loved weight all over me because for so long we slept under rugs.

DELOZIER: We never had enough covers.

PRESTON: It wasn't funny; sometimes you got caught with a short one.

MCKINZIE: Somebody would come in and it would be necessary for your parents to say, "Well, would you mind moving to a pallet while somebody has your bed?"

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PRESTON: They just nudged us; we all got up. I got to the place, I'd go to sleep on the kitchen table. That was the safest place to be. You didn't have to move from there.

DELOZIER: I usually stayed back because I was nosey and wanted to hear everything that Daddy said. So I usually stayed right down there where he was talking. Well, I didn't go to bed until everybody that had come in was coming and going.

PRESTON: As long as we stayed quiet we could stay.

DELOZIER: We could stay anywhere. Daddy didn't care if we sat in his office all day.

MCKINZIE: You were talking about the closeness of the family. You mentioned something to me once about going to Washington and you all went someplace as a family group.

PRESTON: We went everywhere. Daddy loved to parade us. Now this wasn't just the five children; don't get me wrong, there were usually a few cousins or maybe friends.

DELOZIER: You know the car runs just as cheap, full.

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PRESTON: They used to give family rates pretty good.

DELOZIER: I never realized the rates. I never even knew we paid. You know what I mean? I was unconcerned; Daddy never mentioned it. I thought, "Wasn't that great!"

PRESTON: The only time I was concerned about money was when we traveled just with Mother. She would give us a dollar a day to eat on. Now you could spend it all going to the show, or on one meal, or you could save it up and go without for two or three days if you wanted to. That was fine with her. Then you could splurge. She could care less; but you got a dollar a day.

DELOZIER: A dollar to Mama might be the same as 20 dollars. She didn't know a dollar from twenty, and she might, you know, take you all out to dinner that evening up on a roof garden or something and pay 20 dollars apiece for a meal. Money was just so unimportant to her. She could have handed you that dollar and you could have said, "Well, I really needed more," and she would have given you more. We thought it was kind of a game to go ahead and see if you could get by. I remember one summer; we'd see what we could get by on, how much we could have

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left. It was just Mama.

MCKINZIE: Did you travel during the summer?

DELOZIER: We traveled all the time.

PRESTON: The year around.

DELOZIER: We never went to school -- we did some.

PRESTON: We did some. I know one time the principal called up and asked where Mary had been for the last six weeks."

PRESTON: Mother said, "Well, I sent her on an errand."

He said, that's the longest errand he'd ever heard of.

DELOZIER: He was going to say something to her.

PRESTON: So she hangs up, "bye"

DELOZIER: Mama never talked to anybody on the telephone. She answered their questions or said what she had to say -- "bye!"

PRESTON: She'd call you up, rattle off, and "bye!"

DELOZIER: Anyway, the principal turned around to me and said, "That's about the longest errand I've ever heard of."

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That's the first I knew she'd said it was an errand. To her, missing school was the most unimportant thing she'd ever heard of. She couldn't imagine that silly man calling her up. I laughed about it with her when I got home that day. She said, "Well, I can't imagine a man having time to call people to see why people weren't there; they ought to be taking care of the people that are there!"

PRESTON: She had her own ideas. Travel was very educational, and if we had a chance to go we went; and that was it. Mother or Daddy, either one, never were very good with money for personal things. But for college things, Daddy could be very concerned; helping students or this, that, or the other.

DELOZIER: Mother was good at that, too. I heard her advice to these young students about how to handle their money.

PRESTON: She didn't practice it.

DELOZIER: She didn't want to have anything to do with money. The least you could have to do with it the better. So, it was really very unimportant in our travels except the time when we left with the 50 dollars, or whatever

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we had and went to Yellowstone.

PRESTON: The reason we don't like Colorado today.

DELOZIER: Henry told us to watch. He had worked in a store where they shot money up over head, you know, to the office. Well, he'd been the guy at the other end that sent back the change, I think, in packages and things. So we were driving to Colorado and mother said if we needed money we'd wire Daddy. So Henry -- I imagine to keep Tom and I busy; we were probably bothering him -- he was driving and he says, "You all watch those telephone poles because Daddy might wire us some money." We were so afraid we'd miss them. We just kept our heads out the window the whole trip looking for that. But we saw a lot of scenery that way.

PRESTON: Uncle Henry was always real bright coming up with things. Coming home from school, we would say, "Where are Mother and Dad?" And he would say, "Up on the roof flying a kite." That was a standard answer.

HARRIS: I told one of my teachers that one time and they didn't think it was so funny.

DELOZIER: Well, we really loved Henry's humor.

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HARRIS: Did he get that from Granddaddy?

DELOZIER: Yes, Granddaddy had a good sense of humor. Mama didn't have.

PRESTON: Mother had no sense of humor.

DELOZIER: Liberty and I were more like Mama. We stood there like dummies when people would tell a joke; we didn't know what they were saying.

PRESTON: We were a little English. After about six or nine months, and after about the tenth time you heard it, you might figure it out if you're lucky.

DELOZIER: But Granddaddy really had a good sense of humor. He really would keep us in stitches. When he came home from New York or somewhere we would sit up for hours listening as he related everything he saw, everything he heard. If it was a popular dance, he'd get up and demonstrate and sing the music. He was pretty good at it. Remember when he went to New York and he came home with the "Big Apple?"

MCKINZIE: When your father went out to talk about Point IV;

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when all that came up were you still around close enough, then?

PRESTON: I was right here; she was right here.

DELOZIER: We were right here and our family; you were up there.

PRESTON: You checked in at least once a day.

DELOZIER: Or several times.

PRESTON: Mother came by and stayed long enough -- she went to the bakery everyday. She'd bring these things back and she never stayed over 15 minutes, but if the children were asleep, she woke them up and then she left. I used to just want to strangle her.

DELOZIER: Really, we spent a lot of time over there; Liberty and I both did. Now as I look back, it's been an amazing amount of time to have been busy and involved as we were. But the children loved it. Liberty's little girl was in school and she would come to Grandmother's to meet Liberty in the afternoons.

PRESTON: And it meant I'd better be there ahead of time.

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DELOZIER: Mary and Mac were in nursery school up at the college. I would take them to Grandma's. Everything started from Grandmother's car, and in those days they didn't allow cars on campus. So you had to park there and walk anywhere. Daddy thought it was better to walk

so we would walk. Grandmother loved walking around, saying hello to Dean Stout and all her friends. These were Boswell friends. We'd walk around campus. Of course, it was very important to her that we be kind and considerate of their friends, these older friends. So it was an everyday little thing and I'm sure it was with you, too. Be sure you got in touch with Miss Irland and Miss Stout, and Dean Scroggs and Dean Conger. We had quite a few. By the time we said hello to everybody, nursery school was out.

PRESTON: That's about the truth. We all ate up there on Sunday, too.

DELOZIER: Of course.

HARRIS: We ate there almost every morning for breakfast. I used to go and eat lunch there.

DELOZIER: During nursery school, you and I went there everyday.

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MCKINZIE: And the grandfather fixed the breakfast.

HARRIS: Biscuits are my favorite, and you know people don't fix biscuits like that anymore. I don't know how to do it either. I wish I'd had my sense at that age to remember.

DELOZIER: Well, honey, he taught Liberty and I, and I don't think either of us make as good a biscuits. Mother never could make biscuits as good as Daddy. He really loved biscuits.

HARRIS: He cooked in quantity though and I think maybe that helped.

DELOZIER: He loved the more the better. The more relatives would arrive the happier he was. The more of us that could sit down to that table the happier he was.

MCKINZIE: Whatever possessed him to leave a happy life like he had here and go on that Point IV thing?

PRESTON: Well, you've got to understand mother a little.

DELOZIER: Well, also, I remember he really felt that you should serve your country. He had really felt so bad;

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he never got over the fact that he was to go the day after the armistice was signed to serve in World War I. He was heartbroken. Mother said she never saw anyone who felt so bad, because he didn't get in that war. He was very patriotic.

MCKINZIE: You mean he was going to enlist?

DELOZIER: He had already; he was to go in the next day. Then of course, the war was over and that was it. He never did get to serve.

PRESTON: Those with families they didn't take.

DELOZIER: Mother said he'd been trying to get in. I don't know whether he'd signed up or what.

PRESTON: The infantry. He signed up before they knew I was on the way.

DELOZIER: But he really felt bad about that. When the Second World War came along, I know my twin brother was in advanced ROTC and -- Daddy even let that group go about three months early from college, to their units, and then they came back to get their diplomas. Tom had to go to Ft. Robinson in Arkansas -- Little Rock -- and he

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immediately asked for overseas duty. I'm sure it was because he knew my parents really would have thought he was terrible, I guess, if he hadn't. I think he must have felt that way, because I would have. But mother was -- like Liberty said, you'd have to know mother.

PRESTON: First of all, Daddy probably would have stayed in Hugo but mother more or less accepted for him, and after Mother committed him. Daddy was committed. I think Daddy was very hesitant about coming up here. But Mother was very determined he was going to come. Daddy wasn't interested in radio, but Mother became very interested in it and they were having a hard time finding people to speak over at the Ardmore station. So she wrote them that Daddy would be very happy to speak anytime they needed a speaker. He drove about 54 miles over those bad roads, pretty often, to speak over there. Mother was very great at wanting Daddy to advance.

DELOZIER: Yet I never realized how organized in Mama's mind she was, while it was going on, because she really had everything throughout the day planned for him. I noticed it more after I was grown and living there during World War II. Every morning she would have, on a sheet of paper, just all across it, what he was to do

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that day. Like, be sure you do this, be sure you do that. I'm sure this was an asset, because it helped make sure he wouldn't miss doing the things that she thought were important.

RESTON: You had asked what Mother said when she found out Daddy had been asked to head up the Point IV. I was mentioning this to Aunt Trula and she said, "I can tell you what she said, 'Well, aren't they fortunate they know someone like Bennett?'"

HARRIS: That's the way she felt, from what Aunt Trula says, about everything. Aren't they lucky Granddaddy was available?

DELOZIER: That was the way with everything. You always count your blessings. Aren't those people fortunate -- because we were fortunate to have Daddy and Grandfather. I was fortunate to

have Liberty, and she always would say, "Well, don't question what the Lord did. He gave you this sister; my goodness, you're fortunate."

PRESTON: Mother didn't feel like there was anything that Daddy wasn't capable of doing. He lived up to her expectations.

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DELOZIER: But she did the same for him. Without their being there, I never heard conversations about these things. They weren't schemers or connivers. I never heard any.

PRESTON: They were not personally ambitious, I think.

HARRIS: This goes back to what you asked before, if they wanted to be like Great-grandfather. This is the way they thought they could serve the Lord -- was to help people help themselves.

DELOZIER: I think so, and serve the country; and they really felt that you were put here on earth for this mission. This is your responsibility, and you can't expect from everybody else. We were always told don't think people just do for you.

MCKINZIE: You mean, you would say that if he were asked and he saw an opportunity there was no way he could turn it down?

DELOZIER: No, he would feel this -- he should do for people. If I have all of this "know-how," then I should share it. He felt very humble about having know-how, of being able to show people how to be something. He felt this

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was just something he was blessed with.

MCKINZIE: When your father went, then, to Washington, what kinds of reports did you get from him about what he was doing?

DELOZIER: Oh, great. Everything was the most wonderful thing that ever happened. I never knew any other thing; I didn't expect anything else. I expected him to take Washington by storm. I thought everybody was going to love him up there. I was so happy when he told us that the first press conference he had, he looked around the room and here were all the news service people. The head of Scripps-Howard was a boy from here who went to school at OSU. And his two brothers had gone to school, and then Daddy had their mother come here, when her husband died, to be a house mother. Another boy who was head of AP was a boy who had gone to college here. In fact, both these boys were fraternity brothers. So it seemed to me that everywhere he went, it was such a small world. There were those same friends.

MCKINZIE: Did your mother go out with him to Washington or

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did she stay here in Stillwater?

DELOZIER: She went back and forth. My twin brother was living there, and Daddy kept rooms at the Washington Hotel. By that time they were accustomed to going by plane everywhere and so she was back and forth. Liberty or I'd meet her in the city.

PRESTON: Well, I think your brothers lived in Oklahoma City.

DELOZIER: Everybody wanted to go meet them.

MCKINZIE: Do you think your mother enjoyed Washington life?

PRESTON: Oh, loved every minute of it.

DELOZIER : She was real fond of museums and she loved the Smithsonian. Of course, we'd always spent a lot of time in Washington.

PRESTON: Well, a lot of time compared to other people from our community.

DELOZIER: It seemed like a lot of time and we certainly were familiar with Washington because we had always walked everywhere. We didn't think anything about

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taking off from the hotel to the Capitol or from the hotel to anywhere. We never felt unfamiliar anywhere.

PRESTON: You can always ask questions and find out where you are.

DELOZIER: You can stop a nice policeman and he'll tell you whatever you want to know.

MCKINZIE: She traveled with him some, I take it, from the very first before the trip where the accident occurred.

HARRIS: Yes, she did go overseas, because she went to South America.

DELOZIER: Mother loved travel and everybody in the family loved travel. Every opportunity she got to go anywhere, she went. She was always ready for it. It took her five minutes to get ready to go anywhere. She didn't at first enjoy air travel till finally Daddy convinced her one day to fly in a college plane to the lower Rio Grande valley. The first long trip with anybody else, I remember is when they went to McAllen. Mama Con's birthday dinner was taken down one day by plane, but Aunt Trula says that Mama didn't fly, that Mother

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drove down and Daddy flew it down. But I thought she flew down, too.

PRESTON: Well, one time when she was going to stay, I flew the meal down and mother drove down; but the time that mother flew, it was to take something down to Mama Con.

MCKINZIE: From here to Durant?

DELOZIER: Yes.

MCKINZIE: So, it'd be a short flight?

DELOZIER: Oh, yes.

PRESTON: On a small plane.

DELOZIER: It was really small.

MCKINZIE: I take it, though, your father loved to fly.