

An Interview with  
**George R. McCue**

at his home in  
Kirkwood, Missouri

**07 January 1998**

interviewed by Will Sarvis  
transcript edited by Will Sarvis  
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**Oral History Program**  
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## PREFACE

George R. McCue was born on May 13, 1910 in Lipscomb, Texas, and in subsequent years lived in various places, including Arkansas and Hannibal, Missouri. In 1937 George McCue and Pearl Lucas were married at her house in Brookfield, Missouri. She was a registered nurse, and her father and paternal grandfather were country doctors. They celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary the year before this interview. Mr. McCue's long newspaper career began in 1933 in Linn County, Missouri, where he worked until a brief stint with the Associated Press, 1936-1937. Next he worked in Springfield, Missouri, from 1937 to 1941. From Springfield he moved on to St. Louis, where he worked for the Star-Times (1941-1943) and the Post-Dispatch (1943-1975). Mr. McCue has written two volumes of memoirs and family history, Time For Another Day (1993) and The Hillside's Dew-Pearled (1997), with a third work in progress at this writing.

Mr. McCue was another interviewee recommended by Francis M. (Bud) Barnes, III. After our initial correspondence and telephone conversations, I met Mr. and Mrs. McCue at their home in Kirkwood, Missouri. We all enjoyed some friendly introductory conversation, and then Mrs. McCue left the two of us to our endeavor. Mr. McCue and I enjoyed a leisurely lunch of bean soup, cornbread, custard, and coffee. Then we moved to the living room where Mr. McCue started a fire in the fireplace. We sat in easy chairs to conduct the recording session; an L-shaped bookshelf about eight feet high (with respective lengths six and three feet) occupied the corner walls behind Mr. McCue's seat. A coffee thermos, as well as the tape recorder, sat on the table between us. Altogether the atmosphere was relaxed and delightful. After finishing the recording we talked of various things as I packed up the equipment, and Mr. McCue gave me copies of the above volumes.

The interview was recorded on 3M AVX60 and Sony type I (normal bias) audio cassettes, using a Marantz PMD-222 manual recorder (set on automatic recording level) and a Shure VP64 omnidirectional microphone attached to a floor stand. No background noise compromises the good audio quality.

The following transcript represents a slightly modified rendering of the entire oral history interview. The interviewee carefully read a draft transcript and made various corrections, clarifications, and additions of content reflected by the following transcript. Minor stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. Any use of brackets [ ] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Parentheses ( ) are used to indicate laughter or a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation. Quotation marks [” “] indicate speech depicting dialogue, words highlighted for the usual special purposes (such as indicating irony). Double dashes [--] and ellipses [ . . . ] are also used as a stylistic method in an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech. In an effort to avoid cluttering the transcript with brackets, details surrounding complete proper names are not always found in the transcript itself, though the index contains, when possible, their fullest spelling. And although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editors, Will Sarvis and N. Renae Farris.



**[Tape meter, 000. Begin Side One, Tape One of Three. Begin Interview.]**

WS: My name is Will Sarvis. I'm with the State Historical Society of Missouri. Today is January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1998. I'm in Kirkwood, Missouri, with Mr. George McCue. And we're going to talk about your career with the paper and that sort of thing. But I thought just to get started, maybe we could begin with an autobiographical sketch of where you were born and grew up, and that kind of thing.

GM: Okay. I was born in Lipscomb, Texas, which is a little county seat up in the middle of the Panhandle, in 1910. My grandfather had sold a farm in Kansas and moved down there and bought this little weekly paper, and built a house. They also bought a farm south of town. I was born in a house that he built in town. My sister Louise was born in the outlying farm. And I have a brother, Richard, who was born later in Hannibal, Missouri, where we lived subsequently. My dad -- he and my mother were married at Lipscomb. She'd been teaching school there. They were newcomers to Texas, and they were just getting started. So, in the course of time I was born and my sister was born. My folks worked on the farm.

And then everybody went broke and they moved to Arkansas, near Rogers, which is now quite a city, but at that time it was just a little trading point. My dad built a little slab house out in the woods near the White River near some relatives who also were there. My mother's parents had a farm there, so they all kind of made a little colony. And they all went broke there. In Arkansas they had wonderful crops and great growing seasons, and everything wonderful, except the market. When the

market went bad you just had a whole lot of peaches and logs and materials of all sorts from various harvests on your hands.

So they moved to Hannibal, where my dad got a railroad job with the Chicago-Burlington-Quincy. My brother was born. We were there until early in World War I, when Dad was assigned to go to Alliance, Nebraska. We were left running a little house that he had built on top of a very high hill on Park Avenue, Park Avenue being on the hill. While my dad was away we had a very cold winter and a coal famine. The government decreed that on Mondays you could not burn coal, and on certain days you were prohibited from other normal activities. They encouraged, to the point of [requiring, that when a housewife purchased the standard 24-pound sack of white flour she also buy six pounds of graham flour]. They were trying to get everyone to eat more graham and save the grinding facilities for the army. So that's how we were introduced to wholesome graham flour.

My dad came back and was transferred to Keokuk, Iowa, for a summer or so, and then to St. Louis. So we were just bouncing all over and changing schools and not realizing that we were having such a hard time. The really bad time was in 1918 when we were up on this hilltop in Hannibal, with winter. The flu epidemic of that year was a *real* crisis. It was not just ordinary flu. It was a killer. People were dying up and down the street. We survived that. From St. Louis, after a couple of years, we were transferred to Centralia, Illinois, then back to St. Louis. Then my dad was transferred in 1927 to Brookfield, Missouri, where we moved a year later. I

immediately left for the University of Missouri, where I had plans to enter the journalism school.

After I got out of school, in 1933, there was a terrible problem with finding a job.

**[Tape meter, 050]**

Newspapers were not expecting to pay anything much. They never had. And now they expected to get almost free labor if indeed they took them on on those terms. I tried around the state; Kansas City and St. Louis, trade journals and newspapers, with no results whatsoever. Finally, in Brookfield, I went into a little tri-weekly and offered to work for nothing just to get some experience. That's the kind of guy they wanted to hear from. So they took me on. For seven weeks I sold ads and wrote reports and other chores. Then they offered me \$11 a week to stay on, which I did. Three years later I'd risen to \$15 a week.

About that time I met a photographer from the Associated Press, who said, "Well, maybe there might be an opening on the AP," if I'd just go talk to them. So I did, and there was. I was assigned as a junior editor in Jefferson City, which meant running teletypes and reading the "pony service" for mid-state newspapers. The "pony" was like a conference call. The operator got Mexico, Fulton, Marshall, and Boonville on the line, and then I'd come on and read them twenty minutes of news in the morning, and another ten minutes in the afternoon. That was their wire service.

After a year on the AP I went to Springfield, Missouri, which was considered a very hot spot in the learning process, because there was an editor there named

George Olds, who had a great talent for discovering things you could do that you didn't know you could do yourself, and making you do them -- and, at the same time, being a little bit cantankerous when he took a notion to be difficult. I covered the city hall, the courthouse, and wrote a food column and an "around town" column, editorials, and also ended up being the Sunday city editor. So I had a pretty good grounding, thanks to all that.

I had been applying to the Post-Dispatch, and they didn't have an opening. One day I got a call from the city editor of the [St. Louis] Star-Times, Aaron Benesch, who I'd done some work for on election returns. They had an opening and he asked me if I'd like to come to St. Louis. So I did. In the meantime, I'd been in touch with Raymond Crowley, the city editor of the Post, who said, "By all means, come and get the experience and then see us later." And that was kind of the way it worked out. A year later I was on the Post.

I did general assignments and was covering municipal courts, where they had wonderful neighbor disputes and all kind of earthy neighborhood matters that came up in court. I wrote a feature story about some of that, and as a result of that, was pulled back into the office and given more writing assignments. Then I shifted over to the Sunday "Pictures" magazine, which was the newest version of what they used to call the old brown section. The Sunday roto [rotogravure], which had little features and debutantes on horseback, maypole dances, and just general miscellany; whatever they had in the way of pictures back in the old days. It was always printed on this brown rotogravure slick paper for better reproduction. By this time that had been

taken over by a man named Julius Klyman, who aspired to be the only real rival to Life magazine, which had just been started. He was interested in photojournalism as a serious pursuit, and as a dynamic way of presenting news pictorially with short, punchy bits of texts and captions. So I was on that for eleven years and ended up being the assistant editor of it.

**[Tape meter, 100]**

One of the things I'd been working on from time to time was whatever features we had on art, architecture, street planning, or what not, I had done. And I had gotten acquainted with a pretty broad range of art people and design people. One day I got an offer. Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., who had succeeded to the editorship after the death of his father, wanted to start two new pages. One was a book review page in the editorial section, and opposite it was what they called the "Music and Arts" page, which had essays, the schedules of concerts and exhibitions. And then it had a thing called "The Realm of Ideas." They gave us a wide latitude for publishing almost anything that had an idea in it. So I was assigned to that page when Thomas B. Sherman was the editor of both pages. I was entirely in charge of the art content.

One day, Irving Dilliard, the editor of the editorial page, asked me if I realized something different about my job. And I said, "Well, what?" He said, "You're the only writer on the paper who is his own assignment editor." And I realized that was true. Whatever I took a notion to write about I would do, and inform the managing editor about it. He would okay [it], and it would be in the paper the following Sunday. One reason for that was that they were kind of humoring the man they called

“Young Joe,” Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., who was in his mid-40s when he became editor. He was beginning to assert himself in various areas of the paper. But this [The Realm of Ideas and book pages] was, in my belief, the first thing he had done that he merged in the paper as his own idea carried to fulfillment. In a sense, the old tough boys on the paper were kind of humoring Young Joe by just letting this thing -- I think they figured it would run its course and burn out or something to that effect. When it didn't do that, why, they still sort of kept hands off because they didn't want to be bothered with it. Actually, none of them knew what to assign or to talk about, even, in advance, about anything that appeared on the page.

On the death of Tom Sherman I became editor of the page and still carried on [with the art and related content]. I had an essay every week almost without fail on subjects of art, urban design, architecture, and the environment. And billboards. I gave myself quite a bit of latitude. Nobody else was doing it, so nobody quarreled with it. The attitude of the paper seemed to be if you put somebody in a job like that and gave him enough rope to hang himself or make a swing or whatever -- it's kind of up to him to prove he's capable of handling it. So, for nineteen years I was in that position. That was the brightest, most luminous time of my life. I got to meet hordes of artists and architects in this and other cities of the country. I made talks at universities from coast to coast, and was invited to participate in panels and [on] competition [juries] and quite a number of things that had to do with disseminating information on all these areas.

That was, of course, the old period of urban renewal; the period of scraping cities clean, or large areas, and then rebuilding them with new apartments or business districts or whatever.

**[Tape meter, 150]**

There was quite a lot of argument about how cities were to be reconstructed, since they were wiped clean and there was nothing there anymore but open ground. We were not in the habit of thinking of design in terms of the city, and we're not yet. You can see in downtown St. Louis that the idea of the city design has never gotten very far. What has gotten far has been individual projects that have come in; wiped out a lot of the old part of the city, put up something that is a big event or a big office building or something, with no sidewalk life. And now they wonder what killed the city.

So those were all questions that were in the early stages, in the 1960s. The main memorable thing about my having been occupied with it at that moment was that it was a rather historical time in the American concept of what cities were all about. We still go to Europe and love the old streets and the old buildings from the sixteenth century or eighteenth or whatever. Then we come home and tear down something that was built fifty years ago because it's getting old. So we have that irreconcilable point of view about structures and how cities work. It's still afflicting us very terribly.

At any rate, I stayed with that job until my retirement in 1975. At that time I was immediately occupied with a small book I was writing about the drawings of

George Caleb Bingham, which we had just secured for ownership by the state, when the Mercantile Library put them on sale. There was a big to-do about that, because we were suddenly very concerned that these drawings would not be broken up and dispersed, that they'd be kept as a collection. That was done through a very strenuous state effort in which I participated by giving talks in cities here and there with slides. Then at the end [I] wrote this little book publication about Bingham and some of his works involved in this issue.

At that time I was also working on a history of the Octagon House in Washington, D.C., which was a commissioned job. The house was an 1800 building, occupied by the Tayloe family, who moved in from a plantation over near Fredericksburg. So I was in Washington several times getting material for the book and writing it. Following that, there was a succession of things that just kept coming along that kept me busily writing about them and being involved in them and going to meetings and activities of that kind. So there was never a real stop in activity. It was just a change of arena.

[Francis M.] "Bud" Barnes [III] was very much interested in something about a house we lived in here. When we moved from Springfield, we lived in a bungalow in Maplewood, near the City Limits Loop, which during the war was very handy for transportation almost anywhere in the area. You could get a bus or a streetcar. You could go to Jefferson Barracks, Creve Coeur Lake, almost anywhere from there, in one vehicle.

**[Tape meter, 200]**

From that house, where [we lived when] our son Tom [Thomas] was born, we moved to Kirkwood in 1950. We had come out here for walks with the children and just to get a little farther out in the country. Walking down a street one day we saw this *immense*, yellow brick house. It's Roman brick, which is a large, hard, clay brick that's rather yellow. This is a house fifty feet by fifty feet footprint, three stories. It's a Dutch colonial design with roofs on the front and back, and then the end walls are just plain, undifferentiated walls for the whole height. When I looked at that wall, I thought, "This is the biggest thing this side of downtown." We were kind of *marveling* at it. And the next thing we knew, when we were talking to a real estate agent about houses here and there, he said, "Well, I've got a place in Kirkwood that's kind of big, but you might like it." Well, it was this house! We had three children then [the others being Mary Patricia and Bill, born in Springfield.]<sup>1</sup> We went through the house several times. It really took a grip on us. We had been really cramped in a little back yard, and this was a yard that was close to an acre. It was a complicated transaction, but we made it and we moved in. The children would hit there and they'd just *burst* running all over the yard. We would burst inside both at the enjoyment of the space and the realization of some work to be done.

At any rate, we found that the experience of a big house after a little house is not just spatial, it's spiritual. You grow into a larger space in a way that you can't anticipate. But we found ourselves thinking in larger terms and brighter terms. And somehow, with all the troubles we had getting the house fixed up here and there and

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<sup>1</sup> Bill's given name is John William.

financed and other things, it was just a joy to live in. We were there for twenty years. Our children grew up there. We keep meeting young people around town who say, “Oh, I knew so-and-so when we were children, and we had that great party at your house one time.” It had a great attic. One time the children put on a Halloween party up there with black thread for spider webs and all the spooky lights and so on; the children up and down the steps. It was just a memorable evening.

We had a neighbor named [Florence] Waddock; Mrs. Frank Waddock, who was kind of a neighborhood cement maker. She would get people acquainted with each other, and was just a very friendly, warm person to know. And it was her father who had built our house. John Wilkinson built it in 1890. It had been the scene of a great many family things during all those years. So we had our turn at it, for which we were deeply grateful. [Our other two children, Kevin and Elizabeth, were born in that time.] Then we moved to two other subsequent houses, still in Kirkwood.

**[Tape meter, 250]**

I think that’s about as far as I can go without some prodding from you, of what you’re interested in.

WS: Okay. Well, I’d like to go back, when you were a boy, and maybe you remember when you first became interested in journalism or writing.

GM: Yes, I can do that. I was never aware of the Lipscomb Herald that my grandfather owned. I was two years old when we left there. My first awareness of a newspaper as a newspaper was in Hannibal, when we used to get the Hannibal Morning Journal thrown in the yard, and I’d go out and get it in the snow or rain or whatever was

going on. I remember the smell of the paper: the ink, and the kind of wet paper. The contents of it always had something for children, which we enjoyed. And my mother would clip things out of it. Once she had clipped something, then that clipping acquired kind of a special interest, because it had been separated from other things in the paper and was standing alone as something that had been clipped for some reason. That took on special importance. I became addicted to clipping along about then.

When we moved to St. Louis, we were getting the old Star that was previous to the Star-Times. It had Uncle Wiggly stories and other children's things in it that we always looked forward to. And mother was still clipping any items of interest to her. Then, in other towns, I began to notice that each paper had very individual characteristics; kind of a personal style that made it different from other papers I had known. Which is quite different from the way papers are now, when one company might own thirty papers all over everywhere. Even the big papers, individuals they usually remain, [but] still have characteristics that you recognize from city to city.

But my interest in working on a paper -- I was editor of a high school paper in our suburb of Jennings, which at that time was a kind of bedroom community, with everybody working downtown and going home at night on a Wabash commuter train. We had a small high school that had just started when I got there, as a real high school. They had a paper called the Jenjotter, which I was editor of for about a year. I just got interested in writing and the way that you write for a newspaper. So when I went to Missouri U, the routine there was that you would go two years in general arts

and science subjects before you could enter the journalism school for your last two years.

**[Tape meter, 300]**

I did all that. I started out with advertising and was just simply *revolted* by the idea of advertising. I switched to feature writing and editorial, and got the general run of courses that go with that.

Then I got out of school thinking, “Well, okay, who’s going to have the pleasure of my company now?” Nobody gave a *hoot* about my company! I went to the Star-Times (it was the Star-Times by then). The Post and the Star were across the street from each other [at] Twelfth and Olive. There’s a bank or something of the sort where the Post was, and the Star -- the building, I think, has been torn down. But up on one of the upper floors was William R. Miner, the city editor. I went to see him. I gave him a real approach. I said, “Mr. Miner? I’d like to work for the Star-Times.” He looked up and said, “Who wouldn’t?” (chuckling) And he went on back to work. End of interview!

So it was after that that I went back to stay with my folks in Brookfield, and feeling rather embarrassed about it, but I couldn’t think of any alternative at that moment. But finally I went down to this Linn County Budget-Gazette, a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday publication. I suggested that maybe I could be of some help and in the meantime get some experience. And on that kind of a paper you really got experience! You got the whole shazam. So that’s the way it worked out. I was there three years; with the Associated Press about a year and a month or two; at Springfield

five years; Star-Times for a little over a year; and with the Post for thirty-two years, altogether. So I ended up getting quite an exposure to quite a variety of journalism -- all of it memorable in its way, and all of it interesting in its way. And some of it awfully *trying* (chuckling) in its way. But nevertheless, that was a pretty good career. I don't think I would change anything if I were doing it over, except I might pay myself a little more.

WS: When you went to the journalism school in Columbia, that was a fairly new operation, wasn't it?

GM: I think it was started about the time I was born.

**[Tape meter, 350]**

But it had been kind of a floating crap game operation until they got their own building, Jay H. Neff Hall, down at the end of the Red Campus. That's where it was when I first met the school. Walter Williams was the founder of it, and had been the dean. By this time he was the president of the university, and the dean was Frank Martin. It was a good school.

At that time, if you went around applying for a job and said you were from the school of journalism -- these [newspaper owners] were all self-made guys. I never worked for anybody who had been to a journalism school, although a lot of [journalism graduate] people were working for them. But they'd always say, kind of a little bit patronizing, "Well, we can un-learn you that pretty fast. We train our own people. We don't need journalism school." They *really* had total scorn for journalism school. I found that it was justified to some extent. But to a further

degree, it was beginning to be that newspaper people needed to really have some education. On the Post, the guy I succeeded on municipal courts had been in vaudeville. He had been kind of an entertainer. His name was Buck O'Malley. He was an Irish guy. And he was a *heck* of a good reporter. He was always scooping everybody.

**[Tape meter, 385. End Side One, Tape One of Three.]**

**[Tape meter, 000. Begin Side Two, Tape One of Three.]**

GM: The people brought in from quite a variety of unrelated jobs turned out to be good newspaper people! I never could understand that. But some of our sharpest and hardest digging reporters had come in from totally unrelated jobs. And they really made it. Later we began getting guys with law degrees and economics and English; all of them pretty well educated. And they had a different kind of writing from them. But you didn't have the swashbuckling go-for-broke kind of reporting that we used to have. So the whole thing began to become a little bit different reading experience.

And from the reporting point of view -- I remember one day. I didn't go to many press events, like conferences and so on. I usually had one on one interviews with whoever I was going to work with. I went to some kind of a press conference, and you couldn't get in. There were *cables* all over the floor. It was the *television* era that had kind of slipped up on me from behind. (chuckles) The television guys were getting the interviews, and the paper guys were sort of listening and *maybe* getting in a word, but you didn't dare interrupt the *television* guy because he was on the *air*. So everything was kind of suddenly pitched toward television. That really burned me

up. (Chuckles) Because they came on, and a lot of them were nothing special in the way of reporters or anything else.

You could listen to television now and hear more clichés to the minute than any other medium on earth. They get by with barely flashing a picture of something on the screen as it goes hastily through some report. And then they're into something else before you know it. The camera is playing around on the door to the sheriff's car or to the yellow police ribbon, and to all sorts of irrelevant things. Particularly at trials it'll fix on maybe three or four people walking abreast past the view. Well, one of them is the guy on trial for his life, and the other one is his lawyer, and the others are whoever. They don't identify them! They don't say, "The second one from the left is the defendant." They don't say which is the lawyer. They just *float* all this by you. You don't know what you're seeing. The next minute you're seeing something different anyway. And they're great at covering fires. If there's a fire anywhere on earth, television will put it on the evening news. They love flames and fire engines and stuff.

Now we have Tom Brokaw saying that something that's coming up will be "in depth." "In depth" means it'll be forty-five seconds instead of thirty seconds. Television does nothing in depth unless it's a special feature that devotes a whole half hour to it or something. Newspapers cover things *routinely* in depth. And I think they're beginning to appreciate it, to be appreciated by a few more people, on that basis. But it's a difficult time in news and communication and reporting and archiving, and all of that, for all these reasons. Television doesn't make an archive

worth the time you spend looking it up. It'll have the pictures, and it'll have a fleeting fragmentary suggestion of what the pictures are about. But if you want *information*, you've got to get a *newspaper* file. They used to have clippings and books of files, and now you get *that* from a printout of something that's barely readable.

(Chuckling) So I don't know. We're in kind of a hard time from the standpoint of archiving our own history. And I don't know which news medium is going to emerge as the one that you can count on to have reference to thirty years from now, and know what they're talking about. The printed word, I think, will have to hold that responsibility.

WS: It sounds almost like you saw three eras in newspaper reporting: the old self-made group of people you were talking about when you started...

GM: True.

WS: ...and then the advent of television, with your career in between.

GM: That is just right. Like on the Budget-Gazette, if I was working with a printer -- we were non-union shop.

**[Tape meter, 050]**

The printer made \$5 a week more than the publishers. There were two publishers, \$30 a week each. The printer got \$35. And at my peak I was getting \$15. So it was not what you could call a big payroll place. So it was non-union. If I was out working with a printer and I saw a piece of type that was to go somewhere, I'd pick it up and hand it to him. Well, I did that in Springfield one time, when I was Sunday

city editor. And of course this was a union shop on the printer's side of the wall. On my side of the wall it was nothing. We were on our own. But boy, the first time I picked up a piece of type to hand to the printer there, there was suddenly a lot of people standing around giving me a very fixed look. They didn't say anything. They knew I was innocent and pure. All they had to do was to signify that I was on thin ice. And I put the slug down, just like a flash, and they all went back to work.

Then when I came to St. Louis we had the Newspaper Guild, which was a great advancement in the life of a person on the paper. At Springfield the managing editor had total say-so over anything; how long you worked, what you got paid for it, whether you came back to work some more that night, or anything. All he had to do was say, "I'd like to have you come back tonight," and you were back that night.

When the wartime wages and hours regulations came in and we were supposed to keep time slips showing we'd only worked forty-four hours that week, he said, "Well, make them out any way you want to, just so they come out forty-four." And that was that!

On Pearl Harbor Day, he called me up at home and said there'd been a murder down at a joint down on the highway, and a highway patrolman had been killed. "So go down there." The photographer came by and we drove down. This AWOL [Away Without Leave] soldier had killed a highway patrolman and had tried to kill a couple of other people, and finally had shot himself. So I went back to the office just full of this great story. It was Sunday afternoon. I thought, "Wow! Maybe this will make an extra." And I got back and the whole office was full of people. Every single

desk had its person there, but none of them looked up when I came in. I thought, “Hey! I got the story!” I went over to George Olds, and he said, “Go ahead and write the story, but keep out of the way.” And then he told me about Pearl Harbor.

(chuckling) So Pearl Harbor really cleaned me out. I didn’t get anything until the *next* day, and then it was way back in the paper. Pearl Harbor was, perfectly, with all justification, occupying the main attention.

*But* -- see, he filled up the whole newsroom. He called in everybody. There wasn’t an empty desk in the place. Everybody ready to do something if he had to have it done. The printers were back too. Well, they were on overtime. We were on *nothing*. We couldn’t put it on the time slips either. So we just simply contributed a day or a late day to the cause.

But somehow, when you worked on a paper in those days, you did it out of a kind of urge. You wanted to work on a newspaper. You talk about printer’s ink being in your veins, it was kind of like that! You wouldn’t mind getting well to do, but you didn’t make a particular point of it. You enjoyed the work. It was stimulating, every day different. You were writing something that was being printed. You could look at your words in print, so I guess there was some ego in there too. Although we weren’t getting by-lines on all of it, *we* knew we had done it. There was something of that in enough people that newspapers got by for a long time on minimum wages. And I mean really minimum!

**[Tape meter, 100]**

It wasn't until the Newspaper Guild that there was a thing set up called the minimum pay. I mean, for five years you had the top minimum set up, that for your first year of work and up to your fifth, you were advanced in a regular stage of pay increase. For those five years after which, you got merit increases or you just stayed with the top minimum. But your vacations and everything was spelled out in writing. You knew what you were responsible for and what to expect and so did the publisher.

At Springfield, that was a whole vapor. You didn't know what to expect from the publisher. You expected whatever you got. You got whatever you got, whether you expected it (chuckling) or not. But I was really glad to get to work in a town where they had some kind of a *formal* arrangement between the employees and the employer. A lot of papers are still not unionized and don't want it, and a lot of the *employees* don't want it. But (chuckling) I wanted it. It's a good thing.

WS: Was the Guild started in cooperation or with the help of other organized labor movements?

GM: A little of both. The Guild was started mainly by Haywood Broun, who was a columnist in New York. He got it going. I'm sorry; I'm not ready to sum up the history of the Guild. But it started before I got to St. Louis and was well established on the east coast, and also in St. Louis. It was pretty much a freestanding union. It was affiliated with the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations], I think, then, before the AFL [American Federation of Labor] and the CIO merged. We had not yet reached the point where either the mechanical unions could count on us observing their picket line or vice versa. But it came to that pretty soon, so that if the printers

were on strike we didn't cross their line and they didn't cross ours. That gave both of us a lot more likelihood of winning a strike, which we did a couple of times.

Another time the paper had what we called a "lockout," because some union was on strike. I think it was the paper handlers. They couldn't publish without getting the paper handled, so they just shut down the plant. So the Guild started a newspaper, [The Daily News, manned by volunteers from the Globe-Democrat, Star-Times, and Post-Dispatch.] We chartered a south St. Louis place that had been printing neighborhood papers and other things down on Broadway and something pretty well down [south city]. We printed a daily paper there for a couple of weeks. And during that time the war ended in Japan. It was [The Daily News] that printed the news of the end of the war. The city papers were shut down. And on the biggest story of the (chuckling) century, why, they were [shut down. Then the government agency responsible for allocating newsprint, the War Production Board, as I recall, allowed the News a large enough supply for a big increase in circulation and the strike and lockout were immediately terminated.]

But the papers were very fair, and after a strike like that we not only went back to work, but we got paid for the time we had been off. The atmosphere in St. Louis was always good. There were differences at times, and a couple of strikes that ran into time. But on the whole, relationships were never bitter. They were conciliatory.

**[Tape meter, 150]**

We went back to work with a will, and the papers went back to publishing with a will.

We picked up where we left off.

WS: Was “Citizen Kane” ever much of a topic of discussion among your colleagues?

GM: That came out when I was in Springfield. It was there. But I didn’t hear it discussed much here, except in terms of simply being a movie that Orson Wells did, obviously with reference to Hearst. But Hearst was never a big thing around here. Pulitzer had been a competitor of Hearst in New York, but that didn’t cut any ice back here in any conversational way.

WS: What kind of technological changes affected your work through all those long years?

GM: The change from hot type to computer type was the big one. For many of the years I was on the Post, it was the same as it had been on the Budget-Gazette or Springfield. When your page was ready to be made up, you’d go down and find the make-up man, and he’d be putting the type together. They had a saw there. If the type needed to be cut to a certain measure they’d take it over to the saw and cut it on the saw.

(Chuckles) They would lock it up in these chases and make you a page proof with the mallet. Did you ever see that?

WS: No.

GM: They had a padded block, and they would ink the whole page and lay a sheet of newsprint over the whole chase. And then they’d take this padded block and lay it down and hit it with a mallet, going back and forth over the whole thing. So they took kind of a crude imprint of the page, which was readable. They’d hand you that page proof if you needed the whole page, which we usually did. From there, if that

was okay, then they went through the matrix process of getting the half-cylindrical thing to go on the press with another thing on the other side of the roller. Then it was a letterpress printing process. This lead form was inked. It was on a roller, and the paper was rolled over this inked surface and held to it with another roller. It came out printed with the letterpress procedure.

Well, now it's offset. An entirely different kind of presswork. Different ink, different everything. These composing room guys who had been going around in old clothes, in work clothes, in a very *hot* composing room -- the Post air-conditioned its composing room when it was still full of Linotype machines. You can imagine what a thing that was for an air-conditioning system to overcome. It was like a foundry! A Linotype machine has got molten lead in a little pot there on the machine. We had dozens of them all over there!

Okay, away went the Linotypes. Not a one [was left]. I don't know what became of them! There was some suggestion that the paper ought to set up a little museum room with a Linotype in it, and a Monotype, and some of the other mechanical stuff that was used, just to have a memory of it. But they didn't. They said there wasn't room for it (and a few other things).

But then the type was set on a computer -- and several different generations of computer composition.

**[Tape meter, 200]**

And each one was printed on strips of paper that could still be proofread downstairs by the staff of proofreaders who remained. Then it was pasted up by printers who

were now wearing white shirts using adhesive wax instead of working with hot type and all that. The room could be air-conditioned without taking a super mechanical (chuckling) arrangement to do it. The process became refined through *several* stages of [technology] for this kind of printing. Finally, just at the time I left, they were getting in these individual computer units. At that time, I think four people were sharing each unit. I don't know when they got their *writing* done, if you had to wait until somebody else finished. But anyway, this could be sent to a bank and the editor could pull it up and handle it and send it back. The whole thing was going around over computer lines. That was after I left. I never had one minute's experience with that.

Now you go down there and everything's very quiet. Everyone's sitting at these monitors. The editors have got them. You go downstairs, the printers are working with [computer printouts and X-acto knives.]

I remember a lot of confusion. You know, they'd have to run this paper through a little wax roller to give it an adhesive backing so they could stick it down on the make-up page. And sometimes that would get away from them and land on the floor and paste itself to the floor, or maybe it would land upside down and something would land on top of it and paste itself to it. There'd be quite a *commotion* there until they picked up these little snippets that they could (chuckles) paste into the paper.

So that was a very *dramatic* change in the production side of the paper. The ink had to be a totally different ink for offset printing. The presses had to be totally

replaced or rehabbed. So that was the dramatic change. Even on small papers now you go in and they're offset and computer composition and all the rest. I wouldn't know what to do if I'd go in and have to work with that now. I know a computer, but this was a special kind of arrangement for getting the type back and forth, so you have to learn that.

WS: I wonder if those old skilled workers made that transition?

GM: Very smoothly.

WS: Is that right?

GM: Yes! I was just amazed that these old guys used to working with the heavy stuff and cutting up the hot type and jiggling it around, whether they'd ever do it or not. They just converted right over. It was amazing.

WS: You were talking a little bit ago about the journalism school graduates, and having to unlearn that material in the hands of the old self-made newspaper people. I just wonder what your observation might be on the kind of students or fresh recruits you got over the years.

**[Tape meter, 250]**

GM: Some things that you learn in journalism school didn't apply to the publication you were on, but they applied to others. Some things you were learning for small papers, and some for large papers. This was a kind of a generic training for a situation that you might or might not encounter. So it was there, and it was useful. I found my training in advertising -- which I had rejected after a few courses -- was the thing that

got me *started* on the Budget-Gazette. They didn't need somebody to *write* stuff.

They wanted somebody to *sell* stuff. (Laughs) So that got me going. I owe it to that.

But the general attitude was both fundamental as to your general feeling about being in the newspaper business, and also about the specifics of putting a story together, or a report, or an editorial -- whatever you were dealing with. I really was disappointed in the school at first, but I began to feel later that I was drawing on things afterward that I had not used for a while, but suddenly there was a need for them. So I had to learn patience with the journalism schools, with a lot of other things.

WS: Were there any Chinese students in the journalism school when you were there?

GM: Several, yes. In fact, the school had kind of a branch at -- I think it was Yenching University, where they traded students back and forth. Some of the faculty went there and taught periodically. We had some very bright Chinese students. One of them was the father of Bill Woo, who was editor of the paper here.

WS: I'll be darned.

GM: I didn't know him, but he was there. I think he was a little younger than I. But we were there just about the same time. But there were some Japanese guys there also. Primarily they were Oriental guys. We had Filipinos and a good many other nationalities, but they were in other schools, like agriculture and medicine and elsewhere [other] than journalism.

WS: Before you left [the Post-Dispatch], of course the Watergate incident took place. I wonder if you saw a reaction in the journalism world in terms of--

**[Tape meter, 300]**

GM: In the art realm, all this impinged rather lightly on what I was specifically doing for the paper. I was aware of it from reading it, and I kept up with it. The paper just sort of took it in stride, like anything else from Washington. It was kind of a distant phenomenon. We did follow it very closely. In fact, Nixon got to hating the Post-Dispatch. I was in Washington [in 1973] to receive an award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. And when I got there, it turned out the person who was going to hand me the [certificate] was Mrs. Nixon. We met at lunch preceding the event. Somebody said, “This is George McCue of the Post-Dispatch. You’ll be handing him the award.” And she said [*spoken disparagingly*], “Oh. Post-Dispatch.” You know, sort of like that. She was nice about it, but you could tell the name did not arouse warm feelings in her.

I won several awards. I won three from the American Institute of Architects. They had a \$500 first prize for proficiency in [newspaper] writing about architectural subject matter. On my day off one year a guy called me from the office and said they’d had word I’d won first prize. So that was my down payment on a VW [Volkswagen] Beetle that I used for work. And the next year I won first prize again, and the next year I won the second prize. I had a couple citations from the American Art Association for art writing on things on the page. This National Trust award was for articles in the realm of historic preservation. That’s probably about it. I became an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects, and of the local chapter in 1964. But at any rate, those were part of the big moments.

**[Tape meter, 356. End Side Two, Tape One of Three.]**

**[Tape meter, 000. Begin Side One, Tape Two of Three.]**

WS: When you got involved with writing about architecture and art, was that primarily things happening in the St. Louis area?

GM: Yes.

WS: Oh, is that right?

GM: Yes, entirely that, at first. The first thing architectural was a proposal offered by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum -- at that time, just starting up as a [architecture] firm -- for a structure along the riverfront; like sort of an apartment. Three or four stories on the levee that would go, oh, from the Eads Bridge, I guess, down to the MacArthur Bridge, or close to it. It was just sort of a continuous level of about three story units. So my first thing was to find a lot of fault with that, because I said it was a monotonous progression of unbroken facade all the way down. And the riverfront really should have something more related to the civic nature of St. Louis. I think I said that. I hope so. And that for other reasons I don't remember citing, found fault with it. It had a lot of defenders, but they ended up not building it, and I ended up going to see Gyo Obata. We had a very pleasant interview and I wrote a story about him, kind of for compensation for taking issue with his design.

The first thing in the art realm was celebrating the seventy-fifth birthday of Pablo Picasso, the painter. And the next thing was, I was in Chicago, and Frank Lloyd Wright was there with his proposal for a mile high building. He wasn't really proposing it as something about to be built, but as an idea that he said could be built.

Someone asked him, “What kind of elevators would you have in there?” He said, “By the time they put this up, we’ll have atomic elevators.” So (chuckles), he had a big session there.

I called him. He was at a hotel, and I called him from the hotel we were in. I called his room. I thought somebody would answer the phone. I said, “I’d like to come over and talk with Mr. Wright.” Well, it was *Wright* who answered the phone! He said, “Well, sure! Come on over.” So I got there in time for his presentation of this idea, which was a very interesting thing. A mile high building with a foundation, he said, “like a carrot with a big root on it.” He had figured out the wind stresses and the elevators depending on atomic power being here by then (which it still isn’t), and so on. Then, after I got home I called up the main guy behind the development of [Michigan Avenue’s Magnificent Mile, Arthur Rubloff] And I asked him how feasible he thought this would be. He said [that the engineering problems could be solved, but that Wright had overestimated the tenants and underestimated construction costs. He said, “The only trouble is he’s poor at arithmetic.”] He had a very pragmatic view, aside from the vision of this building. He was looking at a different kind of vision. Anyway, that was my first architecture story.

It finally got to the point where I was going to the east coast at least once a year. I’d start in New York and work my way up, and sometimes down. I ended up paying regular visits to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and a couple of other places, all in a big stretch along there, to the galleries and museums, and getting acquainted with the gallery operators. A whole bunch of people. It got to the point

where I could walk around in downtown New York or Washington (a couple of other places, maybe) and run into somebody I knew, which is a kind of an interesting feeling.

**[Tape meter, 050]**

So I'd hit all the galleries and the whole scene, maybe be on the road a couple weeks and then come back and write whatever seemed writeable about it. But the mission was as much to keep in contact with sources as it was to get some immediate article written from it. Then I ended up going to the west coast several times for things, and here and there. It got to the point where I was getting speaking engagements. I'd open the mail, and here'd be something from some university.

I remember once going to the University of Georgia at Athens. I had met the dean of the architecture school at some other meeting. He wanted me to come specifically to talk to a garden club there, because I'd made some remark about how well garden clubs were keeping the approaches to cities nice. And he thought that would be a good topic, because this was the home of the head garden club of the country. So it was set up. Then after I got there, he said, "I'd like to have you talk to some graduate students we've got here, and then some architecture students." I ended up making four different talks, and three of them surprises. It turned out that what he had to do (and I found out this was often the case) to meet the expenses -- the travel and a small honorarium -- they had to put together some different events, each one paying something out of a small budget to make it come up to where it would bring

one guy to town to do a few things. (Chuckles) So that was the way I found out about how things are in academia.

There was period of about three years in the 1960s when I went around to a number of cities with Grady Clay, from Louisville, who was really just about the first [newspaper] writer about urban design in the country, of that period. The AIA [American Institute of Architects] got the idea of setting up seminars in cities on both sides of the country and up and down and in the middle, about trying to interest newspapers in writing more about urban design and architecture, without any regard to whether it was favorable or not to the AIA. They just wanted it to be a subject of discussion. So that was the way it went. We'd go on; we'd be there two or three days and have the sessions. We'd talk and some other people would talk. We'd have field trips. All this was just to sort of introduce the people, whoever the paper sent to them [the seminars], to the idea of making this something to put in the paper.

It had pretty good success. A lot of papers expressed very deep concern about being sued for libel or slander or something if they said something unfavorable about a building. They said, "Well, this guy's put a lot of money into this building. We can't just come out and say it's bad." And the answer to that was, "Well, why not? The building is in your town. Ada Louise Huxtable doesn't hesitate to say a building is bad if she can make a case for it. The important thing is to be able to make a case for whatever you say if you're challenged."

So we had pretty good luck with that, but it all stopped after the urban renewal period. About the time I left the paper they had just about stopped it. They had a

little further writing on architecture, but it was more along the line of the design according to promulgated precepts of historic style and so on, and not whether it worked in that particular place for the purpose it was built for. And architectural criticism is not just the niceness of a design, it's [also] how the thing works.

**[Tape meter, 100]**

I learned that several buildings here and there in other cities that were cited enthusiastically by publications, and everybody celebrated [their] architects -- and I talked to the people that worked in one of them (it was a medical laboratory in Philadelphia), and they said, "We just hate this place. The fumes don't get carried out right. The room arrangements are very clunky." It was like people saying, "Well, Frank Lloyd Wright is a very interesting architect, but I'm always breaking my arm on some projecting rock in his hallway, or bumping my head on his low ceiling, and his roofs leak."

A lot of things were beautiful designs in a kind of abstract way, but from the standpoint of use and function and serving their purpose, they fell pretty far short. That seemed to me to be an element in the critical discussion of the buildings as much as how pretty they looked against the evening sunset or something.

Anyway, papers were very willing to service movies and rock concerts and athletic events, but they really held back -- and are doing it now -- on the subject of buildings and how they go together in a city. You can see what happened in St. Louis. We've got that stupid thing in the Gateway Mall, that building built on what was supposed to be public park space; a solitary building at Seventh Street, right there

in the Gateway Mall, which breaks the view down through that mall to the arch. And that's our Champs-Elysées, what there is of it.

And then all the buildings downtown that disrupted small businesses and put in sidewalks but no reason for anybody to want to *walk* along those sidewalks. What do you do? You look into the side of a stadium or you look into a building that's got offices on the ground floor. All these things that happened when they cleaned out something and put in something, and the thing they put in had a few problems, which they're now finding out about. They're talking about putting in people who sell hotdogs on the sidewalks. Well, who are they going to *sell* them to? There's got to be somebody there walking around. Not just people who live in a loft. They're already home. They can go up there and eat, or eat in a restaurant.

The big business in sidewalk sales, which New York has demonstrated abundantly, is you've got a lot of people *swarming* all over the place who are glad to be able to grab a hotdog or a sack of hot chestnuts or something and eat as they walk or as they look or whatever. It all goes together. One thing will not do it. And I think for downtown, before you get too concerned about hotdog sales, you've got to be concerned about some small businesses that can operate in the center of a town that did everything it could to get rid of small businesses. It literally squeezed them all out to the malls. And now they complain that the malls are taking all their business.

It's a big subject. You have to be very careful not to be carried away by a point of view that might enter your mind either as a problem or an advantage, because

there are so many things that are linked to it in so many different ways, that you're talking about a tapestry, not about a thread. But we need to have someone who can start the conversation along the lines like that instead of saying, "We've got to have a hotdog vendor," or a mime. What the hell's a mime going to do for anybody, if there's nobody there in the first place?

**[Tape meter, 150]**

And what can they do much for them after they're there? (Chuckling) I mean, there's a limit to mimes, and these people on stilts, someone playing the accordion or something. There's got to be circulation that can be counted on to be regular circulation, not just after the game or after the whatever.

WS: Talking about some of these poor designs a moment ago, with the rock sticking out and all -- I've heard some people complain -- and I don't know the history of this, but I think maybe around the time period of the late '60s and the early '70s, where architecture departments in universities were emphasizing design (in some people's minds) to the detriment of these sort of practical concerns you're talking about.

GM: Well, there's always been that. Design for design's sake rather than for the sake of utility or some kind of harmony with the surroundings. A lot of buildings in the country have been built as solitary monuments to their own architects. You could readily make a list of them. And then they turn out to have faults as functioning buildings. Now, the Guggenheim Museum in New York has some of those characteristics. First, it's on a spiral. To see paintings you go up gradually ascending walks that go in a spiral up high in the building. So you end up feeling like you need

one leg shorter than the other to keep your footing on this slanting walk. And you're looking at pictures that are hung straight, but you're at an angle. As a place for viewing paintings, it's really a trial.

There's a certain place at a higher level where you're between the railing around this light well in the middle and the other wall. There's a space between the railing and the elevator. Then there's another place where the elevator is suddenly up against the railing, and you have to enter in a different way. You're kept off balance. I was there one time when the man arranging the paintings on all these levels -- I saw how he did it. He had a model of the [wall surfaces] that he could [stand] out straight on the floor, and had a scale size reproduction of each painting. He was installing them along this wall to figure out how he was going to do it, finally, on a spiral. Sometimes that worked out, and sometimes it ended up with a little more confusion.

But I went to see James Johnson Sweeney one time, when he was the director there. He was in his office. I went in and he mentioned something about, "Squeeze yourself on in." And, "howdy," and like that. And then he began telling me the ways in which he hated the Guggenheim building. He said, "Look at this. I can't turn around in this office. It has this funny little balcony out here, which serves no purpose at all." And the shape of the room, it was hard to fit any kind of [furniture] into it. He really had been there long enough that he knew every shortcoming of that office, and he hated every inch of it. He left and went to Houston, finally. But that was one instance, and then the one at Philadelphia with this building with the fumes.

**[Tape meter, 200]**

And then the [Art and] Architecture Building at Yale [designed by the] young [and] dynamic [architect, Paul Rudolph, in sober big masses] of the Brutalist [style. The students expressed their disdain by installing disco effects of flashing fluorescent lights and silver Mylar].

At Chicago, the Loop Campus -- it was a new campus, and the architecture students were moved into a new building. And *they* were unhappy. I talked to some of them. They said, "You know where we were before we came here? We were in the old brassiere factory." It was a factory where they made brassieres. Just an old warehouse type building. And they were completely happy there because they could do anything they wanted to without being told, "Well, no. You're going to stick something on the *wall* of this building? This architecture?" And they could do anything. They really missed the old brassiere factory.

At Lexington, Kentucky, the students were in an old tobacco barn. And they were still there. No new building had been built for them. And they were just *totally happy*. This big barn with big beams and wood walls [and the tobacco aroma.] They could just gouge it or nail it or anything they wanted to and nobody complained.

So, you start thinking, "Well, where does the enjoyment of a building leave off and the idea of abstract design come in, and where do they conflict? And why don't architects recognize that it's not their monument they're building, it's a reminder [of] what architecture is about and how you use it." (Chuckles) So that was thing you kind of keep running into. And it's a constant tug of war.

But I think lately buildings have become more utilitarian even though they're not ["architectural" per se. A lot of our suburban office buildings are whipped up in glitzy vernaculars with little facade gables in the spirit of the brief vogue known as Post-modern. I never understood that term. Once I asked a real architect: "If Post-modern came after Modern, then what comes after Post-modern?" And he said: "Architecture, I hope."] Some of that stuff is pure moxie, from the standpoint of being arbitrary ornament that they're just sort of playing with. On the inside a lot of these buildings just work fine. So the question keeps pulling itself along: "What counts? Whether the building works well or whether you can make fun of it from the standpoint of design, but it happens to be a pretty darn good building for the people who work there?" You kind of wish they would have it both ways, and once in a while they do. But quite often they don't.

WS: How would you describe the evolution of your own aesthetic in terms of architecture? Just through experience?

GM: It just kind of grew. I started out, I'd taken some survey courses in classical architecture, and up to modern times. But I had no *ideas* about it.

**[Tape meter, 250]**

I just took buildings as they came. And I sort of always enjoyed seeing one with columns and pediments and classical allusions. But on modern buildings I didn't have a clue. So I just went to lectures at Washington U. I knew a lot of architects. I'd have conversations with them, and go around with them. They were very

hospitable and friendly about it. It was mostly just that kind of exposure over quite a long time.

I made up my mind about one thing when I began doing critical writing, and that was: I was never going to be witty at somebody else's expense. If I had something to find fault with, I was going to have a reason for it that I could argue, and not just toss it off as something that I didn't really *care for* a whole lot, but one way or the other I didn't like it, or something. I mean, you've got to have a better reason than *that*. Because there are a lot of critics I've known who have a lot of "I" in their [writing]. "*I* looked at this building. It reminded *me* of (whatever)." They're really reviewing themselves in the presence of the building. They're not talking about the building. The building is their take off point and their bait for the day, or something. Artists can be guilty of a lot of over ego, and so can people who write about [them.] They can think that they, by virtue of being there and going back to the paper and writing something, that they're suddenly endowed with total knowledge. And boy, is that ever a mistake!

The feelings about design and the environment and our relationship to it keep *going*, and they keep *changing*, and they keep changing in relation to each other, and to things that are not even done yet or that things that have been done and have been forgotten, but still have virtues if we'd only go take a look at them again. So, it's a very volatile kind of a world in design aspects. You can go to Europe and go through the old cities and see how well they work and how well they've stayed put, the way they are, and how readily you can go back and do things that you can read about

[that] the nineteenth century people wrote about doing in the same places. I think, “Where are we different from that?” It’s hard to tell. You can always blame our tendency to tear things down, but Europeans are pretty good at tearing down. The Egyptians stripped the veneer off of the Pyramid of Giza, the big one, to use for construction somewhere else. And at Rome, they’re always swiping a column here and a facade there or a piece of something to put into another building.

**[Tape meter, 300]**

I went to a lecture one time where somebody went to the trouble of *tracing* a lot of these things. “Well, this column is from this temple,” or something. I mean, he had a lot of citations as to how these things had traveled into different buildings.

(Chuckles) So the human race is always the human race. It can always be counted on to do some rather awful things. But on the other hand, sometimes it really surprises you with some really wonderful thing that suddenly happens. Those are the big moments.

WS: I was particularly interested in your mentioning of Chicago, because I understand that’s quite a city of the history of architecture.

GM: Oh, very much so, yes. Well, that’s where Frank Lloyd Wright got his start; Louis Sullivan. Mies van der Rohe did a lot of work there. Quite a bunch of architects I could recognize but can’t remember off hand. And a lot of sculptors and other artists were quite active there and left their mark; Laredo Taft, among other sculptors -- primarily him. But it was very *fertile* ground. It has some people in it who are really good energizers and had good visions of metropolitan architecture -- how it should

work, what it should look like, and how it should fit in. Wright and Sullivan, who both did monumental work that stands alone, also did things that stand in its context very well. So we learned an awful from them. A lot of their work is still there. You can go and tour the town and look at examples of how it has survived and how things around it have remained true to it. They've had some losses too, as everyone has.

Chicago is a great textbook in architecture and urban layout, and how it recovered from the fire, how it has dealt with the river flowing up or down -- all the problems that it's had have been really big problems. It has dealt with them in a big way. [Daniel H. Burnham, who presided over design for the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago and later for the city plan said, "Make no little plans."]

**[Tape meter, 355. End Side One, Tape Two of Three.]**

**[Tape meter, 000. Begin Side Two, Tape Two of Three.]**

WS: I was wondering if you were ever interested in any of those books written by Rand? Howard Roark -- that seemed to be popular among architecture students.

GM: Books by who?

WS: I'm trying to think of the title of that book that Howard Roark is in as the main character. The architect? Ayn Rand.

GM: Oh! I haven't read it.

WS: Where I went to school there was a pretty big architecture school, so I could just see this from a distance, and would get rumblings of the controversies; phrases like "form follows function" and all that. When did that start?

GM: That was Louis Sullivan [and, some decades before him, the sculptor Horatio Greenough. Greenough argued that buildings should be designed from the inside out rather from the outside in]. I remember one time I was in Boston to an AIA convention. We were on a tour bus and going down toward, I think it was, Trinity Square. All the architects were saying, “Hey! There’s a great church. Who did that?” This was Trinity Church by [Henry Hobson Richardson.] I mean, it’s a textbook example. You think if these guys had been to architecture school that’d be on page one of whatever book they were using. Somebody had to finally say, “That’s Trinity Church, by [Henry Hobson Richardson.]” I happened to know it, so I felt, “Well, hey! I may be getting somewhere.” [Richardson, whose work in Chicago was studied by Sullivan, died at the time of Sullivan’s early prominence.]

WS: A little while ago you were talking about the urban renewal and all, and I guess that would be somewhat related to the so-called gentrification of certain St. Louis neighborhoods?

GM: Well, it preceded it. In the first place, cities had terrible slums. St. Louis had some terrible slums down in what was called Mill Creek Valley, in that industrial section, and where these Laclede Town apartments were built that have [failed.] It had some very nice houses there that were built by well-to-do people, and it was a closely built area down near St. Louis University. As time went by people moved out of the houses out to the county and Negroes moved in to this area. They were poor tenants, and the landlords were usually absentees. It became a case of rats and crumbling buildings and disease. That was what prompted the clean sweep effort in urban

renewal. In St. Louis we lost a lot of awfully good buildings. Some of them were not as bad as the *worst* of them. They were capable of being restored and revived. The artifacts, in their demolition, made a big business for a couple of firms here that just sold old doors, old windows, old iron gates, and whatnot.

So the reasons for the clean slate removal were quite urgent and justifiable. But what happened was, nothing was planned to *replace* what was removed. The general feeling was that if it was bricks and mortar and it was new, why, it was good. We got a lot of bricks and mortar stuff here. The rat problem was solved. They got into the burrows and gassed them out and cleaned them out and excavated them out. So the little kids that woke up in the night with rats biting their toes -- we got through that. But that was the reason that all this clearance was done. It was a drastic, kind of impulsive measure. And, in the 1960s, it just cleared *huge* amounts of land in almost every big city and a lot of small ones.

Then what happened next, the developers came along and just sort of proposed things. The cities reacted to what they were proposing, which wasn't (chuckles) a whole lot in some cases. In some cases it looked pretty good.

**[Tape meter, 050]**

In St. Louis we had a proposal for Mill Creek Valley by a [developer from] New York, who drew an idea for kind of a parkway with a fountain and things going out from it in more of a landscape conception than what got built there, which is just square blocks, [as preferred by St. Louis designers and investors.] You drive down Market Street and you see a whole lot of rooftops with a whole lot of ductwork on

them, and air conditioners and stuff on the roof. So you don't get a feeling that anything at all wonderful has happened there. You took out the old stuff and you put in the new stuff. You have some businesses there, so that's a gain. But you don't have an architectural gain.

Now, the Laclede Town properties. Are you familiar with that? It's a big acreage of townhouse designs and some apartment units that were built east of St. Louis University campus, east of Grand Avenue and extending down several blocks along Olive Street and along in there. It was a really dazzling thing when it was new. They had little stores in there, and a couple of little bars, and pleasant places to sit. The guy in charge of it, whose name was Jerry Berger (but he was not the Jerry Berger who writes for the [Post-Dispatch] paper; it was another Jerry Berger), took pains to populate this place with a great *mix* of people. Had a lot of university people. These rentals were just right for everybody he got in there. He had newspaper people, people in various businesses in the area, and students. This made a good conglomerate of people who could meet at the little bar or each other's houses and carry on a really good community life.

But then it was just like Gaslight Square all over again. They began getting in characters that they couldn't deal with and who damaged their properties. People began moving out. In just no time at all, why, what had been new and shiny and bright and wonderful -- let's see, in the '60s; this is the '90s -- thirty years ago was just falling apart. Now thirty years -- anything should last longer than *that*. This is not a tent city. It's a construction. But it's gone. It'll have to be cleared again and

started over again, probably with more of the campus elements in it, which will be really a help.

WS: I wonder in St. Louis if you ever had a neighborhood centered around the Beat era people, the writers and musicians and that kind of thing, during the '50s?

GM: Not really. There's a certain element of that in U [University] City now, more than anywhere that I know of, where a lot of the Washington U people are sort of here and there in University City, which after all is a pretty big place. But they frequent the loop area. They have this central magnetic thing that draws them in, like everybody wishes we had downtown. They got it by restoring the Tivoli Theater, and then putting in some restaurants and a bookstore, and the usual things that you have for crowd pleasers in a downtown, metropolitan, urban district. So some of these writers are here and there, but I don't think they're there in any kind of a way where they meet at night at the tavern and exchange ideas and all. That's really for young writers. We probably have young writers here, but I could be excused for not *knowing* about them. They might be doing that somewhere. You always hope that somehow that happens.

Then of the artists here, it's not like in Paris where they'd all be at this Dome café and have this kind of art relationship.

**[Tape meter, 100]**

It just doesn't happen. In New York they used to have what they called the Cedar Bar, which is down in the Washington [Square] area, more or less. And the Cedar Bar was where all of the early abstract expressionist painters would gather. You

could go in there any night and see some of them there, sometimes *a lot* of them. It got to be kind of a real gathering place for that particular breed of artists. But that doesn't happen just automatically. Well, it *does* kind of happen automatically, but it has to just happen. You can't say, "Okay guys, let's go sit around this bar and make an art place." It has to be kind of spontaneous and by mutual recognition that this is a place where they enjoy being together, and a lot of things that are very sociological.

We used to have something like that here in the old Gaslight Square, but it was so brief a time. I think it was less than ten years that it came and flourished and got lost because of violent people and a real bad mix in there. So when we do get something really wonderful like that it's hard to keep it going. Somehow it does itself in. I have great hopes for U City. Whatever they're doing there is really likely to be there.

WS: When it came to writing about art, did you primarily go around and talk to local artists or art departments, at Washington University...?

GM: Quite a lot of that. I already knew some artists pretty well. I got a nice note from [Frederick Hartt of the art history] department saying if I wanted to audit anything in there, just feel free, come and sit down and do it. And I did. There was a course in modern art by Robert Jordan, who died a few years ago. I audited that. They had a lot of evening talks on architecture and art and all sorts of related things. I didn't miss a one of them. The way of building up the contacts was simply to go and be with these guys as much as possible. That didn't commit me to *lauding* them. They're very decent people. They're not saying, "Well, what have you done for me

lately?” Or anything like that. They’re saying, “This is a big subject and we’d like the paper to be interested in it in an understanding kind of way.”

There were several architects I got to know fairly well. I’d often meet with them in other cities when we were there on conventions or something. They’d show me around with whatever they knew, and often that was quite a bit. So the opportunities were very varied, and they were everywhere. The main thing was that I was able to take advantage of them. So it was kind of a process of educating myself in public. But it went on unceasingly.

Also a great help was that I reviewed all of the books on all those subjects that came in. That’s where a lot of these books came from [*gesturing to the shelves filled with books to his right and behind him*], and I have a study on the other side here with more, and some more in the basement. We disposed of that many more again before we moved here because I had room for them in the previous house but not here.

Anyway, the process of reviewing a book means you have to read it (chuckles), or read some of it. You have to expose yourself to it. And some of them I read *thoroughly*.

**[Tape meter, 150]**

So it was kind of a running textbook experience, too. I also got to know some of the significant people in all the fields. I subscribed to two art magazines and one architecture magazine, and read them from cover to cover every month. So it was never ending. Since I retired I’ve kind of withdrawn from the whole scene, because you’re either in it up to your eyeballs or you’re not in it. You can’t get your toes wet

and not be wet all over. You've got to really be soaking in it. So I thought, "Well, if I'm not writing about it anymore, there's no use being just a hanger on, and I have some other things to do." So I just began doing some other things.

WS: Did you pretty much cover the spectrum in terms of painters, sculptors, ceramicists, printmakers -- all kinds of artists?

GM: You mean for the present purpose?

WS: When you were writing about them?

GM: Yes. I reviewed shows in all those categories, some with more authority than others, but I gave them my best shot. We were having all that activity. But it was interesting -- when I started in the art operation, we could list all the exhibits for the current week and maybe the current month in about five column inches of space. And some of these would be in places like church basements or a library hall. We had just a few professional galleries. And now look what we've got. It takes a couple of columns of newspaper space in small type just to list the current exhibitions. I used to cover every single one. And nobody could cover every one now! They just pick the main ones they have room and time for.

I think this [current Post-Dispatch writer] Jeff Daniel is a very good reviewer of art, a good art critic. He's been there for a while. I've never met him. But he certainly makes you feel like you understand what he's talking about. And some art reviews leave you just stranded in space. They can't convey a visual experience to you in writing, which is kind of (chuckling) an important thing.

WS: So did you pretty much go to all the gallery openings?

GM: Yes. I was all over the place. Pearl would go with me. We'd go to parties and dinners and openings and talks. There was a lot of it, and we did it all. That's another reason I dropped out when I retired, because I couldn't keep up the pace. The years do catch up with you, too. I got busy on Laumeier Park, the sculpture park here, when it was organized [in 1976.] And I was very active with it. I wrote their catalogue. I wrote their labels on the artwork scattered here and there. I edited and wrote for the ten-year history, and I did it all over again for a twenty-year history, which they've never published and I guess never will. It's too big an undertaking to publish unless we've got a pretty big budget for it. So I wrote that, and it's there in manuscript. I did quite a few things like that, and I also was just over there a lot.

**[Tape meter, 200]**

But I've had to stop that too. Pearl doesn't get around well, and I've had spells of back trouble and a thing or two that make us pretty happy to just sort of sit around here and enjoy whatever there is to enjoy right here, which is plenty.

WS: When it came to deciding which artist to commission and what kind of works to get for public art -- is that handled by an arts commission or something in the city government?

GM: Commissioning an artist is a very wide ranging kind of a process. Like if you're going to commission a sculptor to do the figures of justice on the federal building downtown, that's one process. Or if you're going to do something like commissioning a work to be exhibited in Laumeier Park, it's something else. There have been some commissions for public monuments that have been very bad

monuments, by the way. They're done by committees that are sort of volunteer groups that raise funds, and they say, "It'd be nice to have a statue of Robert Burns of Washington University," for instance. In that case they got a good one.

In the case of General [Nathaniel] Lyon, down by the brewery, they got a *terrible* one. But a very aggressive group of people commissioned that. It was originally up near St. Louis U, up in that area. When they cleared it for some of the Mill Creek Valley work they found a new home for this piece of nothing down by the brewery. It's an example of how bad a procedure that can be. Because they had no professional advisors. They had just some people who thought it'd be nice to have a statue of General Lyon, regardless of what he was doing and what kind of a statue, and so on.

There was a very active group here for a while that, anything with nudity in it, they were all over it like a coat of paint. They couldn't *stand* the idea of sculpture being unclad. Sculpture is a medium about the human body, pretty much. That was its only means of expression for several centuries. So suddenly they wanted *clothes* all over these things. So (chuckles) you ran through that.

I don't know whether there is an ideal way [of commissioning public art]. I'm trying to think of a place where it happened in a pretty good way, but I can't. It's happened in so many different ways, and some are better than others. But the ideal thing close to it would be to have the people building the building, and the architect, and a trusted sculptor or two meet together and agree on the subject matter, and then

on the scale, and then on materials, and then on the money raising. I mean, there's a whole lot of stages in this.

**[Tape meter, 250]**

It's very hard to handle, and the results are more likely to be disappointing than rewarding, which makes it all the more wonderful when it turns out well.

The Milles Fountain was a marvelous example that turned out well. And it went through a lot of things about nudity and problems. Milles just sort of stayed with it. He'd smile and then he'd go ahead and do his design. They even sent a commission (that included a tailor) [to his studio near Detroit to confer with him and] look at his other work and see if he really was as good as everybody said. They didn't think so (chuckling) when they came back. But they were overwhelmed by other points of view. So the fountain got built, and it's been a great ornament to the city ever since. But they could have hung clothes on these water creatures. Swimming suits, I guess, or something; I don't know. It could have been a great miss. But Milles knew how to handle a commission like that. He sure did a beautiful job.

WS: Did you ever get a sense of the public reaction to, for instance, this sculpture that you don't like, the General Lyon?

GM: No, everybody agrees that it's horrible. The only people who liked it were the ones who paid for it and commissioned it. It's generally -- I would say universally -- regarded as a terrible mistake. But they can't bring themselves to melt it down again.

General Lyon was killed down near Springfield at the battle of Wilson Creek. When it [the sculpture] was being moved from the campus area, they got word of that down there and they thought, “Well, gosh! It would be nice if we had a statue of General Lyon down here!” And they sent word up, well, if we didn’t want that they’d be glad to have it. So I wrote to the prime mover of that idea down there, and Dick Terry [a Post-Dispatch writer who had worked on the Springfield papers] also did. We said in effect, “Don’t make the mistake of getting this abomination down there. At least we’ve got it nailed down here. It’s not hurting anybody because we all know about it, and we don’t see it anymore. But if you had it down there, everybody would see it and wonder how it ever got -- I mean, you’d go through the whole thing all over again.” Besides, it’s a very heavy hunk of bronze. So they let it go.

Sometime when you’re down by Anheuser-Busch on Broadway, take a look at it. It’s on the grounds by the old mapping center. It’s awful. The elements in it are out of scale with each other.

**[Tape meter, 300]**

The horse is partly in relief and partly in the round. The rear end is in relief, and then the head and neck make a right hand turn and come out in the round. The figure on it, the man figure, is out of scale with the horse and everything else. Help yourself some time (chuckling) and take a look.

WS: The artist usually presents a scale model, don’t they? I just wondered if the scale reflected those problems.

GM: This was a bronze, so he would have had to make a wax or a plaster model. Yes, they had plenty of chances to see it and to evaluate it. Two art guys at Washington U wrote letters saying, “This is just awful. You’re going to be sorry. It shouldn’t be anywhere in the city, and certainly not visible.” And everybody said, “Oh, what do those guys know about art?” (Laughs) You know. So it just went through. And the artist was a young guy and very arrogant. He likened himself to [Rodin.] Nothing small about his conception. He said, “They laughed at [Rodin] too.” Well, sure they did, but they ended up feeling that he was pretty good. And they’ve ended up still laughing at this one.

WS: I’ve kind of run down on questions for the art and architecture. I don’t know if you want to go back and talk about your years with covering the municipal courts.

GM: We have two court operations here. One is civil courts, one is criminal courts. Civil courts is in a high building that they’re talking about having to be overhauled at a high cost, at the head of the Gateway Mall. The municipal courts is across the street from Kiel Auditorium. It has the city courts, which are where violations of city ordinances are tried, like neighbors who quarrel or parking tickets and all that. Then there are two divisions of the court of criminal correction, where they have preliminary hearings for more serious criminal cases, and also try a lot. Then they had about six divisions of circuit court where the actual state trials take place on fairly high-level crimes.

**[Tape meter, 350]**

These are scattered all over now. They're not in that building anymore. Some are in Kiel Auditorium or I don't know where they are. But at the time they were all together. So you had a pretty good sampling of what life was like in St. Louis on the level of abuses people did to each other.

The city courts were the most interesting in some ways, because they were the everyday annoyances that people did, and neighbors whose smoke got on the other guy's yard, and things like that. The upper divisions of court were for murders and sincere crimes. So it was a place like you'd read about in Damon Runyan. The bondsmen were all around. You began to identify some of these people.

**[Tape meter, 371. End Side Two, Tape Two of Three.]**

**[Tape meter, 000. Begin Side One, Tape Three of Three.]**

Some of the city detectives were the elegant dressers. They'd always have on the sharp suits and the hats and the nice ties. They made it a point to be elegant at all times. And they'd show up. You could always tell a detective because he was so *elegant* looking. If you were in a bar downtown and you saw one of these guys walk in you'd immediately stop whatever you were doing and be a non-offender, because you knew there was cop there.

The bondsmen were a breed apart, too, the guys who made bond. They were kind of heavy set. There were several *bondswomen*. They were always sort of hovering around. You began to identify them by certain occupational characteristics that I really couldn't describe, because you either knew it or you didn't. Some you just sort of thought they were, and often they were. They had a pretty steady stream

of prostitutes in on trials, and the detectives in the vice squad -- you began to know *them* pretty well because they had certain characteristics.

I remember one girl who came in. Some of these prostitutes were really interesting personalities. This one got on the stand. She was kind of cute. The judge was just fascinated with her. They heard this testimony about her being arrested and so on. The judge said, "How did you ever get into being a prostitute?" She said, "Oh, I don't know Your Honor, I guess I'm just a chippy at heart." (Laughs) He was so amused he took her (laughing) to lunch. So it was a very earthy place. No holds barred.

I had my overcoat stolen out of my locker in the pressroom one time. We had a key to the door but somebody left the door open. My locker was the first one inside, and away went my coat with my press badge and my card case and everything in it. So it was not genteel, but it was earthy. I kind of hated to leave it, but I didn't want to spend the rest of my life there, by any means.

WS: Did you ever cover any trials where Morris Shenker was involved?

GM: Yes. If you were really in bad trouble and you really had a lot of money, why, he was the guy you went for. He was a good lawyer. He was a very jovial sort of a guy, but he was hard driving. I mean, he knew what points to make and what to leave alone, and how to guide this thing through the court. He got a lot of guys off with very light sentences or often with no sentences. Often they were in gambling cases. We had a lot of cases of guys living on the east side who were [in horse racing and the so-called numbers racket, where numbered tickets were drawn in a kind of lottery.] But it was

all illegal then, and a lot of these guys were making big money at it. Once in a while the cops would make a big arrest and have them in court. They'd pay up and go back to work, all in a (chuckling) day's work.

But Shenker was very shrewd. As our city editor described him one time, he was "kinky," which I think meant he could be relied on to use every trick in the book. He *knew* them all, too. Then he had this investment in Las Vegas, and a lot of operation there. So you never knew quite where he was at on things, because he seemed to be a little bit of everywhere. And everybody liked him! He was one of these guys that you admired even though you didn't admire what he was doing or how he did it. It was the fact that he was so good at it.

But I didn't know him well, though; it was just the comings and goings there in the court. When he was through in court he was gone. He had somewhere else to go, so we didn't stand around having a lot of chat.

WS: When you were covering the courts during that period, was that when you were having a lot of organized labor violence and problems of that sort?

**[Tape meter, 050]**

GM: No, we didn't have much of that here in that time. It would have been in criminal court if there'd been violence. I don't think I ever covered any labor case, and I covered a lot of trials over a ten-year period.

One time I was in a meeting of art people and I said, "Well, one of the best things I learned about covering art is what I learned in the criminal courts."

Everybody was just sort of aghast. I mean, they swooned and everything. And I said,

“The thing I learned in criminal courts is that you’re innocent until you’re proven guilty. So you don’t go into an art exhibition proclaiming somebody’s rotten until you can prove that he’s rotten or cite some cause that contributes to that idea.” So they eased up a little.

Artists are funny people. Some of them are very volatile, and some are very comfortable. And some of them have more affectation and ego than you can shake a stick at, the ones who wonder what you’ve done for them lately and that kind of thing. Most of them, though, are delightful people.

WS: Was Tom Eagleton the circuit [attorney] when you were--?

GM: Oh, no. He wasn’t anything when I was in there. He became circuit attorney after I was off the beat. I’ve never met him. But he was a good circuit attorney.

WS: Well, his father was quite a figure in St. Louis, wasn’t he?

GM: Yes.

WS: Mark Eagleton?

GM: Yes, he was. I remember hearing of him from way back.

WS: Were there any remnants of the old gangs, like the Eagan Gang and such?

GM: Yes, when I was in high school they were very active. They had this place that you keep reading about out on Olive Street Road for target practice. It was an old racetrack, an old dog track. Everybody pointed to that and said, “That’s where the Eagan Gang (or Hogan Gang, whichever it was) comes for target practice.” And they were formidable, and everybody was pretty careful to give them a wide berth. But then they were broken up. I guess most of them were sent off to jail terms or

something. After Prohibition in particular, gangs like that had no occupation. They were done out of their bootlegging, so they either had to take up highway robbery or something else, and I think they just sort of disbanded.

WS: Your mentioning of alcohol makes me wonder if Anheuser-Busch has been a big sponsor of art and urban renewal or anything of that sort?

GM: [There is an Anheuser-Busch Gallery at COCA, a nonprofit art organization, and they may have aided activities elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> I am a bit out of touch with recent connections]. It's been a big sponsor of sports events, and it's been very good in coming through in a lot of cases for a lot of institutions. They've been a really good corporate citizen in St. Louis. I don't know what the city would have done without them.

It's like the presence of Jews in art. All you have to do is say, "Take them out and what do you have left?" You have a lot of *nothing*. They're the energizing source, the art source, the source of a lot of the really educated point of view about whatever they're in. So just come to St. Louis and start counting the names and the numbers. It's a very significant showing. [A roster of Jewish supporters of the arts in St. Louis would make a good dissertation project. It would be voluminous.]

WS: Who are some of the corporate citizens who have helped in a big way for art in St. Louis?

**[Tape meter, 100]**

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<sup>2</sup> COCA is an acronym for "Center of Creative Arts."

GM: [When Morton D. May, known to the world as large as Buster May, head of the huge May Company of department stores, was alive he was identified with great gifts of art]. And he gave a *great* many things to the museum and continued a lot up to the point of his death. He was a good [painter] himself. He was acquainted with Max Beckman, the great German expressionist, who came here and taught at Washington U for a while. I think [May] was about the biggest collector of Beckman paintings, and [he gave] a lot to the museum.

Adam Aronson is [a] prominent corporate contributor to art. He was a banker. He's retired now. He organized the Mark Twain banks here. He's a very crusty guy. I've known him a long time. He was one of the founders of Laumeier Park. He started exhibiting modern art in all the branches of the Mark Twain bank the minute they were organized. And some of the first showings of some of the great names of modern art were in the Mark Twain banks. And he's contributed money. He's given objects to the museum and to Laumeier and to I don't know where else. So he's been a very potent force in that.

And some others have been very potent, but in a less known way. Because if you start giving and become known as a philanthropist, then you really get on the list and they come at you. So most of them prefer to do whatever they do without fanfare. And Adam does it without fanfare -- his name is mentioned a lot, though, because he's already known, and when he gives something it's in his own name or he and his wife's name.

WS: I guess when they were building the arch you were still covering the [courts,] so that was outside of your...

GM: No, at that time I was in the art operation.

WS: Oh, you were?

GM: Yes. But I had very little to do with the arch. It was covered in the various stages of its construction by the news department and the news photographers, and occasionally by the "Pictures" department. But it didn't really fall to me to give it (chuckling) much help. It was already doing pretty well. But that was a big, exciting event.

You know, that was another case. On the riverfront, where the arch is, it had been cleared right after World War II. And it just sat there for about thirty years, mostly as a parking lot for buses during the day, between their morning run and evening run. There were buses all over there. It took a long time for any impetus to be given to the construction of the arch, and then it was mostly kind of a straggling thing for quite a while before it really got rolling. [Some St. Louisans advanced the idea that the cleared riverfront acreage should be continued as parking space, and demanded to know,] "Why do we want to build a big stainless steel croquet wicket on the riverfront?"

**[Tape meter, 150]**

You know, it gets down to that kind of question. They had no capacity for thinking of it as a monumental statement of anything. And when you're about thirty miles over in Illinois and look over and see the arch standing up above the sky -- you don't

have that experience on this side; you have to be over there -- boy, you begin to realize that there's really something here. And if you fly over it on a flight in or out of town, it really impresses you as a great piece of monumental art.

WS: Well, Mr. McCue, I've pretty much exhausted my questions for you. I don't want to leave anything out, if I've failed to ask you about something.

GM: Well, if you think of something, why, let me know and I'll write it to you or send you another tape or whatever.

WS: Okay. Well, I'd like to give you a chance to make any closing remarks, if you like.

GM: I think I've just about said it all, that I can think of. It would be kind of redundant, probably.

WS: We've covered a lot of ground, really.

GM: Yes, we really have. I'm impressed with how we've kept it going.

WS: Okay.

**[Tape meter, 165. End Side One, Tape Three of Three. End of Interview.]**