

Cecil L. Edwards

SR 9431, Oral History, by Linda S. Brody

1982 May 14



EDWARDS: Cecil L. Edwards
LB: Linda S. Brody [now Linda S. Dodds]
Transcribed by: Phyllis Soderlund; Linda S. Brody
Audit/edit by: Michele Kribs, 2020
Reviewed by Cecil L. Edwards, ca. 1982.

Tape 1, Side 1

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LB: Mr. Edwards, you have had a long career with the government and part of your early service has been well-documented. I was wondering about your service with the military during World War II. How did you become attached with the military in the first place?

EDWARDS: Well, I was in the National Guard in Oregon. I was also a reserve officer dating from 1933. That's eight years before World War II started. I also, for a number of years, was a civilian agent of the U.S. Army Remount Service, which was kind of a volunteer thing. It had to do with management of two [U.S. Army owned] stallions assigned to me, as well as serving in a recommending capacity for the placement of stallions in Oregon.

LB: How did you become involved in World War II?

EDWARDS: Well, when the National Guard went out to their camp, Camp Murray, I went out with them and never came back — for nearly six years. [Laughs]

LB: Amazing. What were your duties when you were in the service?

EDWARDS: In the beginning, I was an aide to General Thomas E. Rilea, a glorified “dog robber” job. I also served as an aide to Major General George Ared White in the National Guard. Can you shut that off for just a second?

[Tape stops]

LB: What were your duties when you were in the service, then?

EDWARDS: Before I got transferred to the Remount Service, I had just the normal duties of a company grade officer with the added duties of being an aide-de-camp — first to General Thomas E. Rilea on record, and in practice a great deal of duties with Major General George Alfred White, Commander of the 41st Division.

LB: How did you become involved in the selection of horses during the war?

EDWARDS: I'm sure that I selected to do that because I'd been a Remount civilian agent and I had also been in the horse business — I'm a horse trainer.

LB: How long had you been in the horse business?

EDWARDS: My father was in the horse business; he had standard bred race horses. I had a couple of cheap runners. I was involved in getting the [Oregon] Pari Mutuel Racing Act passed in 1933 - The other people involved were [Shy Huntington?] and Julian McFadden; ex-governor Jay Bowerman was the lobbyist, aided by Pete O'Conner and Murray Kemp, who still runs the Multnomah Kennel Club. They were all involved in one way or another presenting testimony and developing support.

There's really a big background to that and it's kind of a humorous thing. Julius Meier was governor and we were in a depression then like we are now, sort of, only it was worse. The fairs received an appropriation from the state general fund and Meier said that

he'd veto any appropriation for the fairs. He said, "We're going to feed people before we entertain them." So that kind of left the gate open for enactment of the Pari Mutuel Act with the beneficiaries being the county fairs and the state fair and some name shows like Pacific International and that sort of thing. There were several other shows; Pendleton Round-up was one.

LB: Did you have a ranch, or a farm, then, when you grew up in Salem?

EDWARDS: Well, yeah. I had two little farms with big mortgages. One over in Polk County, which I sold — 90 acres over there. Then I had 40 acres on the Pudding River and I sold that, too, and 35 acres on Boone Road, also in Salem vicinity.

LB: I meant had you grown up on a farm, or did your father...

EDWARDS: All my people, except my father, were farmers in the Turner area. My cousin still runs [what remains] of the old farm that attrition and taxes and lawyers and heir fights left of it.

LB: Back to the horses during the war, what were your duties in collecting these horses? What did you have to do?

EDWARDS: How did we do it?

LB: Right.

EDWARDS: We had a set of specifications that were promulgated by the War Department. The horses preferred were half-bred, or marching-type horses. That's why these [thoroughbred] stallions were put out to develop a pool of light horses of quality. We liked horses that were about 15.2 hands and weighed about 1050 or 1100 pounds. We

varied from that some. We didn't buy anything except officers' mounts over 16 hands, and we didn't buy anything less than 15 hands. A marching-type horse has very sloping shoulders, longer pasterns, and it's nice and comfortable to ride, and it has thoroughbred characteristics. It couldn't be over eight years old, nor younger than four. At eight years old, horses start to become smooth mouthed.

[Tape stops]

LB: Size and type and age were factors, then?

EDWARDS: Size, age, and soundness. In conformation, we wanted a marching-type horse with very sloping shoulders, nice pasterns that would be nice to ride. Those were the horses, generally, that had descended from the Remount stallion and the mares of the community. We went to areas where we had placed Remount stallions.

LB: Like private lands, or army posts, or where were they kept?

EDWARDS: No. Private farms area. We placed a total of 650 stallions, [mostly thoroughbred, some Arabian, Morgans and Cleveland Boys] and each stallion, would hopefully breed up to 40 mares. Some bred more: some bred less. If it was too many less, we'd move the horse because he wasn't liked there. Some people like a sort of quarter horse type, and some wanted more of a hunter type.

The way that a sale was conducted, our purchasing program was conducted — inspection — we called it - In advance we'd communicate with the county agents. We'd communicate with the agent who had the stallion; then we'd communicate with the newspapers so it would get wide publicity. We'd select a place — maybe it's a ballpark, maybe it's a fairgrounds, it might have been a ranch — and everybody [wanting to sell their horses to the government] would bring their horses there that, hopefully, would meet

specifications. A lot of them didn't. Then we would hand out tags to everybody and we'd give them a little slip to write some basic information about the horse.

LB: The horses were kept on the farm in the rural areas. You put the stallions out to seed, really, then who took care of the horses?

EDWARDS: The agent received the money for the stud fee, which was \$20.

LB: The county agent?

EDWARDS: No.

LB: The farmer?

EDWARDS: Yes.

LB: The rancher?

EDWARDS: Yes, that had the horse. He might use the horse only on his own mares. He might have enough mares to take care of the situation, but probably not. So, he'd keep the \$20 and if you have 40 [horses], that's \$800 he'd get then. Besides that, he may use the horse judiciously — ride the horse if the horse was sound. We used some stallions that were not sound; they had racetrack injuries but these were not transmissible injuries.

LB: Interesting. You said that you'd been doing this for some years before you were in World War II.

EDWARDS: That's right, but not buying. I wasn't buying then, I was recommending placing stallions.

LB: Placing, but still involved in the same program.

EDWARDS: Yes.

LB: Was this a new program with the army?

EDWARDS: The Remount program was modeled after similar programs that existed in much of Europe. Ours was closely patterned after the German system where the theory was that the average farmer couldn't afford to buy a stallion of this quality. Yet, this horse when mated with his fairly plain mares — the first get is half bred. Then we changed stallions every three years to avoid “father daughter” stallions and then the next ones are three-quarter bred. Then if you do it again, they're 7/8ths bred, and again it would be 15/16ths.

So, actually, when we get to half bred, or three-quarter bred, we've got quite an improved horse. So, they developed a pool of light horses that would be available in case of need in a national emergency — that was the background of it.

LB: What I'm getting at, though, is do you know when this program was begun?

EDWARDS: The American Remount system started in, I think, 1926. What they did, they took over a program that was voluntary, called the Genesee Valley Horse Program, which published a stud book of half-breed horses. One line was well-known: the sire line. Then after they had the first crop of fillies, then the mare line was known for at least one generation and as it went on, they'd know for several generations. But that's the way the program started.

LB: I see. Were these horse breeding areas concentrated in any particular part of the country?

EDWARDS: Well, yes. Horses we liked best — of course there's horses bred all over the United States, but horses we liked the best were in the Western part of the country: California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho.

LB: Why was that?

EDWARDS: Well, the Midwest had a lot of draft horses and didn't seem to emphasize so much the lighter breeds that we were concerned with. The West was the last frontier so we had lots of livestock and cowboys and that sort of thing that goes with it.

LB: When you selected the horses, then what became of them?

EDWARDS: Then the horses were sent to a processing center. There was one called Fort Robinson in Nebraska, and one called Fort Royal in Virginia, and the Pomona Remount Depot in California, which was the former Kellogg [of Kellogg cereals] Ranch. Did I say Fort Reno?

LB: Fort Reno, I think you did.

EDWARDS: Fort Robinson, Fort Reno, Fort Royal — there were four. So, they left there. Then they were processed; and then as required, they were issued. Actually, it was a highly successful program. A lot of horses and some mules were shipped to the C.B.I. Theatre.

LB: That's the China, Burma, India Theatre.

EDWARDS: Yes, and some mules were shipped there, too. But our mules were not liked by the natives over there, who were used by the army for packing, because our mules were too big — number one, and number two, they didn't forage well. They didn't

understand the kind of forage crops they had over there. Then some horses they were going to ship around to New Zealand. Of course, they had their own whalers that we bought some of. But the [*U.S.S.*] *Meigs* that was sunk outside of Australia – I'm not sure if it was out of Australia or New Zealand, but anyhow, it was sunk with a great loss of life and a loss of animals.

It happened, according to investigation, because they didn't clean the ship while they were out at sea because they felt that a submarine could track the manure and find their investment. So, they were quite close to shore and they wanted everything spic and span so they cleaned out the ship and they think a German U-boat became aware of this (this may not be true) and torpedoed it. Of course, the mules went for everything that was floating (it could be a man) and pawed him into the ocean. It was a real tragedy. So, they quit shipping them and went into local procurement.

Local procurement horses were initially worth \$15 for the Mongolian straight shouldered, cat fanned, short pasterned ponies. Then they became worth \$165 right quick! The natives understood money.

LB: How did the Western horses, or the horses in general, adapt to that theatre?

EDWARDS: Not well. They contracted two very lethal diseases. One of them was called hoof dermatitis and the hoof virtually rotted off with this fungus. The other one was a disease that the veterinarians called farcy, which was a respiratory thing and necrosis would set in and the whole face would rot out. They didn't last very long — three or four months. The horses that were just kept ended up in a huge sale at Los Angeles Stock Yard. I was involved in that, too.

LB: When was that?

EDWARDS: That was at the end of World War II, right after everything was signed. There were numerous things there. The army was being real scrupulous about telling the truth

and they'd say, "This horse has been green broken." That means he's seen a man, and they'd say that he has spavins, or sidebones, or whatever it was. People who didn't know from one horse to another would bid more money when un-soundnesses were mentioned. On about the third day, people came wearing bandages on their heads, walking on crutches and one thing and another because they thought that buying an army horse meant buying a horse that was broken and trained and so forth. And of course, they weren't. These horses had had the very slightest kind of training. The term "green broken," as I said means they'd seen a man. So.

Then some of the horses from units were so herd bound that they couldn't ride them away from other horses. That really was a bad thing. The only thing good about it, they paid as much money or more than the army paid for them. That's about the only thing you can say about any material that the army had bought and later sold.

LB: Were the horses that you bought exclusively for that theatre, or were they for all-around use?

EDWARDS: All-around use. And some of them went for recreation for soldiers here. Some went to the Coast Guard.

LB: What was the Coast Guard doing with horses?

EDWARDS: Beach patrols. Also, the Coast Guard used dogs that were bought.

LB: Police dogs or German Shepherds?

EDWARDS: Well, you're both right and wrong. In the beginning, when it [the war] started, all the dogs used for defense were gifts. So, all the movie actors and actresses would give everything from Pomeranians to Mastiffs, which of course the army couldn't use. They had to destroy many of them. But the actors and actresses also had their picture taken with the

dog they were donating. When one did, why, many of the others followed suit so we had this great number of inappropriate useless dogs. So, then the army started to buy dogs [for the K9 Corps] and generally, for the army we bought German Shepherds. They were very good dogs — they train easily and they were plentiful. For the Marine Corps, mostly, we bought Dobermans. The Doberman's temperament is different than the German shepherd as a general rule. There are exceptions, of course, in all dogs.

But the German Shepherd was better for the army because a fellow was a private today, a corporal tomorrow, a sergeant next week, and he was moved, and a new man came in. A German Shepherd quickly looks for a new master and they get along better. A Doberman is a little more cautious and when they changed handlers with the Doberman, and if the man put on pressure the first thing you know, you're going to get chewed up a little bit. But the Marine Corps is fairly stable and so the guy with the dog is with the dog until the end of time, maybe. They don't move around too much. The Marines liked the Doberman — it's a very tailored-looking dog and looks very military, just like a Marine, even though it's a German dog.

For other purposes, we bought some Chesapeakes; we bought some Labradors; we bought some Setters. A lot of these dogs were trained for finding wounded and also trained as mine detectors, in which they excelled the magnetic things.

Then a number of the dogs were trained just as guard dogs at installations — they barked. The dogs that were trained for scout dogs were trained not to bark. They would indicate by raising their ears or just signaling with their tail. The enemy had an unusual smell and they smelled that.

LB: Where did you buy dogs?

EDWARDS: I bought dogs mostly in Oregon and Northern California. The Southern California dogs had heart worm, a lot of them, which is a lethal thing. I've seen dogs' hearts that look like flowers are coming out of them — the worms are all twisted

LB: Where did you locate the dogs in Oregon then?

EDWARDS: Same system: we used a lot of advertising. We named a place and they brought them there; we inspected the dogs. We like dogs two and four years old and we gave them a test — we didn't want any gun-shy dogs — and we gave them a health examination. Of course, we did that with horses, too. With the horses, we used to find a little trickery went on concerning ages. Misstating the age was a common thing in Southern California where they tried to pawn off the riding academy horses that were a little aged.

LB: How did they do that?

EDWARDS: Usually a dentist's drill, a cup would be turned on the tooth end and then they'd stain it. I've heard of silver nitrate that they use — I'm not sure about that. So, then the horse that had cups would be under eight years old. When they're eight years old, sometimes earlier if they're living in sand country, their teeth get smooth. There are a lot of other age indications besides just teeth, but that's the one that is relied on mostly.

LB: How many men were doing this sort of work?

EDWARDS: Not very many.

LB: I shouldn't have said "Men." It could have been women, but I just assumed...

EDWARDS: No, we didn't have in the very beginning, and we didn't have any that went into the army. We had a civilian woman on some of the buying trips, however — mostly record keeping.

LB: How many people were involved in...

EDWARDS: Well, each board would have the purchasing officer, a clerk, and a veterinarian, and then just general help. There were two boards operating out of Oregon — one headed up by Colonel Koester, who was my commanding officer; then I was head of the other board.

LB: What happened – did the army continue the practice of obtaining horses and dogs after the War?

EDWARDS: No. The Remount Service was discontinued. I can't think of the name of the general right now who preferred wheels. [I believe it was General Summerville.] The dog program also ended, though the dog program has been kind of kept on in a very minor basis, even now. There's no horse program.

LB: What happened to you after the War ended?

EDWARDS: Oregon law said that you were entitled to the job you had, or an equal job, when you came back. Well, when I came back, I was an aide to Governor Sprague when I went into the Army. When I came back, [Douglas O.] McKay was governor, who was also a good friend of mine because I'd been his secretary when he was in the senate, but Tom McCall had my job and that's pretty tough competition. So, I'd been in this horse business and involved in racing so McKay said an opportunity was going to come up in the Racing Commission and would I care to kind of wait and bide my time until that happened. That was agreeable with me and I worked as credit manager for Eyerly Aircraft during that brief period. They made amusement rides. Still do.

LB: So how long was it then, until you became connected with the Legislature?

EDWARDS: Approximately two years after I came back before I got back on with the public [service].

LB: What were your duties then?

EDWARDS: As racing steward?

LB: Yes.

EDWARDS: Well, as racing steward at that time, you were the “chief stud cat.” [Laughs] You licensed all the individuals who participated; you observed the races for enforcement of the rules; and made decisions to finishes and so forth, and also functioned as a hearings officer for infractions, if a rider was cutting somebody off in the home stretch, or whatever.

LB: In general, how did the races go? Were there a lot of contests about the rules and...

EDWARDS: Of course, a race is a contest and contrary to what the public thinks, any “taking your best hold,” as I call it, is to win — not to lose. There's all kinds of little things that jockeys do, of course. A rider can wave his bat in front of a gaining horse as if he's whipping his own horse and that tends to get the other horse intimidated, or off stride; or you can cut in front or you can carry him out. Sometimes a rider can't help it. When it's been raining or the ground is soft, the horse's feet hurt, or sometimes he wants to go to the outside because in training that's when you take him to the outside to pull him up because he can't run anymore. So, you have to make those judgments of whether the rider is trying to do the right thing or whether he's doing this purposely, or letting it happen.

LB: Were they filming the races at that time?

EDWARDS: I started the films in Oregon. They were developed very quickly. You could run the race slow and I let anybody who wanted to see the race — anybody in the public — as long as there was a steward there to explain it because they might see a boy stand

up in the stirrups and he's trying to keep the horse from cutting somebody off or turning to the outside. So, we wanted somebody there to explain it. The public viewer doesn't think the boy's trying to hold the horse or something, or whatever.

LB: How did it affect the quality of the racing?

EDWARDS: I think it made the riders a little more wary and it was a safety thing, too, because apprentice riders are big trouble on a racetrack, generally. They're out there thrashing around and – we played the races over to the riders the next morning and had a critique. Maybe it was educational to the apprentice rider [to see that] this is what he could have done to give his horse a little better chance, or this is where he shouldn't have gone in — too crowded of a place — or where someone else looks like he's taking his best hold — I would show that, too, and maybe fine the rider if he was reckless or guilty of impeding another horse in the race.

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

Tape 1, Side 2**1982 May 14**

LB: Were there any controversies that come to mind while you were with the Racing Commission?

EDWARDS: I can't think of one that's particularly interesting, except the state fair where it was alleged to be "battery ridden" and there was a young former rider named [Chellas?] — he'd been ruled off. His name was [Chellas?]. He went into a radio shop and bought all the makings for batteries, capacitor coils, and fabricated a little double loaded plunger device. A fellow who ran this shop was a friend of mine, we went fishing together. He called me up and told me about this, so I was on the alert for it. We caught this guy and some riders that had bought his device and ruled them off the race course.

LB: What about infractions having to do with drugs?

EDWARDS: We had some of that, too. We took urine tests. When I first started, they were taking saliva tests, but the saliva tests were not reliable. You could give maybe 10 horses some help, we'd say a second breath, before the horse left the stall. We'd test them all and we might pick up only four or five of them for a blood test. Of course, there's new methods all the time, but then they always develop new drugs, too — new ways to bury drugs, maybe. Giving horses Lasix to control bleeding might help to bury drugs so that they couldn't be identifiable. There's been some questions about that.

I remember one time — I don't think I should use names, but at Gresham a fellow was in a stall of a horse that entered in a race. The horse's name, I remember, was Cameo Johnny. When the fellow came out of the stall, he was apprehended by the security person and he had amphetamine in one pocket and chloralhydrate in the other. He could move him up or move him down.

So, this thing went to a hearing — he had a lawyer and...

LB: Is that taken inter-muscularly? Injected?

EDWARDS: Well, yes. He'd give it in a needle. So, the thing got in the court finally. The lawyer asked if I'd seen him do this to the horse and I said, "No." Then I learned that you can't indict anybody for being a thief, only for stealing. So, he was free, but he got in trouble again. That time there was sufficient evidence.

LB: How long were you with the Racing Commission?

EDWARDS: Nine years.

LB: As Steward?

EDWARDS: Yes. I'd been on the Commission staff before that, but never as a Commissioner of the track. This really was a bad kind of a set-up. You see, the state didn't pay you. The track paid you, but you were representing the state. Governor McKay didn't like that system so he made an arrangement with the track that they would be billed by the Racing Commission and the Racing Commission then would pay you. But at the very beginning I got checks right from the track. We were in an awkward position then because they had to negotiate for your pay each time. We were all paid well, \$100 a day, which back in those days was a lot of pay. Nowadays, it's all in a big lump. The license fee is charged to the track but the state keeps out what is used to defray the cost of supervision. So, there's not this personal thing that we had with the track which is not a very good thing.

LB: Was the Racing Steward employed fulltime then?

EDWARDS: He is now. When I was there, he wasn't. He was only employed from 10 days before the meeting and 10 days afterwards — 10 days before your licensed people

attended and 10 days after to pick up loose ends. Then you were on your own. [There was a total of about 120 days of racing.]

LB: What happened after you left the Racing Commission?

EDWARDS: Well, I was unemployed for five days. [I was] very distressed. [Laughs] I went to work and was employed by the Oregon State Cattlemen's Association as editor of the paper and lobbyist and state secretary.

LB: How long were you a lobbyist?

EDWARDS: In that stretch about three years.

LB: And then what did you do?

EDWARDS: Well, a member of – was on the board of directors for the Oregon State Cattlemen's Association. Was also a senator [Lloyd Key?]. He also had a committee – he was chairman of the committee on agriculture – so he gave me what was, at that time, a very substantial increase in salary if I'd come back to the legislature and work for him on the committee, which I did. I'm not sure it was the greatest choice I ever made because I got a bill through the legislature establishing the Beef Council. I used to have a hard time collecting my salary. But the Beef Council collected fees on each animal sold and total sale transfers brought in about \$70,000 so that kind of problem was settled by that bill, but I never got any benefits. I also got another bill through that took the federal lease land off the tax rolls. I'm not so sure that was a good deal now.

LB: When did you become clerk of the house?

EDWARDS: I became [chief] clerk of the house in the 1963 session. It was after the termination of the Agriculture Interim Committee.

LB: How did that opportunity come to you?

EDWARDS: Hopefully, I had sufficient competence to do the job and there were some politics involved, and I was a good friend of the speaker and leaders.

LB: Who did you say the speaker was?

EDWARDS: Clarence Barton.

LB: Clarence Barton, yes.

EDWARDS: He was a very able leader and presiding officer.

LB: What were your duties as clerk of the house?

EDWARDS: The [chief clerk] is responsible for the records; responsible for the flow of business — that is, compliance with the rules. You have to do with the no status of supplies — purchasing; you had to deal with personnel, which was largely patronage. You don't do that now and I'm not sure it's any better. They have a committee on administration, but before they had a patronage committee, and it seems to me that they did every bit as well, and maybe better. Because you got your job on patronage and you kept it on performance. You seem a little cynical about that.

LB: No. I just wondered. Interesting. Why did you decide to move to the Senate, then?

EDWARDS: There's an old saying that's kind of humorous in a way that the House is a democracy of the people and the Senate is the aristocracy of man and is normally considered the upper house. It was referred to as kind of reminiscent of the House of Lords, except it has a lot more power. It has some unique tasks that only the Senate has. For example, confirming the governor's appointees occurs only in the Senate. Of course, one thing the House, too – tax bills have to originate in the House, but they get written in the Senate.

The Senate is supposed to be more stable. Thomas Jefferson, who was a great advocate of the bicameral system, two houses, was asked why he advocated the two houses. This person who asked, I forgot now who it was, but he poured his coffee in his saucer. Jefferson said, “Why did you pour your coffee in your saucer?”

He said, “To cool it.” Jefferson said, “That's the reason why we have two houses: a Senate to cool the more impulsive actions of the House.”

LB: What are some of the events that have affected legislation in your observations?

EDWARDS: In the old days, legislators, I would say it this way, received \$3 a day for 40 days and the session ended soon after. The staff got more than legislators do now, too, which you don't hear much comment about. But in the old days, the legislators generally had the feeling that people in the districts or counties who had sent them down here had put some confidence in them to make decisions, and they did. Nowadays, they have a hearing every time they hang a cat. Every bill gets at least one, and sometimes two or three, and that stretches this thing out to six months plus.

I think hearings are often a waste of time. You seldom get any facts; you just get opinions, but it's the way it is going. It's an expensive process. Maybe it's good to get more people involved, but usually it's the same set. We're getting legislation now by faction — a bunch of loudmouths come in all the time.

LB: “Special interest groups” they've been called.

EDWARDS: There's not too much wrong with special interests because our whole society is composed of special interests. Maybe we like to have six-month legislatures but it's changing from the citizen legislature, changing to the professional type of legislator because the citizen legislator can't leave his business for six months. Nowadays legislators are on a full year-around job. They've become, through no fault of their own, ombudsmen; each one's an ombudsman. Every constituent who's got a quarrel with a bureaucracy or something writes to his legislator, calls his legislator, comes down to see him. So, all of these things take time and that's what requires an increase in staff, too.

I'm not sure than an increase in staff is all that wonderful now, either, because sometimes you can hardly get through to see the man who's supposed to make the decision.

LB: You were talking about in the old days the legislators made \$3 a day and since that time things have been changing. I was wondering, do you see that changes have taken place in just the last few years, or over a certain period of time?

EDWARDS: The last few years have been marked changes. We didn't have a committee on administration; I remember when we didn't have a committee to write legislation — the Legislative Council. I remember when Blaine McCord, back in the 1930s — a Woodburn lawyer—wrote all the bills. Legislators just came to him or else they'd write them themselves, or else they'd hire some attorney. Later it was Ralph Moody — he's a kinsman of Governor Moody. Now we have a Legislative Council which has grown tremendously and has a multi-million-dollar budget.

Then we had a chief clerk secretary of the Senate to help to do the buying and all that sort of thing. Now we have a committee on administration and we have administrative assistants to all legislators. It used to be virtue and a desk in the assembly was their only rewards, but that has changed.

LB: I think I read somewhere that you had identified a debt that was owed to the state of Oregon by the federal government.

EDWARDS: It's still alive, but it's not very active. The way it happened was at the time of the Civil War, the Union forces wanted to get all of the trained troops possible. So, Lincoln took everyone out of the garrisons in the Western states, including Oregon. The Secretary of War made an arrangement that they would pay if the state itself would set up a militia and guard the settlers, and the Oregon Trail, and the miners, from hostiles. There's all these other nations looking at Oregon, too, at that time — Russia had acquired a colony here; the Spanish here; French; and British.

So, we did [pay], but the government didn't. They said that Oregon was an exception to the loyal states because, first governor, “Honest” John Whiteaker, was pro-slave, refused to cooperate with President Lincoln. “Honest” John as he was called somewhat in deference and somewhat in derision, made a speech. At Pleasant Hill, out of Roseburg, he made a speech at some occasion. I’ve forgotten what it was. in which he said that the South would never be conquered. He said that in freeing the Negro, beware that you don't enslave the white man, and he said that he didn't think it was fair to impose on Oregon, which was remote from the rest of the country, the afflictions of the nation. He was considered a pro-slaver and was not cooperating. He was followed by Gaines, who cooperated completely with Lincoln and did raise the troops.

Then the federal government paid out \$45 million — three states were on the tail end of it: Oregon, Nevada, and California. Then Nevada was paid. Then in 1909, the court of claims renewed Oregon's claims — threw out two of them and okayed two of them. The newspapers carried the story that Oregon was going to be paid but the check never arrived. This thing was passed through both houses, but never at the same time.

It's kind of a peculiar thing in Oregon, and maybe it's true in other states to some extent, but when a new regime comes in, they bring in their own loyal crew. And maybe they should surround themselves with their own people, but these new people don't know what's gone on before. So, nothing happens unless somebody discovers it. Now Sprague,

when I was his executive, left \$100,000 to the state for a fountain. It was all forgotten about until I resurrected it. Only then it was \$140,000, but the treasurer's office had no account of it. The fund was over in general services. So, they felt that if the fountain was not constructed, the fund would accrue to the state library. But I just mentioned that as another thing without any continuity of interest. So, this Civil War debt was overlooked and passed over.

Of course, three of our Congressmen were indicted for land fraud when this thing had come up one time, or probably it would have been resolved. We didn't have any clout back there [in Washington, D.C.]. In fact, two of them were convicted. John H. Mitchell and John Newton Williamson, I guess. Binger Herman was indicted, but not convicted. Fulton was accused, but never indicted. In the Congressional Bio Directory from 1770 to 1971, a great huge book which I have, it never tells a thing about the fact that John H. Mitchell was censured in Congress for being a bigamist, and for misuse or appropriation of public funds. It didn't say anything about him being convicted of land frauds in Oregon. There were 35 indicted, 33 convicted in the Oregon land fraud cases.

There is quite an interesting book on the Oregon land frauds written by a fellow named Putei, S.A.U.D. Putei, called *Looters of the Public Domain*. It even became a bestseller because everybody that was accused in it bought copies and destroyed them. Even the copies in the [state] library were taken out and many destroyed. They never came back. So, the library keeps them in a vault now, the few copies that there are. I own a copy and I think there's a copy here, too, in the library

LB: Were you able to pinpoint any other interesting irregularities when you were working in the Senate?

EDWARDS: Yes. Just rolling around without, you might say, a sense of direction. For instance, how, did I discover this Civil War debt? Well, [Jason] Boe was smarting a little bit over criticism, Senate President Boe, for the press criticism of the wings of the capitol – Oregon Flies with Its Own Wings. That was the territorial, not the state motto. Well, anyhow,

he asked me if I could do a little research and find out what the press had said about the other capitols that we had. Of course, the wings were really the fourth addition. We had the territorial capitol, burned in 1855 and then the capitol that burned in 1935 April 25th. Then we had the capitol accepted in 1937 and then the wings that were put on it. So, I was going clear back to 1855 and searching things and I just ran across this.

I found out that the capitol that was accepted in 1873 – of course, it was about 30 more years before they finished it. But Governor Thayer, who was very critical, said that it was a false symbol of the vanity of people. I mean, a false symbol of the prosperity of the people, that it would never be filled. It wasn't too long [before] public employees were falling out of the windows. Then on the capitol we have now, C.C. Chapman, editor of the *Oregon Voter*, said, "It lacks the majesty and dignity of the old capitol and certainly was not efficiently designed." So here the press was taking cracks at the wings, so I put those things together for use in a speech about the criticism of the other capital buildings.

LB: Tell me about working in the old capitol. What was it like there in that building that burned in 1935?

EDWARDS: I thought it was a pretty building. It looked like the White House. I don't know of anything unique or unusual about it. The big well was where the lobbyists congregated. When I started there, we only had six lobbyists of any consequence. Now we have 600. The railroads had Harold Turner; utilities had [Roy Meyers?]; labor had [Kelly Lowe?]. Oh, a grey small Irishman – oh, dear. I've got his book. School teachers had a lobbyist and a Farm Bureau lobbyist. That's about it. [Oh, racing had ex-governor Jay Bowerman; and the railroads had ex-governor Oswald West.]

LB: What about the use of space? How were the offices arranged and the chambers and all of that?

EDWARDS: Well, there were the two chambers, but members didn't have any offices. Neither did they in the capitol that was built in 1937 until the wings were built. Well, they had partial offices and shared offices and things like that in the last two or three sessions, but before that their office was, they said, their hip pocket. Their only desk was right in the assembly [unless they chaired an active committee].

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

Tape 2, Side 1**1982 May 14**

LB: Mr. Edwards, can you tell me, do you have any recollection, or were you there, when the second capitol burned?

EDWARDS: Yes, I was at a little place where lots of the "in" people congregated called The Bluebird on State Street. It was west of the capitol about two blocks from the campus. About four o'clock in the afternoon, my attention was called to the fact that there was a wisp of smoke coming out of the old capital — I think it was about four.

It wasn't any time at all until it was really burning strong. I ran up there, carried out typewriters and things, and put them in trucks and pickups and stuff around there — I hoped [the vehicles] belonged to the state! But all of the art pictures and things burned; all the desks and chairs burned; a great many records burned; and that's why it's pretty tough to be a historian on the legislature.

LB: Where were the things taken to as the capitol burned?

EDWARDS: I don't know. The Legislature met in the Marion Hotel and in the old armory; the Senate met in the hotel banquet room. I was secretary for McKay then. The Senate met in the mirrored room and they had a chute going to the [Douglas] Armory, which they called the cattle chute — that's where the house convened.

LB: So it was just kind of a makeshift operation, then?

EDWARDS: Yes, very makeshift. Then Governor Martin wanted a new capitol to be built in what is now Candelaria Heights, which would have been a beautiful site. They'd of had many acres for parking and the vista would have looked over the whole valley.

It was south — the south part of Salem. Salem goes way beyond it now and the land was very inexpensive. He was visionary and this was great. But the business people of the city used to raise hell, and so much hell, that shortsightedness prevailed and they rebuilt it where it was.

[There is] a funny story about that, too. The old walls were standing. [Roy Hewett?] and Henry Zorn filed a lawsuit to require the state to rebuild inside of the old walls. Oh, the fire marshal threw up his hands and said, “People shouldn't even stand close to it — it will fall down. It's no good at all.” So, then they hired a wrecker to come in take care of it. So, he plastered dynamite all around in the walls, set it off — and the walls just shuddered and stayed there! But he blew Raymond Breyman Boise out of bed and broke all the windows on mansion row. They had to re-powder it and re-blow it and then, of course, it finally came down.

Governor Atiyeh was interested that there be some remnants of the capitol preserved. He and his wife, Dolores, were the chief movers of the columns on the present grounds of the campus. So, he found a column, one column segment, and I found some others, and so a little park was created by the east side, designed by [Allen Goff?]. It is very attractive. And there's a plaque there and I wrote the text for the plaque. We had a little quarrel, not a real one, but the governor wanted inmates in the text — that they did the excavating, made the bricks, and so forth. I said, “No, they're convicts.” [Laughs] I won because that's what they were called then. They didn't call them inmates; what the hell. They were convicts. Convict labor.

When they made the bricks, though, for the old capitol, Governor Thayer took great exception to the fact that the state was paying 25 cent a day to the convicts, which he thought was exorbitant.

The old capitol was accepted first — just the building in 1876. It wasn't even finished inside and then later the state finished it in-side, the interior, and they put porticos on it. Later, they put the dome on it. That just really created it and it became a beautiful building. It became a real artistic looking monumental-type structure. It was awfully dowdy at first. I have pictures of that; very dowdy.

LB: It was a copper dome, was it not?

EDWARDS: Yes, but you wouldn't know it because it had a beautiful green patina on it.

LB: You served under a lot of governors in one capacity or another.

EDWARDS: Well, I didn't serve under the governors. I've served the state...

LB: Under their administration.

EDWARDS: Yes, served as close to – well, when Snell ran for secretary of state, became governor, I was one of the volunteer drivers for him. Then aide to General Martin; I was executive secretary to Charles H. I was very close to McKay. I'd been his secretary while he was a state and be – I was military Sprague. Then senator, plus when he was governor.

LB: Is there anything else you'd like to add to the permanent record?

EDWARDS: Have you gone through the things you were interested in knowing about?

LB: I think so, most of them. Would you like to add anything?

EDWARDS: No. I've been there a long time, seen a lot of changes. Some of them were better and some of them were doubtful.

LB: Is there anything you try to do when you see some of these doubtful changes on the horizon?

EDWARDS: You mean, have I tried to thwart them? Not particularly, no. I just field some criticisms about it. I think Congress and state legislatures are experiencing this same kind of change where the constituent has to go through too many non-elected people to get to the man, they want to talk to making legislative decisions. They're having too much influence on decision making. Then another problem that has bothered me some, and you're going to have some of it, and that's administrative lawmaking. More administrative laws will be made than bills passed. Sometimes you never recognize the mandate from the legislature to the bureaucracy because it gets a personal interpretation. But I think all enlightened practitioners of government are concerned about the inordinate growth of administrative law. It affects your lives more than legislative passed laws. Of course, the authority for the administrative law flows from some legislative act.

LB: Yes. I think you're probably right about that.

I want to thank you very much for taking this time to record your oral history. It's very much appreciated. Thank you again.

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]
[End of Interview]