

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Salem Schools Project

Teaching Experience

O.H. 1048

FRANK HOOPES

Interviewed

by

James McNeal

on

October 8, 1975

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: FRANK HOOPEES
INTERVIEWER: James McNeal
SUBJECT: Fourth Street School, High School Life in
40's, Teaching Experiences, Student
Teachers
DATE: October 8, 1975

M: This is an interview with Frank L. Hoopes for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Salem School History, by James L. McNeal, at Salem Junior High, on October 8, 1975, at 3:00.

First of all Frank I would like to know when you first started teaching in Salem schools.

H: I started teaching in Salem Schools in September 1953.

M: 1953 and what background did you bring to that job in the way of preparation and schooling?

H: I received my undergraduate work at Bowling Green State University and at Mount Union College.

M: Was there something that was instrumental in your decision to come to Salem?

H: I am a native of Salem and I grew up in the school system. I was reared by a long time school employee, and before that my grandfather, and I knew nothing but Salem schools.

M: Could you give me some indication as to whether you had any preparation when you came to the first teaching job, equivalent to say, our student teaching program? Was there anything in effect at that time?

H: Yes, at Bowling Green I was in the first program which they called the Block Plan. Which was the forerunner of the current program that they have now, where a student teacher goes into a classroom, takes over . . . Of course at that time we were on a semester basis. We took over the classroom for a full semester, all teaching duties, the whole load, just like a teacher today--you know, a full time teacher does.

M: What did you first teach?

H: My first teaching assignment was elementary school, at sixth grade, at McKinley.

M: At McKinley. Approximately how many students did you have?

H: The first year I had eighteen students.

M: You worked under what principal?

H: Natalie Sharpnack.

M: Can you tell me anything at all about Miss Sharpnack and her operation over there?

H: She was one of the most fair people I think that I have ever encountered. She was a long time employee of the system. I believe she had worked at that time almost forty years in teaching. She had spent class room time, that was from 1939 to 1941. In fact I had her as a principal when I was a student at McKinley. So, I knew Natalie throughout a part of her career. In fact one of the saddest things I had to do was to serve as a pallbearer at her funeral after I had begun teaching. She treated teachers and students like people, which was kind of rare sometimes in that day and age.

M: Found that not to be the case?

H: Oh no, this is no slam on present administration at all. Principals were different in the 1950's than they are now, considerably different.

M: Could you expand on that in addition to what you have mentioned about Miss Sharpnack?

H: In general I think that they were much more organized and much more demanding. When I first went into the high school to teach under Beman Ludwig he was extremely punctual. He would not tolerate tardiness, not even to teacher's meetings. Now again he was fair but much more strict than Natalie was. They were just two different people who handled the situation two different ways. Both of them got the job done very well.

M: When you were beginning you mentioned grade school and high school and you are here at the junior high now. Going back to your first teaching assignment, could you tell me generally, or specifically if possible, what a routine day in the elementary school would be.

H: Well, a routine day in 1953 was primarily a full time load for the class room teacher. We were not at all departmentalized. The class room was totally self contained. We taught music, we taught art, we taught writing, we taught social studies, we taught science, we taught health, we taught English, we taught math. Did I say spelling?

M: No.

H: And we taught gym. So essentially we had ten subject areas which we would do it all. We were it. We were the whole day for the kid. We did have a traveling music teacher who would come in once a week. Other than that the only teacher that those kids saw in that class room during there school year was their teacher.

M: In 1953 that traveling music teacher would have been Betty Hoffmeister.

H: I'll have to think about that.

M: Carothers maybe?

H: Yes, Tom Carothers.

M: What about lunch time? Did everybody go home, everybody stay inside? We had a closed lunch here in Salem.

H: No, this, in the elementary school, was an open lunch but bussed students, of course, stayed. The teachers rotated duty with lunch students. Which I did not have to take. There were two men at McKinley, Vince Crawford and I, and since we took all the playground duty--you know recess and when they came in the morning, when they came in the afternoon--we didn't have to take bus or lunchroom duty.

M: Nobody then gets stuck with one particular duty. That seems reasonable. You have taught then a total of how many years?

H: This will be twenty-one years. I am getting two years service credit. I graduated in 1951, went to the service, and got out of the service in August of 1953. I got a letter from Mr. Kerr who was superintendent then, while I was in the Far East, and said, he had talked with my father, he knew I was getting out in August, if I wanted a job in September there was one

waiting for me. I took it. I thought it would be temporary, until I saved money for law school.

M: You mentioned Mr. Kerr talked to your father. What relationship was there there? Friendly basis or through the schools?

H: Both, I think Mr. Kerr was a unique person. He was both a friend and an employer. This was prenegotiation days and what we are encountering now. Simply as a friend of my father, a friend of the family, but as superintendent of schools he had an opening. This was in the day of teacher shortage. Nothing like today where they send out 400 applications for one opening. He had the opening, he knew that I was there, was qualified--or at least on paper qualified to teach--and so he initiated the contact in that way.

M: Question maybe I didn't ask just right. How did Mr. Kerr know your father?

H: Oh, because my father was then a janitor at Fourth Street School. He had been since 1935.

M: Until what date?

H: Until 1956, he retired.

M: A little over twenty years. At Fourth Street always?

H: No, he began here at the junior high, at that time it was a senior high; the same building. On the night turn until an opening came at Fourth Street, then he took over at Fourth Street.

M: I would like to come back and ask you more personal questions about your teaching and so forth, but let's take it from here with your father since the subject has come up. Your father worked at Fourth Street primarily for, let's say, a little over twenty year as a janitor in school systems. I would be curious to know what he came home with, in your memory at night, after he had worked . . . When he worked night shift I guess.

H: No, he worked days at Fourth Street.

M: He worked days at Fourth Street. When he came what time did he get out of work?

H: He came home from work . . . They finished and left the building at 5:00 and you could almost time him to the second. At 5:06 he would be home and sitting at the table wondering where the food was.

M: At home, of where?

H: On Superior Avenue in Salem.

M: Oh Superior, so that was a walk home?

H: Right.

M: When you sat down to supper did the conversation ever include Pop's work at the Fourth Street?

H: Oh, yes. This is what I said in the beginning. I grew up with the schools. I mean he told us what happened at school that day. So, I was in school even when I wasn't in school.

M: The comments would fall under both positive and negative areas I am sure.

H: Oh, yes.

M: I would be curious to know what griped him as a custodian in the gigantic building over there. I am sure there were other custodians.

H: Well, there was only one other one at that time. It eventually got to the point where there were five. Two of them handled it. Now he quit at 5:00 and he also started at 5:00, or earlier, in the morning. They had kind of a long day and no job descriptions as they have now. The biggest gripe that he had was inconsiderate teachers, which I think is probably the same situation that we would hear from a custodian today. Teachers who had no concern with the custodian and his job. Consequently kids reacted the same way, which made a heck of a mess.

M: Did he ever indicate specifically how teachers were inconsiderate to him and little things that they would do or not do?

H: Yes, the biggest gripe that he would have . . . Of course, Fourth Street was combination elementary and junior high. Of course, in the elementary grade part of the art program is cutting and pasting. It used to irritate him tremendously. Teachers who would have students cut with the scraps falling on the floor. If you have ever tried to push a broom across a wooden floor with flat paper scraps on it, you realize that eventually you end up picking up each scrap. Brooms just won't do the job. These were oiled floors at the time too, not nicely varnished and sealed. The other thing, of course, went along with the pasting. Kids are naturally going to miss the paper when you are pasting, consequently you end up with globs of paste on

the desk. Which meant the janitor not only would have to sweep a room in the night, then he would have to wash it too; the desk tops. He always maintained that if the teachers had simply used a newspaper, all they would have to do was fold it up and throw it away. You wouldn't have the scraps on the floor or the paste.

Another big gripe, people cutting out things around holidays and sticking them on windows with scotch tape. Scotch tape will not come off a window without a razor blade.

M: Especially the old yellowing type. You mean your father and one other janitor took care of that entire Fourth Street building?

H: That is right.

M: 5:00 in the morning until 5:00 at night.

H: In bad weather they were there . . . Sometimes he would go in at 2:00 in the morning. I can remember the alarm going off at 2:00. He would get up, eat his breakfast, go to work, and we wouldn't see him until 5:00 that evening.

M: By bad weather you mean the wintertime?

H: Snow, cold, because there is a whole city block to shovel. They did all the outside walks around. Then if you remember Fourth Street you had probably an eighteen or twenty foot walk wide, front and back, and all of that had to be cleared of snow.

M: And shoveled?

H: And shoveled. When I got older I used to get called upon to be the "horse." They had a snow plow and I would pull that plow. He would get on the handle of it and we would move reasonable amounts of snow. I had the strength to pull the snow off that way, rather than shoveling it all. It was much faster. When it was too deep to plow then I would go help shovel. This was after I had started, maybe fifth grade.

M: Did we have any bad winters in 1953 or the late 1950's?

H: We had the big snow of 1950 and we had about thirty inches. I remember I had to shovel half the playground then too to get so the coal trucks could get in. Those were coal fired boilers. In order for them to have heat so the pipes didn't freeze up you had to get a truck in. That meant shoveling halfway across the playground the width of a coal truck, whatever a coal truck is wide.

M: Where was coal delivered at Fourth Street?

H: That would have been off the Fifth Street side. It would be on the northeast corner of the school, was were the . . .

M: Coal chutes.

H: Coal chutes were.

M: They had steam . . .

H: They had hot water heat.

M: Hot water. Now on the opposite sides, were there any things that pleased him that he made mention of enough, or often enough, that you could remember that he definitely appreciated certain things that were done.

H: I think . . . Of course you are more inclined to hear bad points than good. I think this is probably typical of people. There were certain teachers and certain principles that they had during the period of time that he liked very much because of their consideration. You know, the understanding of the problem. Mostly I think he just liked kids. This was a thing, he liked being around kids.

M: With regard to Fourth Street this gives us another area to look at, not specifically with your father, but the building itself. I know some of your feelings with regard to the demolition of that building. There was definitely a mystique that hung on that building. I talked to enough people in the Fourth Street schools. A thing unto its self. Could you pinpoint some of the things as you grew up in Salem as a teacher? Now even with the building gone do you think it counts for much?

H: Well, I think one think that it counted for, more than anything else, is that virtually everyone in Salem--at least every native of Salem--attended Fourth Street at some time. The older ones that attended it maybe from grade school, through junior high, through high school . . . The "younger" generation would have had at least junior high in that building and maybe grade school. So, I don't think there was a kid in town, who was a native of Salem, who had not spent at least two years in Fourth Street school. Now McKinley School, there have been a limited number who would have attended it. A limited number attended would have attended Prospect or any of the other elementary schools. Everybody, at some time or another, spent time in Fourth Street.

Plus the fact the building was so . . . It was such an

imposing structure. It was totally different, I think, than any school I have ever seen no matter where I have been. I have never seen anything like it and the atmosphere was fantastic. I almost feel like with . . . I don't know if you read Charlie Brown or not. You know the little girl who talks to the school building? Fourth Street had a personality, and not just for me. It got to be a part of people somehow and maybe because we were exposed to it, maybe because of the feeling. The spirit among the teachers there when they were there, it was entirely different than it is now, and yet we have some of the same teachers. It had to be . . . The environment had to do something for them. It had a personality, the building did.

M: The building having a personality. Sort of a general idea, what specifically about that building do you recall that you classified as having fantastic qualities, individual items within the building or without?

H: Well, the spaciousness was one thing. I think there was no crowded feeling in the building because of the massive halls. The tremendous size of the halls--which incidentally is probably what lead to the downfall of the building, a large unsupported structure--and that grand staircase going up in the center. These are just physical facilities but you almost had a feeling . . . It was so large that you had feeling of being outdoors even though one may have been inside. I don't know how to describe it really. It is like why do you love your wife, this type thing.

M: At Fourth Street a lot of people didn't realize the situation in the upper decks, the third floor. Could you describe your recollections of activities up in that third floor area?

H: Of course in my generation there were no activities. It had been condemned, for activities long before I was born.

The superstructure of the third floor, Fourth Street School, was almost totally unfinished. I know this because I was up there at least once a week. I would go up on Sundays to turn their fans on so there would be heat on Monday Morning. There wasn't a central switch, you went up in the attic in both ends, east and west end, and flipped the switches manually for the fans. It was totally unfinished. At the west end of the building one could see the remnants of a stage, which I used to think would have been where the footlights were. After talking with people much older than I, I am believing now that what I was seeing was the top, the cap of the stage, and the stage in the auditorium actually set up on the second floor and all that

we had on the third floor was a balcony. I realize there are differences of opinion on that point. First hand opinion I can't tell you. I am merely repeating what I have heard. It was just like an unfinished attic. It was an unfinished attic. I went up there. I used to shoot pigeons in there. Maybe I was responsible for enough holes through the slate roof that in the 1940's they had to replace the roof, I don't know.

M: There was definitely a stage at the far end.

H: At the west end. It would have been on the second floor. A lot of people say the old auditorium in the attic and I don't think so. I don't think this is true because there was only one access stairway into the attic. I believe that that was an access really to a balcony. According to Miss Elsie Hole, with whom I corresponded, the stage did set at the west of the second floor and you did have the balcony on the third floor. Now, prior to that . . . The steps were still there, went right up to the roof. There had been a belfry on the top of Fourth Street. This was torn down and I have talked to several people. John Litty called me and everybody I know trying to figure out what year that belfry came off and nobody seems to know for sure. It was 1926.

M: This would have been the top, dead center of the building.

H: Right. It was quite a massive structure that was supported by brick walls about three courses thick on both ends of that, but the stairs still went up and dead ended. I have some pictures taken from that belfry. It must have been impressive. I mentioned going up to the roof and I remember when they put the new roof on they still had the ladders going up to the peak of the roof, which the roofers used. On weekends I would go up and on to the gutter and then climb up and straddle the peak of the roof and look. You could cover this entire town in the fall.

M: I'll be darned.

H: An unobstructed view.

M: How high was it up there?

H: Well, it would have been . . . The caps in the chimneys were approximately eighty feet so I would say it would be eighty feet, or maybe seventy-five feet when I straddled the piece.

M: So, you could see all over Salem?

H: Yes. It is located on one of the higher points in Salem and then you add another seventy-five or eighty feet to that. You get a lot of distance in that.

M: What could you see out to the west, for example, where the city wouldn't have expanded that far west?

H: You could see easily to Prospect School on the west side and beyond. You could see out onto the Georgetown Road. I could see out the New Garden Road almost to where the Saxon Country Club is.

M: Really? From Fourth Street?

H: From Fourth Street. Now, this was when there is no foliage on the trees.

M: In the fall.

H: I could see to where Carey Road began. In fact I could see Kline's farm, the first farm up on Carey Road.

M: I'll be darned.

H: I could see well out to Milville Hill. It was quite a tremendous view. Of course the building . . . Maybe this too is why it imposed--to go back to the other question--on people so much. It was part of the . . . It was the skyline of Salem. Let's face it we had no other building in Salem that you could see from every place. There were very few places in Salem that you could not see the roof or the chimneys of Fourth Street School.

M: A landmark.

H: Right.

M: I'm curious, when you got up on the roof did anybody know you were up there or is that just Frank Hoopes on his own?

H: No, I did it on my own.

M: Pop didn't know about it?

H: No, he didn't know about it.

M: Never got a call from the neighbors?

H: Never got a call from the neighbors. Used to get a call when I would shoot pigeons.

M: What did you shoot them with?

- H: A .32 rifle.
- M: Inside the building?
- H: Inside or outside too.
- M: Not a BB gun? (laughter)
- H: No. Inside I never got many complaints because the sound was muffled. When I started firing on the outside then the neighbors start calling, "Somebody is shooting a rifle up the school." They were concerned citizens, which is in its self different then today. I had to explain several times to the police what was happening. Then my dad would simply tell them what the pigeons were doing to the windows and walls and so on. Which I don't need to say on tape but anybody can figure out.
- M: Maybe it would be a good thing if some younger kid don't hear this tape either. Shooting birds out in front of the junior high. The funny thing about Fourth Street, the reaction was extremely strong about tearing that building down. Do you feel that from your understanding, and also appreciation of the structure itself, and supposed problems with it . . . Do you think it could have been saved?
- H: Yes, I think it could have been. I was very much opposed to its being torn down. I still don't feel kindly to its having been removed. I can see it as an act of mercy, as I have described human attributes to this building. In the later years after it was condemned and people threw rocks through the windows and began ripping off everything that was not really cemented down, then it is an act of mercy. It was put out of its misery and torn down. I think it could have been saved, if not for purposes of an elementary school, it could have been used for trades extension. I'm now director of Salem Trade Extension and still think so. It could have been used for administrative offices. It could have been used for a multitude of other things. If they had wanted to continue using it for an elementary school a flat roof would have done it. Maybe an expenditure of \$500,000 which is still cheaper then building a new school.
- M: One or two though in terms of spaciousness, you mentioned it, they would have to alter that certainly. How high were the ceilings?
- H: I am guessing that they were approximately sixteen to twenty foot ceilings, which was real nice in hot weather. The classroom down where the student was sitting was quite comfortable.

M: But yet the heating problem in terms of days.

H: Right.

M: I would like to get back to questions of a more personal nature. Would you tell me please--you say you are a native of Salem--what schools did you pass through?

H: I went my first four years--there was no kindergarten at that time--my first four years to Fourth Street. Then, because of overcrowding, all of us who were north of Ellsworth Avenue went to McKinley for fifth and sixth grade. Then I came back to Fourth Street for seventh and eighth grade and then four years at Senior High.

M: Which would be where are right now?

H: Same building. I graduated in 1947.

M: What were things like in a school in 1947? You would have been old enough to know what was going on and certainly not all that long ago. What was the class of 1947 up to?

H: It was great. Well, 1947 was a pretty good year. World War II was over and we had entered a period of affluence. There was still money available. We had not hit the post war recession that many people feared. There were still jobs available. I know I had a job for the post office, still got eight hours a day in while I was going to school, four hours before and four hours after. Twelve hours Saturday. Four Sunday. Plenty of money, cars were becoming available. You could now purchase them. You know the wartime prohibition on the manufacturing of automobiles was gone. You could buy cars. Had a tremendous social life. A lot of exservicemen in school at the time.

M: Finishing up?

H: Finishing up, yes. They had come back and decided that, "I do want to finish. I got a GI Bill, I can go to college now." You know, kids who may have quit with no hopes of college went to the service, matured, found out, "There is someplace I can go from here and the government is going to pay for it. I'll finish high school and go to college." So, we had a lot of ex-GIs in here.

We were a very closely knit class. We still have reunions every five years. I think we are probably the only graduating class from Salem that does that. We spend about three years in planning and the planning sessions are fantastic. We have them down at the Saxon

Club or at the Slovak Club or something like that.

M: What kind of turn out do you get for . . .

H: For class reunion? We will turn out over half the class. That is on a regular basis. We have them come in from California and from all points for these class reunions.

M: You had how many approximately?

H: We had approximately 185 in our graduating class. It was one of the larger ones for this building. Now, of course, they are much larger out of Senior High.

M: So, you had an active social life. What was available to students at that time? Even though cars were becoming more available you certainly didn't have cars in the sense that students do today.

H: No, they were not as prevalent but at least we were ahead of the kids who graduated, say, in 1945; during the period of rationing, you know, when they couldn't go any place. We did have a real nice youth center which was . . . Covered half the second floor and the whole third floor of the Arbaugh Building down where Kelley Corner is now. It had pool tables, ping-pong tables, and then the third floor was a dance floor with a bandstand. We had band come in after football games. This was in the old days of dance when you got to hold the girl.

M: Was this school affiliated?

H: No, that was sponsored by the Jaycee's. At that time the Jaycee's and I think Kiwanis. Probably Kiwanis and Rotary kicked some money in to keep it operating. This started when I was a freshman in high school. The kids got together and we went in and painted the building, sanded down the floors, varnished the dance floors, carried the equipment in, set it up, and we ran a coke bar--you know, the soft drinks. We ran everything but there was always one advisor from the Jaycee's present at all times. We had membership cards and there were strict rules. Much stricter than you encounter now. That is there wasn't an in and out deal. You didn't go out to a car and drink and then come in bombed. If you went out, you were out, that was it. You didn't come back up. If you came up, you know, out of your mind, you didn't get in. They just reared you right back out the door. So, we didn't run into the hassles, the problems that you get in dances. We didn't have the fights. We didn't have the destruction of property. I think this is the biggest difference between my generation and the current one. Now they get kicks from

destroying things. We got out kicks from building them, keeping them nice.

M: This wasn't school affiliated but it was limited to our school?

H: It was strictly Salem high school students and guests.

M: Along with that any other similar types of facilities?

H: No, I'm out of similar types of facilities but of course the school itself sponsored the freshman, sophomore party. They sponsored the junior, senior party. There was naturally the prom. There was an association dance and party. I remember the association. Everybody who bought association tickets got into the games free. They are not free, but you paid for them, and you got the yearbook. Then you had dances, you know, social activities. Various high school clubs would sponsor dances. It would be held either at the high school or at the youth center. The clubs worked together, boys and girls worked together to run concession stands, basketball, and football games. Everything was a social activities. We got together a lot more.

M: You mentioned social clubs, those have been outlawed.

H: They were very common.

M: What clubs were in operation in, well say, your years of high school in the 1940's

H: The Cavaliers were the largest and the most active club when I was in school. The Dukes, I suppose, would have been second largest and most active. There were the Panthers, the Monks, and for the girls the Sub-Debs far and away were the club to be in. In fact I think this was probably the only girl's club with enough size that I remember them anyway.

M: That was called what?

H: Sub-Debs.

M: Sub-Debs. S-U-B . . .

H: Hyphen D-E-B-S.

M: D-E-B-S. Were you in any of those? Not the Sub-Debs, I know you weren't with them.

H: I dated a Sub-Debs all the time.

M: Were you in any of the male social clubs?

H: No, I was not.

M: Do you have reason for that you care to mention?

H: Well, there were several reasons. I wasn't quite sold on club activities as such and work interferred. I couldn't see it. The same reasons I didn't pledge a fraternity until my sophomore year in college. Then I found it was more of a necessity than anything else. I just wasn't too big on clubs, and there were a bunch of us who ran around together all the time without the formality of calling it a club. We just hung out all the time together. We would go this place, that place, or another place.

M: This place, that place . . .

H: State theater, the Grand theater. Up to the Palace in Youngstown, they still had stage shows on. Not really vaudeville but, you know, you would have the big bands would come in. The Elm's ballroom in Youngstown, you would have big bands come in. Idora Park, you would have big bands coming in, and stage shows. Radio, of course, was the big thing. If you would get a Jack Benney or a Bob Hope coming into the area, something like this, this was a big deal. I suppose I would say I was a member of a club but we never bothered to get jackets.

M: Formalize?

H: Yes

M: What was there to do locally in the group that you would have run over to Youngstown with, five or six guys to Idora Park and so forth? What was available to you aside from the youth center down here?

H: Well, other than the youth center we had basketball. City series basketball was a league. It was divided into A and B. A lot of us played . . . I played basketball for the "Corner" instead of high school ball. We had this for an athletic outlet. Other than that the theaters of course. We had two theaters running constantly and still changing movies two and three times a week at that time. Good movies were available. Dating was always big. Athletics were big. We could turn out eighty kids for football, where now I guess they are hustling to get twenty some. Of course, there was a heck of a lot of work to do at home, kids today don't have.

M: What about places just to go sit down and have a coke?

H: Yes, the "Corner" was the big thing. That was the

hangout when the Kaley sisters ran it. We would spend . . . You know, you would take your date up there after school or work and we would stay until they kicked us out. They would kick you out for the supper hour because they didn't want a bunch of kids taking up a booth. They made their money not from selling us a coke for two hours but from people coming in for dinner. So, they would root out of there about 5:00 and then 7:30 it was open for kids again until about 9:00, 10:00. Someplace in there, I don't remember exactly. That is where everybody met, everybody congregated. We had open lunch at school too and everybody congregated on that stone wall across the street. That is where we would have our smokes and so on and so forth. Or stop up at Ed Sheen's and play the slot machines which he had in there.

M: The good old days! You mentioned the Kaley sisters. Now, did they ever have any trouble that they couldn't handle with high school kids.

H: No, never a bit. These were two women. At that time Nora wasn't there, it was Helen and Kate. Just Helen and Kate and if they told you to leave, you left. That was it. This was pre-hassle days. There was no mouth. I remember when they put the "new" furniture in the booths. One girl carved her name on it promptly the first day. So, they banned her for a year. They said, "Hey, you don't come in for a year." And for a year she did not enter that store.

M: You don't remember who that was?

H: Yes, I remember who it was but maybe I better not say the name. We just didn't talk back to adults. I remember going to a football game once with Don Shoop and he had a blackjack in his pocket. He yelled a lot and the guy in front of him, an adult in front of him, got mad and told him to sit down and shut up and he sat down and shut up. Now, a kid go in with a blackjack in his pocket is going to use it.

M: This was done a lot?

H: Yes. The guy who told us to sit down and shut up was half his size but he was an adult. So, he sat down and shut up. Different generation.

M: So, you graduated in 1947 and from there what happened?

H: Then I went to Bowling Green for four years. Graduated from there in 1951. In August of 1951 I went into premed, changed to prelaw and then I had to finish up education requirements when I . . . You know, my senior year. So I graduated in August 10, 1951 and August 28

I was in the Army. Spent two years in the Army, came out, started teaching McKinley as I related earlier. Then went back to Kent and worked on various programs.

M: Now, of course, you are here at the junior high. In the years that you have taught, you have been the elementary, and junior high, and you said high school.

H: Yes, I had you as a freshman.

M: I wondered what, again, do you see in a way of a change in the school system? Things you have mentioned a lot with the graduate kids and so forth, but on the other side of the desk. Have you seen any change in the teaching, the teachers, and that particular aspect?

H: The only thing I think I can say in that respect Jim . . . The only teacher I see in the course of a day is me. I know, at least I hope, that I have changed to fit the times. 1940 methods are no longer good in 1975. We have a more aware group of kids. We have a group that we have to approach differently. We can not be quite as autocratic as we were then. Although I never was, I don't think in that category. At least I tried not to be. We have to go along with the kids a little more now than we used to. On the other hand we have a whole lot more to work with now, like your Audio-Visual department. When we saw a movie . . . Good heavens when I was in school, I don't know, it was a big deal. They put it on the school calendar, "movie." Everybody went to see it and that was it.

M: I remember that.

H: We have so much more equipment now to work with. So many more resources available through curriculum office. It is whole new ball game.

M: You mentioned that we have . . . If I state you correctly, you have to cater to kids more. What really do you mean by that specifically?

H: I mean we have to realize, and you are younger than I so maybe you don't have to, but my teaching began with your generation really and going into this one . . . I can not teach this generation of kids the same way that I did you. Because, let's face it, your class was much more naive than these kids are today. There is a lot of, at least, pseudosophistication. Which we have to go along with. I have to recognize this otherwise they are going to turn me off right away. It is a lot of playing by ear. You watch expressions. You watch the response of the kids. If you are making it clear you keep on that line. If not then you better be able to shift in midstream. You have to change . . . That is

what they are doing. We can't do, like a history teacher I had and I'm sure you had in high school too, put your head down, your chin on your hand, and sit there and mumble all the way through the course. You know who I am talking about. You can't do that because you lose your class. They are not oriented to accept the teacher as an authority figure. Yet your generation and mine would accept this teacher up there simply because he was there.

M: That was all that was necessary.

H: Yes, that was it but it is no longer. Now you have to sell it to the kids.

M: You noticed that change in just a change over of one generation to the next.

H: Yes. It has been a gradual progressive thing, step by step. This year's class is different than last year's class and I think we have to keep this in mind too. They are not just kids. They are individuals who have been brought into a collective group. We have to try to hit them that way. Each succeeding generation is getting a little bit different. Makes it kind of neat really, tough but neat. What I am trying to say is it was a heck of a lot easier teaching when I started than it is now but not nearly as much fun.

M: Easier but not much fun?

H: Right.

M: Easier even without all the new equipment?

H: Sure. All you did was say, "Read these pages," and tomorrow you talked about those pages. The next day you said, "Read these." You went through that routine. That is the easiest way in the world to teach, but it is not a good way I don't think. At least not now. Apparently it wasn't too bad because this generation that went through that hasn't turned out badly.

M: Just a different approach?

H: Right, it has to be a different approach.

M: Again you have taught elementary, and junior high, and high school. Do you find that this area right now of eighth grade students, roughly fourteen years old, is that what you would prefer to do?

H: Yes, I like junior high. Now there are advantages in all the areas. I would not be too adamant to go wherever I was assigned. If I had my choice I would stay

here. If somebody said tomorrow, "I want you to go to the senior high," or "go back to the grades." I would do either one without fighting the problem too much. In grades you don't have the boredom factor, and you don't have the fatigue factor, because here I essentially repeat the material six times, or five times during the day. With the elementary, well, it called for more preparation with ten different subjects. You got the variety of ten different subjects during the course of the day. In high school you can go much more deeply into the question, you can get more response from the student, more feed from them. This is the big thing now too. Kids will respond where in my generation you did not voice . . . One did not voice his own opinion too much. You spouted back what was in the text and that was it, pretty much kept your opinion out of it. Now, we actually search for opinion. Of course, you can get more opinion from a high school student because he has had more experience.

M: Been around longer. The other thing too with elementary, you had the same students for a longer period of time; thirty or thirty-five or whatever it was. Well, here you have the 160, 170 factor.

H: But that was kind of nice. It got to be almost like a family. You never get tired of your own kids and after you have been in with them a while you never really got tired of having the same bunch with you all the time. Even though they may not have always been the nicest, most pleasant bunch you would choose. After you got used to each other, then developed some rapport, and you liked the kids. If you didn't you were dead.

M: In the last few years you have had any number of student teachers. I'm curious, have you detected any particular difference in teachers as you see, and observe, and understand teachers to be, of your generation and the ones in the school right now and the new generation of teachers coming out colleges?

H: With just a couple of exceptions I think that the kids coming out of the colleges now are not as prepared in subject matter. They are not as knowledgeable as I would want them to be. Now, I have had two notable exceptions to that. One most notable. Generally speaking I have been getting history teachers who know little history. Which makes it rough to try to tell somebody else what it is all about. Because in a give and take classroom situation where you ask the kid, "What does lead to?" The kid comes up with some viewpoint and wonders why is this happening. If you don't know what happened, you don't answer the question. I have been running into some of the later student teachers with a lot of blank space in there, no answers.

They just simply did not know their subject matter. I think maybe that they are emphasizing, at least at Kent, to much in methods and not enough in content.

M: The reason I asked that question is do you think there is anything within the school system itself . . . I hear a lot of positive and negative comments; mostly, as you mentioned earlier, the complaints. Do you think there is anything within the Salem school system itself that we could do to improve our student teaching program, student teaching system? Did you ever have any in the grade schools?

H: No, I never did.

M: Just in this building?

H: Right, I have only had them in this building. I guess I have had about a dozen now. I don't know Jim because here--I'm saying this sincerely--I think the principal has gone along with the teacher rather than the university. Which had created some problems, as you recall. Last year they said that we would have no more student teachers from Kent because we were not cooperative with them. They wanted the student teachers spread among several teachers on the staff. Which really didn't give the student any feeling of taking over, he had no sense of responsibility. He would be with me a period or two, with Ada a period or two, and maybe with you a period or two, whatever it might be. Therefore, he really had no place to be at home. He did not have his homeroom, he did not have his classes or her classes. Like we refer to "my" kids. They just didn't have them. They didn't develop a lot of responsibility. So, we simply have not done that. We followed the old device of keeping a student teacher with a teacher and I give Sam credit for this. I am sincere when I say credit. He has bucked the university and we have done this. I think this has been better for the student. I really don't know what else we could do. I can think of some things that the colleges might do but I guess that is off the subject that we are on now.

M: The other thing too is the Salem School System is quite active. Even in the ten years that I have been here I have seen a tremendous number of student teachers come through. I had three and I am just wondering if we are really doing the best job with them that we could. Do you feel that we give them a pretty good run for their money?

H: I honestly think that we do here. I think that we do. In fact maybe some of them we give more than a run for their money. I wish that the university had some way that they could screen kids who were not cut out to be

teachers. You know, that they would have some opportunity before the final quarter of their senior year to find this out. We get some deadwood and I really don't . . . You have experienced it I know with one and I know I have with a couple who had no business being in a classroom, let's face it. One of them I even told and she quit the second day.

M: The second day?

H: Second day.

M: It didn't take any longer than that?

H: That is right. Her name was Theresa, I said, "Theresa I think" . . . No, she said, "I don't know that I want to be a teacher. I don't know whether I should be a teacher." I said, "Theresa, I don't think you should."

M: Full backing from the administration?

H: Yes, that was it.

M: What procedure did you have to take to get rid of her?

H: I simply told the Kent supervisor her feeling and my feeling. He had observed her the first day that she was in there. She had no interest, she didn't like kids, she was afraid of kids, she did not like history. Why she majored in it I don't know. It was a case that she simply . . . That was when Ada and I were splitting her. Ada had the same feeling, she said, "This girl is terrible." She gave us no promise that she would get better because she frankly told us she didn't want to teach. She didn't like it. She didn't like kids, she hated being with kids.

M: Well, the supervisor and I decided that we are going to ask her to forget about it. Did you have to then go to Sam?

H: I just told Sam what had happened. He said, "Okay, you see what she is like."

M: It didn't go beyond that didn't have to go through a superintended or any other?

H: No, as far as I know. Unless Sam went to the superintendent it never touched the superintendent at all. The Kent supervisor said, "I agree with you." The girl said, "I agree with you."

M: Have you talked to other teachers in the school system that have had student teachers?

- H: No, not much.
- M: Strictly in the junior high.
- H: Maybe that would be a good idea, mention what we could do. You know, at first they started an advisory committee. Maybe instead of departmental meetings they should have meeting with the teachers who have student teachers and we could see what problems are common to all and come up with a solution at least. I don't know, this would be one thing that Sam could do. So, I would know what you are doing with your student teacher and you would know what I am doing with mine. We would know what John Doe was doing at Senior high with his student teacher.
- M: Well, we have covered a lot of areas. Everything from your father's background in the schools and your coming up through the grades and eventually your taking over in a teaching position. I would like to finish up with just a couple of questions and this is really for a personal nature. If you had it all to do again do you think that you would be willing to go through the same schools operation and wind up as Mr. Frank Hoopes, in such and such a room, on the third floor of the junior high school? Has it been rewarding enough that you think you wouldn't mind going that way again?
- H: That is a tough question to answer because you are asking me to think back on the experiences that I have had. I do not regret being a teacher. I like what I am doing now and I will stick with it. I honestly think that if I were a twenty-one year old senior in college on October 8, 1975 that I would not go into teaching. I can't make this statement because I began in September of 1953. I have accepted these changes and I have had them thrown at me one step at a time. I could absorb and assimilate what was happening. I do not think that I could step in . . . Maybe into a junior high or an elementary school classroom. Now, I do not think that, "Boy I went into the senior high with three years experience behind me and I got along okay." I do not think that I could step into the senior high as a beginning teacher in 1975, and at least not stay in education very long.
- M: You say you haven't regretted it. So, based on that to finish up, what do you find to be the most rewarding thing in your experience in the Salem Schools?
- H: I think the most rewarding thing that I can see is how the kids turn out once they are out of school. Kids that we didn't have much hope for maybe become very worthwhile citizens. Kids that you had high hopes for realize those hopes. At least knowing you had some-

thing to do with that, certainly not the whole thing. I read in the paper so-and-so did something. I say, "Gee I remember I had that kid," you know, in good or bad. This I think is the most rewarding thing about it.

M: Contact with the people, with the kids?

H: Right, and it is always nice when you see somebody downtown and they say, "Hey, do you remember me, I'm so-and-so? You had me in school back . . ." Well, sometimes I remember the name, sometimes I don't. In twenty years with 150 kids a year it makes a lot of names to try to attach to faces when you see them. Then they begin to recount. At least the kid knew he was there. He had some fun and since he is making it he must have learned something. This I think is nice. Maybe it is the same feeling that a craftsman would have if he looked at a piece of furniture that he had made, "I made this." Or a carpenter, "I built that house." Something like this.

M: With that in mind do you have any final comments, any thing you would care to touch on that perhaps I haven't mentioned regarding the history of schools, your part in them? You had a rich experience through your father and through your own upbringing and, of course, now through your own professional standing in the school system. Do you have any final comments?

H: I can't really think of anything Jim, except that I have enjoyed these twenty years and I hope I can continue working because I like being with them. We don't see the changes that a townsman sees. How can you spend time with kids like they are today? Well, when you have spent time and they have gradually changed then they don't seem so odd. No, I can't think of anything.

M: Okay, well I want to thank you publicly and again indicate how important it is to get ahold of people. Also indicate that thank you is hardly enough for the time you spent with me.

H: Well, I enjoyed doing it.

END OF INTERVIEW