

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of Salem Schools Project.

Teaching Experience

O. H. 314

FRANK TARR

Interviewed

by

James McNeal

on

February 12, 1976

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: FRANK TARR

INTERVIEWER: James McNeal

SUBJECT: Teaching experience, Superintendents, Retirement

DATE: February 12, 1976

M: This is an interview with Mr. & Mrs. Frank Tarr for the Youngstown State University History of Salem Schools Project at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Tarr, 951 Summit Street, on February 12, 1976, at 3:30 p.m.

First I would like to ask both of you how you first became interested in education.

Mrs. T: From the time I was in high school, I wanted to be a Latin teacher. That was the only thing that I was really interested in. I think I was probably influenced by the teacher that I had, and the fact I had two aunts who were teachers as well. I earned a fine living and I was interested in it. I like Latin, and I was interested in trying to get other people to like it too.

Mr. T: I think I just drifted into it. I had nine sisters who were teachers, and a brother, and my mother and father both taught. After graduating from college I started at medical school at Ohio State. I didn't have the finances to really finish. I left Ohio State and went to Kent and got enough educational credits to teach.

M: Back to you Mrs. Tarr, after you made the decision that you were interested, based on members of the family that were in teaching and so forth, where did you go from there after graduating from high school?

Mrs. T: You mean to what university?

- M: Yes, to college and so forth.
- Mrs. T: The University of Akron. I lived in Akron and, of course, it was during the Depression so I lived at home and went there. It was a municipal university at that time. Fees were rather low compared to other schools.
- M: What all was involved into your training there and approximately when was that?
- Mrs. T: From 1933 to 1937 I was in arts college and had an arts degree, and then I went an extra semester to get the teacher's credits.
- M: You, Mr. Tarr, you say you went to Ohio State. That was . . .
- Mr. T: After graduating from Bethany College. Then I went back in 1934 to Ohio State and studied administration. In 1938 I went down to spend the summer at Ohio State, and then in 1941 I spent a summer at Kent State. Most of those courses were philosophy, psychology, and school administration.
- M: Generally then, you both came into education through an influence by way of the family as much as any other single item. Nine sisters in one case and two aunts in the other. Now how did you become interested in Salem, or let's say aware of the positions in Salem, Mrs. Tarr?
- Mrs. T: I think we chose Salem because it was halfway between Akron and Toronto, Ohio, where our families lived, my family in Akron and Frank's in Toronto. We had driven through here many times on our way to Toronto and liked the looks of the town. We thought it would be a nice place to live.
- M: You already knew each other then?
- Mr. T: Yes.
- M: You say, "We decided we would like to teach at Salem," How did you go about securing a job? Did you know there were openings? Did somebody come after you, or how was it?
- Mrs. T: This was in 1944 when we came to Salem. The situation where we were in Madison was not too stable at the time so we decided to make a change. You had put in several applications hadn't you, five or six? [To Mr. Tarr] I think we just decided we would like to be in Salem and we came here. Frank started to teach here in 1944, and

I taught in Fairfield that first year. Then I came in 1945.

M: You came from Madison having taught there. Did you know any faculty or any staff members or administrative personnel, or anybody connected with the school system other than the fact that you knew of Salem because it was close to both families? Did you know anyone else otherwise?

Mrs. T: No.

M: You more or less came in the school system cold?

Mrs. T: That's right.

M: The superintendent at that time was . . .

Mrs. T: Mr. Kerr.

M: Every tape that I've done so far, and in other conversations that aren't taped, the name E. S. Kerr comes up. I don't want to pass him up at this particular time. I'd like to have some of your thoughts, perhaps even some feelings or any knowledge you have of that gentleman since he played such a part in the Salem school system. It seems as though everybody has comments one way or the other about him.

Mrs. T: I think he was a good administrator. He seemed to keep harmony in the system and among the teachers. I think he was very interested in the welfare of the teachers as well as in education. I remember particularly one thing he used to tell us. He said, "Take the pupil at the point you found him and teach from there."

M: Mr. Tarr?

Mr. T: That, I remember, had been a good philosophy about starting where they are. Of the four administrators that I worked for he was the greatest. As Beryl [Mrs. Tarr] said, he was interested in the welfare of the student, and he was really interested in education. You got the feeling that that was the most important thing that there was, your teaching. He told me one thing that I'll never forget about lecture method. He said, "Wherever possible get things that students can see." In other words, he wanted you to use a lecture and demonstration. In science, naturally, this would come up. He was a great advocate of that particular method of teaching.

M: In all the interviews I've done, as I say you can see by the list of administrators and teachers and just about everybody across the board except former board members, they seem to be a little reluctant to express opinions freely for some reason or other. But regardless of whether some people had a personal bone to pick with the man, it seems as though the impression was always left to seem universal based on what you said, that there was a high respect for him. I knew of him, but of course, never had any real adult contact.

Mrs. T: I think most teachers were very satisfied here. There seemed to be a small turnover each year. I think in the high school I believe he had a policy of hiring only experienced teachers.

Mr. T: He was an administrator that had a lot of experience teaching. I think that's why he understood the problems that the teachers had. He had his experience firsthand. He was the fellow that taught. I don't know how long he taught, but I know he had former experience in Canton as an administrator, and before that he taught in some small systems.

M: He had a lot of practical experience in strictly administration, nothing else?

Mr. T: Yes.

M: Different teachers, particularly, have indicated that they saw a lot of him. They would look up and he would be in the classroom, or if the clocks needed adjusting in the various elementary buildings, he would take care of that. If the piano had to be moved at Prospect from the stage down to the gym floor, he wanted to be there when it was done. I think some people might get the impression that he was sort of a dictator. He had to have his finger on everything, but even if that's the case, teachers seemed to have respected that.

Mr. T: This is something he told me at the interview. I remember something he said. He said, "If we don't tell you anything, or if you don't see us, you assume that you're getting along okay. Don't expect a lot of supervision, a lot of visiting in classes, and so forth."

M: Did you both go through an interview with him?

Mrs. T: Not at the same time.

M: You mentioned you began in 1945. Even though there was a year difference, did you actually have to go in and sit down and chat with him?

Mr. T: I can explain that.

M: Okay.

Mr. T: I came, and at that time in Salem two married people couldn't teach in the same system. There was a general trend and he followed it, that's why Beryl didn't even ask the year that I got a job.

M: In 1944?

Mr. T: 1944. Then he contacted me when he found out that Beryl was teaching in Fairfield, and he asked her to come in for an interview. That's the way she had to do it. There was a general trend, two people, husband and wife, were not supposed to be in the same school system. The Depression wasn't over; it was still rather deep. There was a feeling. I don't know if you were allowed to do that or not.

M: This was unwritten policy?

Mr. T: Yes, it was an unwritten law.

M: In 1945 the two of you were in the same school system?

Mr. T: Yes.

M: That, of course, would be at the school that I'm at now, the junior high along North Lincoln.

Mr. T: Yes. At that time it was the high school.

M: Do you have any recollections? Of course, you came into the school system with prior teaching experience; a lot of the people I've interviewed came to Salem first. I still ask the question, do you have any recollections of the first year or so in the Salem school system?

Mr. T: I don't know if this belongs here or not, but I had an interview with Mr. Kerr, and then he sent me to interview one citizen of the community, Cliff Callahan. I talked with Cliff and we got along really well. I liked it and I came back and signed up. Then I went up and took a look at the laboratory, and I decided that I didn't want to be there.

M: This would be room 305?

Mr. T: Yes. I had a much better laboratory in the little place that I had come from. It was two rooms and a 3 x 5 cubbyhole built above it for storing chemicals. I don't know how I changed my mind again, but a couple of students that were going to be in chemistry the next year helped me. We couldn't change the physical characteristics of anything, but they helped us with the stock room and the little stock rooms and so forth.

M: At that time was 305 and 304 all one, big room?

Mr. T: No. There were two 24 x 28 classrooms. That's all there was.

M: There was a connection between the two?

Mr. T: Yes, there was a door between the two, and there was a demonstration desk in 305 and the laboratory tables in 304. It wasn't planned as a laboratory at all, it was just two classrooms.

M: It looks the same to me as it did then. I want to come back to it with regard to chemistry. I have a lot of questions here about several topics, but with regard to your teaching when you came into Salem, did you teach Latin only the first year?

Mrs. T: I didn't teach Latin until we went to the new building.

M: Really? What were you involved with?

Mrs. T: When I started, I taught English II, sophomore English, and dramatics. They had a class in dramatics there. I think I had that for two years and I think Irene Weeks took it over from there.

M: Teaching?

Mrs. T: Yes. I hadn't had too much experience in dramatics. I taught from the textbook. Edith Cope and I, together, directed the plays. I was rather relieved when Irene Weeks took over the dramatics part.

M: You had dramatics for two years?

Mrs. T: I think it was two years.

M: What all was involved in that? How did you go about selecting students or plays and rehearsal time and all that? Do you recall?

Mrs. T: I don't recall too much about it. Most of the time we had rehearsal after school. The dress rehearsal was towards the end of the evening. We chose the play together, I guess, the two advisors. We had tryouts.

M: You didn't select students based on knowledge, classroom ability, and speaking and so forth. You had tryouts that anybody could get in?

Mrs. T: Anybody could try out.

M: I have tickets at home for "The Wizard of Oz" which was in 1950, a little later than you were involved in it. Do you happen to remember what you worked on in 1945 and 1946?

Mrs. T: No, I really don't.

M: How did it come about that Irene Weeks took over this operation?

Mrs. T: I think she must have wanted to do it. I think they probably needed me more for English.

M: You didn't teach Latin then until you went to the new high school in 1958?

Mrs. T: 1958.

M: 1958, 1959 was the year I went up there. Everybody, I guess, was a sophomore. There were no freshmen there at that time.

Mrs. T: No.

M: Mr. Tarr, in your chemistry room in 305, if you can call it that, the chemistry lab, you would have worked then with Mr. Jones, correct, in physics in the other room at that time?

Mr. T: No, I believe he was in 306. It went 304, 305, 306. He had the physics lab in the corner room.

M: Do you remember anything at all about your first encounters with Herb Jones? He was another, I guess you could use the word, legend in the Salem school district.

Mr. T: He was really a great guy. He was my kind of person, really, because he was just as sharp as he could be. I knew that he was a terrific teacher, and there was no sham to him at all. He was just Herb Jones--that's all



he was. He helped me a lot, really, becoming adjusted. It seemed like I'd known him a long time. We were both interested in physical science. I don't remember the exact circumstances, but I think he took some overflow of students and I think maybe he taught at about the same time. There was sort of an overlapping. I followed a man by the name of Dody, from Wooster, who had taught chemistry the year before I did. I think that is spelled D-O-D-Y. He was there only one year, but Herb had had chemistry before. Herb was really an intellectual, he really was. You had to be pretty careful that you didn't make mistakes when you were talking to him because he would call you; you would know.

M: I had him for physics my senior year, 1961, and I never had anything but the total impression that the man thoroughly enjoyed teaching. Yet, in later years, even up until shortly before he died, I would see him uptown walking through the alley by the church where he lived. He never seemed to have too much nice to say about education. He tried to tell me to stay away from it. Don't major in education or don't get involved in it. What do you propose accounted for that? Was he that way when you knew him?

Mr. T: No. I think that his health had a lot to do with it. He was there after I left, I think.

M: I'm not too sure.

Mr. T: I think he was. He was in reasonably good health all the time I knew him. I think that attitude could definitely be attributed to his health.

M: It might have declined regardless of where he lived or what he had done.

Mr. T: Yes. But he wasn't cynical at all about education. I know he enjoyed it as much as I did.

Mrs. T: Didn't he used to bet milkshakes?

M: Milkshakes, anything you wanted to bet if he figured that he had you. Nobody very often beat him at it either.

Mr. T: I can say this, I think I missed him more, that is, after he was gone than practically anybody that I know. If I had something that I couldn't see through, like the book on plants that I told you about, whether it was fact or fiction, I could talk with him awhile and he would . . . I remember when I got that book.

M: He was a good source for validating things for you.

Mr. T: Yes.

M: Let me ask another question now. You would have been in the current junior high then from 1944, 1945, either of you, up through 1958 when you went to the new high school. We're talking about a period of about fourteen or fifteen years. What was the transition like to the new high school? Of course, it was a brand new building, but even so, what were some of your thoughts and feelings at the time about the brand new high school and the shift?

Mrs. T: It was nice to be in a really clean place. Of course, it was different for me because I finally had a chance to teach Latin again, which I had missed for many years. I think the classes were so enjoyable too because the students all respected the new building and you could tell for two or three years that they enjoyed being there. They really seemed different in attitude.

M: Are there any comments that you remember are outstanding about teachers? Sometimes the newness of having to change can make people a little uneasy and so forth. Was there any of that at all? Did all the teachers and staff in general seem to be looking forward to moving up here? Any reluctance ever at all?

Mr. T: No. I don't think anybody would want to go back down there.

M: How did a gentleman like yourself feel about the facilities at the senior high? What effects did that have on you?

Mr. T: It was really great. We had a great number of meetings when they were planning it. It was a lot easier teaching because of the way we could handle equipment and keep it looking a little better. It was a lot easier then to keep things put away. Beryl won't think that that sounds like me, but in the laboratory when I work everything is alphabetized. It gave me more time for teaching, that's all.

M: You say you had a lot of previous meetings. Helen Thorp indicated that she had a lot to say and so did the other women with regard to the library--where a door would be, where a room would be, and so forth. If you have that kind . . .

Mrs. T: Yes, we all were asked to help plan our rooms or our departments, things that we would like in them.

- Mr. T: It was a couple of years that we had long after school . . .
- Mrs. T: Didn't you go to different schools and visit some of the labs, and then you sort of designed your own?
- Mr. T: Yes. I designed everything except the shower--that was kind of a surprise to me. The architect stuck a shower there in one corner. I don't know whether it has ever been used or not.
- M: Otherwise though, layouts of tables . . .
- Mr. T: Herb and I both wanted fume hoods in the median center, but we couldn't get them. I guess it was too much. It was too expensive, for student work, to have the fumes taken away right there. The lab is planned around the outside edge. If a student made a mistake, it was a safety measure to have it in a U instead of having tables in the middle. The place where you work is either facing a wall or a window. Then you can't damage the youngster across from you by explosion. It cuts down the chance of having accidents.
- M: About how much of that room is a crude percentage based on recommendations you made? Fifty percent of it, or most of it?
- Mr. T: Ninety percent.
- M: Really?
- Mr. T: Yes.
- M: They did take the teacher's experience and desires into account?
- Mr. T: Definitely.
- M: That's nice to know. There have been so many alterations. The reason I'm concerned now is because every room has been altered, the windows removed, the doors removed, or partitions put in and that sort of thing. Only the science wing is pretty much the same. But the alterations in the other areas have kind of destroyed, somewhat, the thinking that went in to the building for 1959. Of course, things have changed. Maybe they fit better now anyway.
- Mrs. Tarr, you mentioned that you took the job at the high school with the understanding that dramatics was part of it. How did it come to pass that you picked up the Latin classes at the high school in 1958?

Mrs. T: When we went to the new building it was just a three-year high school. The first year of Latin was still in the old building. Helen Redinger, who was teaching Latin, stayed there and I started then with the second year Latin. We had just two years. I taught second year Latin in the new building. After they moved the freshmen to the new building, about two or three years later, I had all of Latin, first and second year.

M: It had to have been after 1961 because there weren't any freshmen there until after I graduated. It was probably about three years.

Mr. T: You asked a while ago about everything else having been changed. It was planned as a three-year high school. Then someone decided that the freshmen should be there. That's what caused all the alterations that you spoke about. Later they were overcrowded and they had to improvise.

M: That would have happened while I was in college. There were still three years after I graduated in 1961. I still don't know for sure why that change took place. Was it a fact that they felt four years at the high school wasn't as crowded as three years jammed into the old junior high? That's probably it. At any rate, the freshmen went to the senior high sometime in the early 1960's. It was a four-year high school and the junior high housed seventh and eighth. It has been that way ever since.

Another thing about Latin, I know that after awhile they did away with Latin all together. Is there some story there that you can tell that explains what happened, and why you think it died off? Was it a national thing and Salem just fell in line?

Mrs. T: In 1970 they dropped the Latin. That was why I retired, really. They said the trend in the schools was to do away with Latin, but I never could quite understand that. I think probably many schools didn't have Latin because they couldn't get Latin teachers. I never could understand, as a Latin teacher, why it should be dropped. Of course, the classes were getting smaller. I think one reason for that was because they had done away with Latin in the mass, that's the Catholic mass, because practically all the students that we got from St. Paul's School signed up for Latin. I really don't know other than that. However, I know even in the 1960's that a guidance

counselor at the junior high used to try to discourage the boys and girls from signing up for Latin because he said it was a dead language.

M: Is there any such thing as a dead language?

Mr. T: No, every plant and tree and animal and bird has a Latin name.

M: Aside from Latin, really no language is dead if anybody is able to speak it and read it.

Mrs. T: I know that was told to a girl whose mother made her take it anyhow. She just recently got her Ph.D. in . . .

Mr. T: Something related to biology.

M: That speaks for itself. I took Latin I in room 312 with Miss Redinger. Being basically not very bright, I know I was in your room about two weeks and I'd forgotten more Latin over three months of summer than I should have. Maybe that was quite normal; I don't know. Did you have to struggle with Latin I kids the next year?

Mrs. T: Yes, it was difficult.

M: I would think it would be frustrating.

Mrs. T: To know just what they had had, what they hadn't, what they had missed . . .

M: I thought I had done quite well. We didn't get into actual literature or anything like that, but I know vocabulary expanded tenfold. As a result of Latin I I won't have anybody tell me that it might increase reading skills. Whether I lost a lot of the declensions and all that sort of thing over the summer doesn't matter because I have retained information even now. I bought the old, brown Latin I book. I can still glance through paragraphs and at least get a half reasonable idea.

Mrs. T: It's logical that it could help build a vocabulary. They say about 65 percent of all our words come originally from Latin.

M: Do you have much contact with Miss Redinger? I understand she has now had two strokes. I was trying to get a hold of her for an interview, and I just had to give up on her.

Mrs. T: I didn't know that. I haven't seen her for a long time.

M: Did you work closely with her at all at the other school?

Mrs. T: Not very much except when we would have our meetings. Once a month I think we had a meeting in the language department. All the languages were there.

M: I've mentioned Herb Jones and I can tell your husband, of course, had more experience, personally, with him, the high respect and regard for him. Going back to the mid 1940's when you first came into the school system in that period, say until you moved up to the new high school, are there any other teachers that you particularly admired or that you especially respected, or felt that there was that general feeling towards them?

Mrs. T: I think Ethel Beardmore helped me a lot when I first came. Mildred Hollett, whose homeroom was right next to mine at that time, and Helen Thorp and I worked together in sophomore English for many years. I think those would be the main ones.

M: You can recall Beardmore and Hollett and Miss Thorp. Frank, do you have any names to add to that besides Herb Jones?

Mr. T: Oh yes! There were lots of them in that area. There was John Olloman, who came back from the service. He was a terrific biology teacher. Ella Thea Cox, whose book I think is still standard in the state of California, and Miss McCready in math. I knew from hearing kids talk in laboratory while they were working; I had a pretty good slant.

M: You had the place bugged? (laughter)

Mr. T: Yes. There was Mr. Allen, who taught general science. Alton Allen, he was a terrific guy. You're talking about the teaching, that is, the classroom teachers?

M: Right.

Mrs. T: I'd like to mention Lois Lehman, who was the librarian. She was very helpful and she really had a nice library.

M: I can't get off the subject of Ella Thea Cox since you brought the name up. I had a delightful hour and ten minutes interview with Mrs. Cope, who is extremely close to her. She mentioned the story of how the lady had such extensive notes and so forth. One day a book publishing agent was in the office and happened to see all of her notes printed up, and he thought it would make a good biology text. It was really a coincidental

thing too, because companies were looking for them at that time.

Did either one of you know her otherwise, just other than the fact that she was in the building and taught biology? Did you know her personally at all or anything about her at the time?

Mr. T: I didn't know, outside of school, no.

Mrs. T: I didn't know her either.

M: I understand her mother was the one that they used for the profile of the Quaker lady.

Mrs. T: I heard that.

M: I learned a lot of little inside things about Ella Thea. Maybe Doris would be better equipped because she worked closely with her.

Mr. T: Didn't she teach biology too?

M: Yes. Home ec., science, and biology here all along one wall on the south side of the basement.

Mr. T: Sure. When you mention that part of the building, Mrs. Strain's rooms down there were so tastefully decorated, the home economics part of it. The kids liked her a lot. I heard she's rather strict, but by the appearance of the room when you went in, you got a good feeling that this is proper and this is what it should be.

M: When I talked to you on the phone, this would be primarily directed at you Frank, you mentioned your association with the Track Club and also the Key Club. I would like to touch on both of those for a minute. You mentioned having talked with Joe Kelly. Was there any association there between Joe Kelly, yourself, and the introduction to sports, or was it strictly on your own?

Mr. T: When I came, Ben was the head football coach and Joe was his assistant. Then I helped out in football and became another assistant. There were three of us that would come out. Then a businessman, Tim Hoppes, used to do the scouting and I used to help. That was the staff at that particular time in football.

Mrs. T: Was that Tim Hoppes or Dutch?

Mr. T: It was both of them, both Tim and Dutch.

M: Tim?

Mr. T: Tim and Dutch. Dutch would come out after school, but Tim helped only with the scouting.

M: You mentioned that in addition to football you got involved in track. How did that come about?

Mr. T: Mr. Cope was coaching track for several years after we came, and then a fellow by the name of Troy Penner came. I'm not sure whether Troy Penner was here one or two years.

M: You said Mr. Penner left to go into business.

Mr. T: Yes, he left to go into business and then I started to coach track. I coached for five or six years. After that, I stayed on and I assisted Mr. Newton. I was Mr. Newton's assistant.

M: Was Mr. Newton track coach?

Mr. T: Bing Newton.

Mrs. T: That was just the last year.

Mr. T: Was it?

M: I was going to say, Carl Zellers was in there. Who was after you then?

Mr. T: I think Carl Zellers.

M: Carl Zellers? All right. He was track coach when I was in school, and then Bing picked it up when Zellers went to Kent State.

Mr. T: When I first came in 1944, I had also coached freshmen basketball for five or six years. I was then assistant and took care of the reserve team. Mr. Miller was coaching then. Then I was a freshmen coach one year when Mr. Cabas was here.

M: You must have had an interest in athletics in the first place?

Mr. T: Yes.



- M: You had been a former athlete, can you give me a few comments about that?
- Mr. T: I played football and baseball and competed in track. I managed a basketball team in college, and I was also a trainer.
- Mrs. T: How did he have time to study?
- Mr. T: I had been associated with athletics; I participated in high school.
- M: You're being modest.
- Mr. T: No, I participated in high school. We had pretty good track teams in college. We had one fellow in school when I was there who was third in the decathlon in the nation. He was a tremendous interest to me. He was a fellow by the name of Elliott. I would go sometimes with him on the trips just to compete and get the experience. I competed in the Penn relays and got to the finals one time, which was a big national meet. I got to the finals in the 100, but I didn't place. I always enjoyed athletics. I had the energy to do it.
- M: What about Key Club, since you mentioned that on the phone?
- Mr. T: I think a man by the name of Merrill, who is still here in the insurance business, came to the high school when he needed a sponsor for that organization.
- Mrs. T: From Kiwanis.
- M: Was it Chuck Merrill?
- Mr. T: Yes, Chuck.
- M: When was this now?
- Mr. T: It would be in the annuals.
- Mrs. T: It's in the early 1960's.
- Mr. T: Yes, in the early 1960's. It was in the new building. They needed somebody to sponsor it. They asked me, and I was the first sponsor when it was formed.
- M: What all did that involve as far as your part in it?

- Mr. T: You had to attend the meetings and the projects and act as kind of an advisor on the projects. I think they were the ones that originated the Quaker Sam. I think it was a Key Club project.
- M: I knew it was in existence at the time, and I think somebody asked me about getting in it once but I was kind of a bashful, not-get-involved type anyway. I never did know what the Key Club was all about.
- Mr. T: It's a service organization. Wasn't it Kiwanis that was influential in building the swimming pool?
- M: I think everybody was involved, but they carried the load.
- Mr. T: They carried the load and then the Key Club was for student participation in activities.
- Mrs. T: Like a service club.
- Mr. T: Like a service club.
- M: How many guys did you have in there roughly? Did you get a good turnout?
- Mr. T: Oh yes! It was a good membership. I don't remember the actual number, but it seems to me there would be--of the original group when it first started--twenty or so of the good citizens of the school who wanted to help the school and help their education. It was good for the school.
- M: Beryl, in the high school on Lincoln you had been involved for a couple of years in dramatics. Were you involved in any extracurricular items in the new high school?
- Mrs. T: I was a co-sponsor of Hi-Tri for fifteen years.
- M: That's a long time.
- Mrs. T: First with Claribel Bickel and then with Mrs Milligan.
- M: This was in existence at the time?
- Mrs. T: Yes.
- M: What was involved in that?
- Mrs. T: It was a scholarship-service club. The girls were invited to join on the basis of scholarship. I think they had to have a 3.0 average for four or five semesters.
- M: Was that strictly as upper class?

Mrs. T: Yes. They were juniors when they were asked to join.

M: Would this fall into line much like the Key Club for the boys? Was it service oriented?

Mrs. T: Yes, it was a service club. Mr. Ludwig felt that it shouldn't have been for scholarship, and for two or three years, we discussed this back and forth. He wanted it to be just for service and open to all the girls. At that time they had already started the YWCA, which was open to anyone who wished to be a member. We felt that there was nothing else for scholarship. Mr. Ludwig wouldn't give in, and Claribel and I wouldn't give in, so it just went on that way. But it's still the same, it's still scholarship-service.

M: I see girls with their jackets, still in operation and functioning.

Mrs. T: Oh yes.

M: That's good. Somebody won out over Beman Ludwig. There are not too many people around that can say that. He told me himself that he prided himself on getting people to go his way.

Mrs. T: Yes, he was stubborn.

Mr. T: Can I try to tell you a story about how he paid attention to detail?

M: Yes.

Mr. T: Just an illustration.

M: Sure.

Mr. T: A kid . . .

M: Excuse me, we're talking about Beman Ludwig?

Mr. T: We're talking about Beman Ludwig. A student in junior high school lost a lock which had a number on it that was given to them when they paid. What did they have to pay? I guess it was fifty cents. We'd moved to the senior high school and had been up there about two years, when the lock turned up. The student was now a senior since at least three years or four years had passed. The lock had turned up. Somebody had found it, and it went into the office. The lock was then returned to the student who had originally paid for it and lost his money down there. Beman returned his money.

- M: They had a record of a simple little thing like this?
- Mr. T: They had a record, and he was able to find it. He paid terrific attention to detail.
- M: He prided himself on it. In his interview, I asked him what he felt was his greatest contribution. He said he knew what everybody was up to and so forth at the time, and he kept track of all things.
- Mr. T: That's why he's the best. I said Mr. Kerr was the best superintendent I ever worked under. Mr. Ludwig was the best principal I ever worked under.
- Mrs. T: He used to irritate the teachers quite often.
- M: A good leader has to make enemies, too. I respected him as a student. I know that kids made fun of him because he had a funny laugh.
- Mr. T: This is how it changes: He used to wear ties just like you're wearing, and they didn't like those ties because they were out of style.
- M: I remember one day I went down to the office--I was in a hurry leaving school and, I had to get an excuse in to be off the next day I was absent--a kid was in front of the office in the new high school. I said, "Is Callahan in his office?" The kid didn't hear me, and I asked him again and I said it louder the second time. Just then Mr. Ludwig stepped through. He was on his way someplace and he heard me say is Callahan in his office. He turned around and said, "It's Mr. Callahan, Jim." I didn't even know he knew who I was. He had no reason. I'd never been in his office or anything else. He knew my first name and called me on that and told me from now on it was Mr. Callahan, not just the last name.

Both of you represent a lot of years in teaching, not just in Salem, but having come from other locations. You've brought experience to Salem and increased the experience here. I want to ask you both just two final questions and finish up. During your teaching career in Salem, I'm just interested in 1944 and 1945 until your time of retirement, what would you briefly say were the most noticeable or the most significant changes during your teaching career here in Salem, whether it be staff or administration or students? Is there anything that comes to mind? I know this is a rather general, broad question, but what you would consider significant changes from your perspective over those year, from

the mid-1940's on through? You mentioned you might not be in a position to make a clear statement.

Mr. T: As far as a change in attitude of students, I noticed a change after I had retired for four years and then returned to teach sophomore biology. That was when Mr. Cabas was promoted to assistant principal. I finished the year for him. I had never had much trouble with disciplinary problems, but I had a feeling that a small percentage of the students were actually working at being obnoxious. In other words, they would go out of their way to be obnoxious and to disrupt the class. The students were coming in and they were exceedingly noisy. There had been something that had stirred them up. I told them that I wanted them to come in in an orderly manner and go to their seats. I said that we don't want any yelling or pushing or anything like that. I heard a voice about half level say, "You're goddam right we don't." I couldn't spot who it was. I thought it was one of the students, but I found out later that it was the student assistant who had actually done it. After that it appeared there was a change in attitude, especially from someone who had been chosen to assist the teacher. I forget now how I determined that guess I heard him speak later, and I was able to recognize the voice. I asked him if he was the one who did it and he said yes.

M: You mentioned since you taught chemistry you really had more, not a select group, but you had a little . . .

Mr. T: I had been retired about five years when I suddenly realized it wasn't because I was a better disciplinarian than anybody else. I had had just the upper half. I dealt with only the upper half and the better group of students.

M: Upper class and people who took elective chemistry.

Mr. T: Sure. I had an elective, and the ones who gave the other teachers all the trouble I hadn't had much contact with. I was so stupid not to know that before.

M: Do you have a comment in that area and then I'll ask my final question?

Mrs. T: I said before that one reason I retired was because they were dropping Latin from the schedule. The other reason probably was the change in student attitude and the increase in discipline problems in the English classes.

I had no problems in Latin, but some in junior English. It was right at the time that they were having arrests on college campuses, and I think it was carrying over.

For example, one day they were arguing about whether the window shades should be up or down. Somebody would get up and put them up, and somebody would pull them down. I finally walked over and fixed them the way I thought they should be. One boy put his hand up and said, "We have our rights." They would question the way I was teaching, and what I was teaching. They didn't like the tests; they didn't like just about everything. They tried very hard to be rather nasty.

M: I don't want to end this on what I consider to be a delightful hour on a negative note. I want to ask you one final question which would concern the total years experience the two of you had. As you look back over the years teaching, regardless of whether it's in Salem or not, what would you have indicated your most rewarding experiences as a teacher? What do you look back at and remember as highlights or as significant things of having been a classroom teacher for a good many years?

Mrs. T: Student contacts that I made and some of them are still very close. We feel that you and Nancy are close friends of ours, and of course, that was a school contact. We have students from Madison, where we were before, who married and now live in Houston, Texas. We still have contacts with them. Things of that sort. The feeling that we have been able to help students choose the right career for them at times, guide them

M: Frank?

Mr. T: I agree with Beryl that contact with former students was important. I don't know whether this would be part of it, but I had, after I retired, the great experience of teaching math to seventh and eighth graders at St. Paul's. That was a tremendous experience. I got the enthusiasm there which I had tried to get before I retired. That's the recent memories, of course. The enthusiasm the students had for math--they had never had any of this particular math before--made the time go even faster when I was teaching at St. Paul's than it did in regular high school.

M: It's the personal element that comes out, contact with students during and after the years you put in.

Mrs. T: In my case it was contact with the teachers. This isn't true of Frank so much, but maybe someone else has mentioned it before about the retired women teachers who had been together in both buildings getting together once a month to have a little coffee social. That's very enjoyable. We call ourselves the retarded teachers. (laughter)

M: You don't have to explain anything. I'd like to publicly thank both of you for helping me in what has turned out to be number twenty in twenty delightful conversations with people whom I respect most, which are teachers in general, but also teachers who, I know, have had something to do with the system I'm in right now. I appreciate it very much and I do thank you.

Mr. T: You're welcome.

Mrs. T: It was very enjoyable.

END OF INTERVIEW