

CLARK HARRISON

JAMES MACKAY: I've been knowing Clark a long time. And I figured he either thought I was some kind of a nut or a dear friend, because he called me up and said he wanted me to read the manuscript of his book and look at it. It's 768 typed-script pages. He didn't offer to pay me anything. But Mary Carolyn and I got busy on this thing last Saturday, and we could not put it down. And I have written this assessment of the book, which is very short—I could write many pages about it. Some of you have read it. But I say this by way of introduction that Clark Harrison's life is an epic in itself. He doesn't have to write a book to for us to know what a great an interesting life he is living.

Now he has written a book that is an epic of the human spirit. My wife and I were privileged to read the book in its 768-page manuscript. We couldn't put it down. Clark's account made me laugh out loud and also shed tears and made me think, which is a tribute to any book. Intensely personal, it deals with youth, fearful combat, terrible injury, recuperation, love, marriage, business, politics, flying, family, risk-taking, defeat, triumph, the mystery of joy and suffering, and the healing power of loving and caring. It is a priceless account of personal experience and local history. And Clark, I want to thank you, as president of the Historical Society—[to entering latecomers] y'all come right in, if you are here to hear Mr. Harrison, or if you've just come in to keep—get comfortable. [Back to introduction and brief review of the book] It is a priceless account of personal experience of local history, but it transcends this individual and even this place and time. I nominate Clark Harrison to join Antoine [de] Saint-Exupéry as a Joseph Conrad of the skies, and we know that the book should be bought, read, and pondered. Buy it.

Now, Clark, you know, I think you'll agree that you and I are old pros at politics. Although I have read the book, don't need to have a copy of the book, I'm a good enough politician to buy the book. [Hands Mr. Harrison a check in payment for the book.] [audience laughter; applause] And a good enough politician to sell the book. [Hands Mr. Harrison another check.] That's John Thibadeau's [check]. We didn't fill out those forms, but you better save us copies. And in the course of his talk today, we don't mind you being shameless, as you have been, about peddling this book around. You know, he's a scholar and a soldier and a politician and a businessman and a banker and an aviator, and I have added the term "an itinerant bookseller." [audience laughter] He came to our barbecue up there, just going around selling his book—well, salesman, because that is something I about his book, that he is a tremendous salesman.

Now, the fun of this project is that we're going to—Fran Broadnax here has mastered this video camera, and we're going to have this fellow in the archives; but we'd much rather have you here in person than just to have you in the archives. We're not going to give you the flowery introduction of [sic] which you so justly deserve because we're going to dub that in later. And as your friend and as a member of the Bar—I hate to do this, but I am yielding the floor for one solid hour. I will say to you that we are not going to have our refreshments because the government would not let us do that here. We're accustomed to having a tea party after this; and if you will forgive us, it's nothing personal, but this is the first time that we have not had cookies and punch. We'll have another one, and I think you recognize about everybody in the room. You have an hour—

INTERRUPTION FROM UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: An autographing party?

MR. MACKAY: An autographing party and he would also like for you to form a line over here and sign up for the book. And I want him to tell me, now that he's got my money, when I'm going to get my book. By the way, on the *Vanishing DeKalb*, we expect to have the remaining 1,700—I mean, 2,700—copies delivered to the courthouse by certainly Wednesday of next week.

UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Tuesday afternoon--

MR. MACKAY: Tuesday afternoon has been promised. So I think it's sort of like the swallows coming back to Capistrano. We have our former county chairman back to tell it how it was, how it is, and how it might be. Mr. Clark Harrison. [audience applause]

MR. HARRISON: Thank you. Jim does my time start now, or did it start at four o'clock [when Mr. Mackay began his introduction]? [audience laughter]

MR. MACKAY: It starts right now.

MR. HARRISON: OK. [chuckles]

MR. MACKAY: You got the tea party time.

MR. HARRISON: I really appreciate Jim reading my book. If any of y'all have ever written a book, you find out it's not only hard to get a publisher, it's hard to get anybody to read it. And he was saying why I got Jim Mackay to read it. They said old Gene Talmadge, when he used to campaign, he would go out in the country riding in his Model T Ford. He'd see a farmer out there plowing, and he'd stop his Ford, and he'd get out, and he'd walk all the way across the field, and he'd stand out there and

talk to the fellow for fifteen minutes. And somebody said, "Well, that's a terrible waste of campaign time. You should have been downtown when he could have been forty or fifty people." What they didn't realize is that from then to election Gene Talmadge had a walking, talking commercial, and it would go on the whole time he was gone. So that's the reason I got Jim to read my book.

I've got a—I had a real wonderful thing happen to me last week. I had a fellow take me out to lunch. Now, if you're a politician or a policeman, you never pay for your lunch. Because the people that take you to lunch are trying to get something, and they always pick up the tab, and you don't even consider paying your way—until you get out of office. And Monday morning after you get out of office, not only will nobody buy you lunch, but they won't even ask you to go out with them. [audience laughter] It's been since 1972 that I've been out of office, over thirteen years. And this fellow asked me out to lunch, and he paid for it. And not only that but he asked me my advice, and that's something else that doesn't happen after you get out of politics. So that was really a big week for me.

I'll start at the beginning. I was born over here on Wilton Drive, at 213 Wilton Drive, and I've always wanted to have enough money to buy that house. And if I could buy it, I was going to buy me a historical marker and put it up in the yard and just say, "Birthplace of Clark Harrison." And then if nobody said anything, I could go back and add things [audience laughter] and have me my own personal historical marker. Decatur was, of course, a very different sort of place. I was born in '24. There weren't many paved streets. As I remember, Clairemont stopped just about after you passed Wilton Drive; there wasn't anything but dirt road. The thing that impressed me so much as a child—of course, it was during the Depression, and we were having, not really a tough time, because my dad had a job, and there were a lot of people that didn't have a job—I mean, he had his own business school, and they were able to have enough money to eat and enough money to pay the rent. But the thing that really impressed me, and I think we tend to forget, is how poor this area was at that time. If you got outside of Decatur--Decatur was really kind of an oasis of prosperity compared to the rest of Georgia. Of course, we all remember when you could get out where North DeKalb Shopping Center is—I know there was a gentleman out there that used to plow mules, and we used to—my dad bought a fifty-acre place out there, and we used to ride out and see this man plowing his mule. And every year he planted two crops; he planted cotton, and he planted corn. And every year the crops got poorer, because he didn't know how to rotate or give the land a chance to rest and didn't have money for fertilizer and that sort of thing.

The thing that really got us started was World War II in this part of the country. I mean we were discriminated against very heavily by the federal government through the discriminatory freight rates. You know, they could ship all kinds of finished goods into the South; but if you tried to manufacture something here, the rates were prohibitive to get it out of the South. I remember I was drafted out of Decatur in 1943, and they put me on a train, and they headed us west. I went up to Kansas to be in the army. And when we got out there—on the way, the thing that amazed me was how prosperous that country was. I mean, you saw these beautiful herds of cattle, and you saw big silos and big red barns; and around this part of the country we still were suffering directly from the results of the War Between the States. My grandpa came down here from Kentucky; and he said, well, he said he could understand why they put a town here, said it sure wasn't no good for farming [audience laughter]. He was talking about DeKalb County. I went off into the service, was in the Air Corps for about five months. But since I had gone into the ground forces initially, I was taken out of the Air Force [sic] and put into the infantry in 1944, just before D-Day. They decided they didn't need any more pilots; they needed foot soldiers. So I ended up in the infantry.

One of the things that I wanted to say today, I know Jim [Mackay] had a real close personal involvement in the Vietnam War; and I know the way my secretary, Virginia Patterson, knew how to get my goat was to say, "Well, Nixon, at least he did get us out of Vietnam." Well, I would start using barracks-type language and screaming and hollering; and it just enraged me, because I knew that young kids were being shot, and they were being paralyzed, and they were being—losing their limbs in a war that nobody really agreed with. And I—you know, we talk a lot about World War II was the last good war, you know, we were all together and all that. But I know you remember, as I do, that that was not true prior to Pearl Harbor. We had the same kind of division then that we had during the Vietnam War. We had the mothers' march; they said, "I didn't raise my son to be a soldier." It had only been about twenty years since World War I. We were extremely cynical about war. When I was in grammar school, we studied that England ruled the world and that England had the moneybags and that wars were caused by the munition[s] makers, and there was a great antiwar feeling. The army was completely shut down after World War I.

Another thing that I've thought about that we really don't appreciate—the World War II veteran, when he came back—when World War I was over and the men came back, there wasn't any GI Bill, and there weren't any jobs waiting for them. They were just thrown out of the army. There weren't any kind of pensions or any way to ease them back into civilian life. And they went to Washington to try

to get a bonus, because so many of them were needy, and they were driven out of Washington, D.C. Well, the reason that we had the GI Bill and the reason that we had the fine things that we had after World War II was the guys that came back from World War I, because they were the ones that went to bat for us. When I was growing up in Decatur, we looked on anybody in the army as a bum. If you were in the army, you were not able to make it outside the army, and that's the only reason you were in it. We paid the men twenty-one dollars a month.

So anyway, I ended up—I was wounded in combat. I was in Germany; I was outside of Aachen, Germany, in a place called Stolberg. We were in an attack, and I was going towards—bringing up the rear of my squad, and a sniper shot at the man just ahead of me. Since I was bringing up the rear as we ran towards a house, I was wounded. I didn't know what was wrong with me because I didn't know what paralysis was. I just knew that I couldn't move. Somebody asked what I thought. Well, the first thing I thought—I was lying on the ground; it was a beautiful, sunshiny day. Stolberg looked just like Decatur—I mean, the houses were like we have here. And I was laying [sic] there, and the first thing I thought was, "I better not move, because if I do, I'm going to be shot again." The second thing I thought was, "I don't know what's wrong with me, but I can't—but my hands and my mind are all right." When you're in combat, you're in an extreme state of excitement because of all the adrenalin that's pumping through your system. And your mind works just like a computer—you remember everything, you think real fast, and all of that. And those were the visions that—the other thing was that the kid that saved my life was somebody that we had planned to send back because we didn't think he had what it took. Ever since that happened--since that boy crawled out there, knowing that sniper was in the window ready to shoot anybody that came out there, and he crawled out there and grabbed my hands and pulled me in—I made up my mind I was never going to judge anybody, I was never going to throw anybody away, I wasn't ever going to say that anybody was no good.

I came back to Decatur not wanting to come home. That's where the name of the book comes from—*A Long Way Home*—because I didn't want to go home. At that time they did not tell us that we were permanently paralyzed; they told me that I would recover, that I was temporarily paralyzed but that I would be all right. And the reason they told us that was they knew from past experience that we would die because of infection. When you're paralyzed, you can't void, and so you get kidney infections; and you always died within six months. The reason we didn't die was that we were the first to get penicillin. But they didn't know what to do with us. The only thing that they offered us, when we kept living and they were trying to figure out something, vocationally, was watch repairing. They figured

that we could—if you can't do anything but sit around and use your hands, the only thing we were offered was a—Bulova Watch Company offered us a course in watch repairing. I came back to Decatur with sores on my body and with a tube coming out of my abdomen to drain my bladder. And I didn't want to come home; I was twenty when I was shot, and didn't want anybody to see me that way. But I came on home; and, of course, my family did what our families here do—they took care of me. And I knew that it didn't matter how bad off I was, they would always want me.

I didn't know what I was going to do with my life. I finally realized that I was never going to walk again. And I didn't know any old paraplegics; I didn't see anybody who was in a wheelchair doing anything. Back then, your life was over. And that's what I thought. But I came back to a real great place. I came back to Decatur, Georgia. Now, Decatur to me is kind of a state of mind. It isn't—we took a—you know, we have this vision of Decatur that's not real. I mean, it's—when you really get out and look at Decatur—one time somebody wanted to tear down the old courthouse. Well, Mills Lane came out and Jim Robinson, the head of First National, the head of the C&S Bank. We had a meeting, and they wanted to tear down the old courthouse because it impeded traffic. They said, "If you tear down the old courthouse, this could be a modern place. You can go right through Decatur without having to go around the courthouse." So I got up, and I said, "Well, Mills, there's nobody that wants to save the old courthouse but me and two old ladies, and we're going to beat the hell out of you" [audience laughter]. I knew they wasn't going to tear down the old courthouse. But Decatur's a state of mind. So we got a photographer, and they talked about this was such an ugly courthouse. We had him go all over Decatur and take pictures. And you know what he came up with—he came up with used car lots, he came up with all these old buildings that looked shabby as they could be. And yet all of us who are from here have this thing about Decatur. I mean, we don't care. When I go anywhere, I don't tell them I'm from Atlanta. I don't know about y'all. But everywhere I go, whether it's New York or Anchorage or wherever. They say, "Where you from?" I say, "Well, I'm from Decatur. [audience laughter] And I don't tell them where it is, I just [inaudible over audience laughter]." Because I love it.

And when I got back, I didn't know—it didn't occur to me to be a politician, because people look down on politicians. And they've got good reason to. I mean, I thoroughly agree with them. When you read the bible, if you read the bible, there's a thing in there, a parable of the bramble tree. And it tells about the bramble tree is the king or the head of the government, and the reason is that he can't do anything else. You know, he can't bear fruit like the vine, so he's put in charge of the government. Well, that was kind of the fix I was in. I didn't know what to do; I didn't know what kind of work I could get. I

went back to school, and I had me a couple of jobs that were just clerical jobs in an office and that sort of thing. But when I first got back to the States, and I mean—I was out here at Lawson General Hospital. And as long as I was in the army, that was fine, because we were part of the army. We were soldiers, and we were waiting, you know, we were just—the only difference between us and everybody else in the army was we were in bed, and they were all out doing things. But they discharged us into a veterans' hospital. And as soon as they discharged us, I decided I was going to leave there. I never will forget, this major came by. They were turning the whole hospital into a VA hospital, and he came by. And told him, I said, "Major, I'm leaving the hospital." He said, "Well, you can't leave." He said, "We haven't finished treating you yet." And I said, "Major, what I've got, you can't cure." And I said, "I'm going home." And he said, "Well, what are you going to do?" And I said, "Well, I'm going to go back to college." And he looked at me, and he said, "You can't go to college with that tube in your belly." He was talking about the catheter that drained my bladder. And I said, "Well, maybe not, but I'm going to be caught trying."

So I went around the next day and asked, "How do you get discharged from the hospital?" Because they'd already discharged us from the army. And nobody knew! And you know, I kept asking them, "Do I turn in my urinal, you know, my combat jacket—what do I do?" And nobody—they looked at me like, you know, I was asking the wrong type question. So finally I called Scotty Scott, a friend of mine here, and said, "Scotty, apparently there's no way to get out of this hospital." And he said, "Well, fine. When can we pick you up?" So he went up there, and they got me—Frances, my life, and Dot Scott came up there with Scotty, and we just *left*. We didn't know how else to do.

So we got home, and at that time you got twenty dollars a month if you were in the hospital. But if you got out of the hospital, you got three hundred dollars a month. Well, that was a lot of money in 1946. And the reason it was so much, it included a hundred percent disability and a statutory award for the loss of use of your legs and the loss of use of control of your bowels and your kidneys. So it added up to three hundred dollars a month. Well, I got home; and I'd been home about two weeks, and I got a letter from the Veterans Administration that said, "Your furlough is over. Report back to the hospital." So I wrote back and said, "I'm not on furlough; I'm out. I'm not in your hospital anymore. I've left." Nobody knew what to do, so then I called up there—I knew this colonel up there who was a paraplegic, and I said, "Fred"—no, I said, "Colonel Dunlap," I said, "I'm in the—I'm out of the hospital, and they won't pay me my money, because they won't discharge me." And he said, well, he'd try to do what he could do. So nothing happened; I kept trying, and finally somebody says, "Call Scott Candler."

So I finally called Mr. Candler. [Very loudly, imitating Mr. Candler] “Yeah, Clark! When’d you get out?” I said, “June the sixth.” “OK, I’ll call George.” And he hung up. [audience laughter] I want you to believe that three days later I got a beautiful letter from Washington, and enclosed was a check in full, starting June the sixth.

Well, I had been a private in the army for three years. And I had tried this and that, and I thought, “Well, you know, there’s got to be something in this politician business. Maybe I better look into it.” [audience laughter] When I got ready to get married—if any of y’all remember, after World War II, there were two things you couldn’t get. One was an automobile. You could take any automobile, I don’t care how decrepit it was—I know my dad at one point bought a Model T Ford, and he had to dig out two trenches in the garage so he could get it in. It had a fringe on the top. It was a, like a surrey. And my mother put her foot down when he was out there at night, digging two trenches so he could park his Model T Ford in the garage. So anyway, you couldn’t get a car.

When I got out of the hospital when I came back, I was a wounded hero. And the people around this town were that way about the boys who came back. And so I got one of the very first Fords that was built by Henry Ford after the war. Everybody else got Oldsmobiles because they have automatic gearshift. But I always wanted a Ford, and I figured just because I was paralyzed shouldn’t keep me from having a Ford. And Henry Ford paid for the hand control, and it was the darnedest Rube Goldberg thing that you ever saw in your life. See, it had a clutch; and, believe it or not, this whole thing worked. It had cables and vacuum tanks, and it broke about every six months, but that’s the way I got my car.

And then I wanted to get married, and you just couldn’t get a place to live. They hadn’t built any houses during the war, and everybody was living with their mother and daddy and all that, so I thought, “Well, Mr. Candler got my money for me. [chuckles] I’ll see what he can do about a house.” [audience laughter] I called him. [Very loudly, imitating Mr. Candler] “Yeah, Clark! Yeah, we’re building some apartments out there at Emory.” Says, “Major Purvis is out there.” Says, “I think we got one. I think we can get it for you.” And he hung up. [audience laughter] So we got an apartment out at Emory, and we paid thirty-two dollars a month. And we had an apartment that was built out of—it was the same barracks that I had when I was in the army. It had tarpaper sides. I told my wife the inside was cardboard, and the outside was tarpaper. And the shower was a tin shower. And she thought I was kidding until she got out there. But we lived out in Mudville—they called it Mudville because the streets were mud.

But anyway, that was, I suppose, what really got me interested in politics. And when they—you remember when Mr. Candler was defeated by Wheat Williams. And one of my first political endeavors, I was asked to go on TV on behalf of Mr. Candler. So Jim Cherry and I went on: I was the wounded hero, and he was the school superintendent. And we didn't do a bit of good, because Wheat Williams beat Scott with a dead fish. [chuckles] I know y'all all remember that.

DeKalb was a dynamic place even then. We had been a dairy farm county. We were the largest dairy farm county in Georgia. And all these dairy farmers had started subdividing their land. And Mr. Candler--back in those days, the county paid—as I remember, the developer bought the pipe, and the county put in the sewers, and the county put in the curbing and gutter for the developer. And Mr. Candler was trying to get the county to grow. And so all these developers like Wash Lively and these other fellows, they were the ones that had money, and they were the ones that put up money for politics. So they were kind of a rough-and-ready crowd, and they started building a lot of houses. But Mr. Candler made the mistake of letting all these foreigners come into the county and giving them the right to vote. [audience laughter] If they hadn't been given the franchise, Mr. Candler would have stayed on. But they let them qualify to vote, and they brought in this little newspaper called *The Decatur News*. And they opened up in what—I think it used to be the bowling alley over here, [points] right on this property right here. And they came in, and they started printing this paper. Well, we had a good paper called *The DeKalb New Era* that everybody paid for, and, you know, we were all proud of it. And this fellow comes in and starts making a newspaper and giving it away. He didn't charge anything, so he had immediately a circulation of as many as he could print of it. And Mr. Candler said they always—they always put the bad things in great big headlines; and the good things, they put them over on the back page. So he had kind of a thing against *The Decatur News*.

After Mr. Candler was defeated, Mr. Williams was the chairman; and they started talking immediately about a multiple commission. Everybody was for it, because the people who had been against Mr. Candler didn't want any more dictators, and the people who were for Mr. Candler wanted to get rid of Mr. Williams. So that gave you a hundred percent in favor of a multiple commission. George Dillard wrote the bill. [Aside to Mr. Mackay] Am I right? [Mr. Mackay responds affirmatively but inaudibly off-camera.] George Dillard wrote the bill. And I really shouldn't say this about George, but since it's this small group, and we're speaking for history, George wrote that bill to have a strong commissioner; and he defended it. And the compromise they made was that the chairman would be the final authority to hire and fire, and then you'd have an executive assistant. And the idea was that

the executive assistant would be a professional manager. That's what everybody thought was going to happen. Well, anyway, George fought and defended that all these years until Bob Gould fired him. And I went to lunch with George Dillard and Bob Gould right after—shortly after Bob had fired him. And I won't use the language, but George said, "You shouldn't have fired me. That was a big mistake on your part." And then George went back and changed the government to limit the power of the chairman. Now that's just the bald facts of the—[laughing] because he didn't want that to happen to him anymore. Anyway, y'all can all look up the law and study that, but that was my observation.

I was asked to run by—suggested by Pat Murphy, Sr. He had been the mayor of Decatur, and I had been trying to figure out something I could do. I had a little business I was trying to start, selling gifts and toys; and Mr. Murphy called me, and he said, "Why don't you run for one of the district posts?" Says, "You can be elected." And so I—we started running; I started writing letters and all that. Well, right about the time, just before they were going to close the qualifying, I was going to have to pay my fee, Dillard Munford called me and asked me if I was going to withdraw. I don't know, I'd kind of halfway decided—I wasn't too healthy back then. I was having a lot of trouble, and I decided I'd withdraw. Well, then Pat Murphy—Mr. Murphy—called me back and talked me back into it. So I went back in, and so Dillard and I ended up running against each other. Well, the night before the election Dillard bought five minutes on television. Now, Dillard is the one who runs all these Seven-Eleven-type stores, whatever they call them [Note: Majik Market convenience stores]. And he went on television; and by the time he finished talking, I wanted to vote for *him*. [audience laughter] I mean, this guy was absolutely going to put DeKalb County on the map! And if it hadn't been too late, I would have withdrawn at that point. So anyway, I had been working ever since January; and Dillard didn't start until about two weeks before the election. So I came in first, and he came in second. There were nine of us running, and Dillard always gave me credit for him being a millionaire, because I got him out of politics. Every time I see him, he says, "There's the man who made me a millionaire!" [audience laughter]

My favorite chairman of all time was Claude Blount. I don't know if any of you knew Claude, but Claude was a banker. My father-in-law is Judge Guess. See, I was well-connected with politics. My father-in-law who was a Superior Court judge, and I had a father who knew everybody in town. And they were both for me, because they were like me; they knew I was going to have a hard time getting any other kind of job. [audience laughter] But anyway, old Claude Blount was a banker; and Judge Guess told me, he said, "Well, one thing about Claude," says, "you may not do anything, but when you get through with the four years, he'll declare a dividend." They said Claude went into the service station

business, and the first customer came in. This was just a story they told. And the customer said he wanted to buy ten gallons' worth of gas. Said Claude looked at him, and he had kind of a glassy eye—you know, he could really give you a cold banker's look. And he says, "How far are you going?" He [the customer] said, "I'm going to Macon." He [Blount] looked at him and said, "Don't you think that you could make it on five?" [audience laughter]

But anyway, when you got into office with Mr. Blount, you found out that he was conservative. He had a saying, if anybody came in and wanted to do something, he'd say, "What's it going to cost?" And if they said, "It won't cost anything," he'd say, "Well, go ahead and do it, then." He didn't care what it was. But I had a big time with him. He had a real good sense of humor; he was always kind of pulling tricks on the other commissioners. We were down at Stone Mountain; and Julian Harris, who was a commissioner at that time—there was this lady down there that was a little bit addled. She wasn't quite normal. And she had socks that came—white socks came up about halfway, and she had on a man's hat; and she was just kind of the town crazy, I reckon you'd call her. And she was after Mr. Blount about paving a road; and finally he listened to her, and he said, "You know, we approved that road, and we were going to pave it. But Julian Harris wouldn't let us." [chuckles; audience laughter] And he turned around and walked off and left Julian standing there with her.

The thing I loved most about Claude Blount was—we did a lot, we started DeKalb General Hospital, passed the bonds and started the construction, built DeKalb General Hospital. We paved about two hundred miles of road. Mr. Candler was in the generation where they were getting you out of the mud. And you know, the fact that they used surface treatment, and three months later they had potholes, was still a lot better than just driving around in the mud; but when we came into office, there just wasn't a good road in DeKalb County. I mean, there were a lot of paved roads; but we went out riding, trying to set our priorities, and finally decided that they were all so bad that we could start anywhere we wanted to. [audience laughter] But anyway, we did that and did some other things. When we got ready to leave office, somebody asked Mr. Blount what kind of chairman he'd been. He sat there and thought a minute; and he said, "Well, I reckon I was mediocre." [chuckles; audience laughter] Well, you know, that was a truly great man to say that.

I thought I was going to be the chairman in 1960—I knew I was, because I knew more than anybody else, everybody knew me, I was a wounded veteran, everybody liked me, I was born and raised here, and so I was going to be chairman. I managed to raise the money to pay my entrance fee, and I started running. When it all was over, I'd come in fourth and I'd lost ten thousand dollars; and I really

couldn't believe it had happened to me. It was probably the best money I ever spent—ten thousand dollars—because it made me so mad that I was determined that I was going to get that ten thousand back. And I got into real estate at that point, and I got my ten thousand back several times; but I always wanted to get it back one more time. [audience laughter] I got involved with First National [Bank] and ended up filling that building up and—see, I never had had anything that amounted to anything. I had my pension, but I never had made any money. And when I finally got First National filled up, I bought me a yellow Lincoln Continental: four-door with leather seats and a black leatherette top. It had a [sic] autronic eye, it had a six-way power seat. You turned a thermostat; and if it was cold, it'd blow hot air, and if it was hot, it'd blow cold air. I got out there the first day after I'd bought it, and I got out there in my car, and I got back in those leather seats, and I had me a stereo—an eight-track stereo—and I pushed the stereo in, and it started playing "Seventy-six Trombones." [audience laughter] And I thought, "By God, I'm successful now." [audience laughter]

So I was sitting in my office—and I had been out of politics for eight years. I was sitting in my office one day, and I had me a big office over at First National, and J. C. Haynes came in. He said, "Who's going to run for chairman?" So I didn't know anybody, and he suggested several people. Finally he says, "Why don't you run for chairman?" And I say, "Well, I will if somebody'll put up a hundred thousand dollars." He said, "Would you really?" And I says, "Yeah, I really would," because I figured that'd be the end of that. Now, you're going to have to read the book to find out how I got that hundred thousand dollars. [audience laughter]

I got to be chairman, and all of a sudden I was king. I was king. Now, this was before George changed the law; this was when we could hire and fire and, you know, decided what the board saw and all that sort of thing. And I didn't—there were a lot of things I didn't like about the job. I really had a complex about it. I used to break out in a rash every time it rained, because there was a lady up on north DeKalb on Peachtree Creek up there that flooded every damn time it rained. And she was absolutely right; we shouldn't have let her build that house in that flood plain. She would always call me. And then I'd get these calls—I got a call one night from a lady late at night, a real nice young lady, and she said that she had dropped her—she had flushed her diamond ring down the toilet, and what could I do about it? [audience laughter] I said, "Well, I don't know, but I'll find out." So I called Rock Barrett [spelling?] and asked Rock. And he said [imitating Mr. Barrett's voice], "Clark, that ring's halfway to the Chattahoochee River right now. There ain't a damn thing you can do about it." [audience

laughter] I said, "Well, Rock, I'm going to give you this lady's number [burst of audience laughter], and I want you to call her and tell her."

We had an exciting campaign, and I tell all about that, about the "smut sheet," and about the midnight raid on the commissioner's office, and about the preacher that accused me of—I was accused of offering a preacher thirty thousand dollars to get him to support me. Friend of mine said, "If I was him, I'd a took it." [audience laughter] But anyway—one of our fine preachers; he's still preaching. You can get the details about that out of the book, because I tell the whole story in the book.

At the same time, we went through a maelstrom. We had a seven- or eight-million-dollar deficit, and it was real. We had to go back to issuing warrants, which hadn't been done since Mr. Candler left office. In the olden days they used to—they used to go back and—they didn't have money to pay the help, so they would issue a check; and on the back it was a warrant, which meant that it was a loan, and the bank would hold that piece of paper at an interest rate. It was illegal to operate the government without setting a rate high enough to pay all of the bills by the end of the year. When we came in, there was seven-and-a-half million debt that was in the illegal debt. And the way we financed it was by issuing these warrants. We had to do two things when I came in office. There was a great combination. We had to reduce services. I don't know if you remember, but the garbage pick-up just broke down. I mean, it—we would get six hundred calls a day, and the only reason we didn't get two thousand was because the switchboard couldn't handle but six hundred. And they used up all the phones down at the Sanitation Department, and the overflow came into our office. We had to—in order to make up this deficit, we had to reduce services, and we had to raise taxes. And if you think that makes you popular, we had to raise the rate nearly fifty percent. Now, this was the rate. Traditionally you get more money by raising the assessment, and then you can say, "Well, we left the rate the same, and they raised the assessment." And you couldn't vote on the assessors, so that's the way you kept getting more money; but we couldn't wait for that, so we had to go in and raise the rate nearly fifty percent. Well, we had people going all over this county with petitions to get me out of office. They brought me one, and I said—I mean, they told me about it, and I said, "Well, bring one of those things. I'll sign it, too." [audience laughter] Somebody wants to vote on getting me out of office, I'm all for that.

My favorite story during the recall was a friend of mine was going through LaVista and North Druid Hills Road intersection, and there was a gentleman out in the middle of the street with a petition—recall petition. And he stuck it in the window and said, "Sign this if you want your taxes

lowered.” So this friend of mine took it, rolled up the window, and drove off; and he had about four hours’ worth of signatures. [chuckles; audience laughter] But anyway, I was not very popular, not very popular at all. At one point—and my mother has passed on; if she’s watching, I’m sure she’ll think it’s all right for me to tell you this. She said, “Son, you haven’t done anything wrong, have you?” [audience laughter] And I said, “Mama, [chuckling] I mean, that you of all people would ask me if I’ve done anything wrong.” But it was so widespread, I mean, every time you’d pick up the paper, I was in there. And I got like Mr. Candler; I got to where I didn’t like to read the paper. I just—as far as I was concerned, I still don’t like a newspaper. I mean, I read it occasionally; but I still don’t like newspapers.

Anyway, we went through that. And what we tried to do when I was over here, we brought in—we tried to put in practice what the original intent of the law was. In other words, I got Don Mendonza [sic], who was the city manager for the city of Savannah and who had lost his job because of a political change. He had written a book on local government financing; and before I started running, I got Don to agree to come as the manager for the county. He got over here in December, and we spent the month of December and rounded up about ten executives; and we got some real high-type people. We made practically all of our changes before the year started, and on January the third we hit the ground running. We made a lot of changes in the county. I reckon the thing I’m proudest of is that we put in the pension program, really meant something. Prior to our coming into office you got your Social Security plus one dollar a month for each year of service in DeKalb County. We were able to change that and fix it where people could retire at age fifty-five, if they’d had twenty-five years’ service, on half-pay; and that would carry right on through. And that was funded, and it always has been funded.

We were—I won’t go into all the things, because I don’t think there’s anything duller—we did—I will mention that we bought Callanwolde while I was here. We did the planning and the financing for the Emergency Medical Service. We doubled the starting pay of the policemen and firemen. And we got a lot done, because I figured as long as I was going to be a bastard, I was going to be a big bastard [audience laughter] and get enough money to really do some good, and that’s what we did. We—one year we had a lot of people that were being paid very, very low salaries, and we increased their salaries. One year we spent two million dollars upgrading the pay. And what we did, instead of giving an across-the-board, which meant that the guy at the top got the same five percent as the guy at the bottom, well, I had been a private in the army, and Don had been an enlisted man in the navy, and what we did, we went out and compared our jobs with private industry; and we gave the largest raises, went to the lowest people. We had a girl who was the switchboard operator, told me that her friend’s husband had

been drafted into Vietnam and that she had gotten a hundred-dollar-a-month raise; and because of that raise she was able to keep her home. And that meant a lot to me because we did, we tried to—it wasn't a popular way to do it, and the people at the top didn't like it. But we put it in in that fashion.

I had a terrible time adjusting to being no longer king. In England they had a much better system in the old days. The king, he was either king, or he was dead. [audience laughter] And that's the way it ought to be, I mean, once you've been king, you ought to be shot because you're no good to yourself or anybody else. I mean, you have a certain tone of authority in your voice that repels people; you no longer can sell because they feel like, "Well, that guy's trying to tell me what to do." I tried—I developed a little subdivision down in Rockdale County, and I had a problem where they wanted me to put in a street connection. It wasn't going to mean one nickel to me to put it in, but they said I had to because of my—I had a long dead-end street, and it was a regulation. So I thought, "Well, I'll do what they always did to me. I'll see if I can wiggle out of this thing." So I kept trying to wiggle out of it and this and that, and finally I went to see the head of the planning commission at Rockdale County. And I told him, I said, "This street is not really all that long. It would be a lot nicer to have a dead-end street where you don't have traffic." I said, "You know, the only problem I have being—having been in the job I was in as chairman," I said, "I don't—you never know who's laying out there in the bushes waiting for you." He said, "Well, as a matter of fact, when you were chairman, I came up as architect for this church group, and we wanted to put an addition on the church, and your government required us to widen and pave the street in front of the church. And it so happened we were on a long curve." And I remembered that. And we said, "No, you have to—a regulation is a regulation. And you're going to have to pave it." He said, "It cost as much to widen the street as we spent on the church building." I said, "I'll go ahead and put in that—" [audience laughter] You're very limited in what you can do after you've been king.

I finally made up my mind after I was out—I had been surrounded for four years by a lot of smart people. When I was a private in the army, I never had seen a colonel. I knew we had colonels, but I never had seen one. [audience laughter] I had seen a major on at least two occasions, but I never had—I'd seen a captain fairly often, but I never had seen a colonel. I had twenty-two colonels working for me, and they were nice guys. And some of them were real smart. But all of a sudden, all I had to do was say, "Let's have a new zoning ordinance" or a new subdivision, and immediately all these guys would start cranking out, having meetings, and they'd come up, "Here it is," you know, and I'd say, "It looks pretty good," you know, and that was about the extent of my involvement. Well, real life isn't like

that. So I decided I wanted to get into something where I wasn't delegating, and I wasn't negotiating; I was doing. And I wanted to be doing something where my own life depended on it. And that's when I got into canoeing. And, you know, most people quit canoeing when they get to twelve years old; but I was doing it when I was fifty-two. And then I suddenly decided maybe I could fly an airplane. And so at fifty-five I started taking flying lessons. I was—it took me twenty-three hours to solo and a hundred and fifty hours to get my license. But I just kept working at it and working at it, because I figured if I could actually fly an airplane, it would mean something to kids who get paralyzed today, you know. So that's the reason I did it, and that's the reason I flew to Alaska; and the Alaska trip was an exciting thing for me. And I'll just tell you that I didn't do it like you're supposed to. I flew over the mountains instead of flying along the highway. And when I came back, I flew the coast; and you're not supposed to do that in a single-wing—in a single-engine airplane. But I figured I was sixty years old, I was paralyzed from the middle of my chest down, and I didn't have a hell of a lot to lose. [audience laughter] They said, "If you go down"—and I had two pilots talk to me, said, "If you go down in that water off the Alaska coast, you last eight minutes." I said, "That's all I need. Eight minutes will take care of everything I need to do if I go down in that water." But I flew the whole coast—the west coast—from Anchorage all the way to Bellingham, Washington; and the good God put a high-pressure trough the whole way, and we just had beautiful weather. And I flew along over that water with the mountains and the glaciers coming right down in the water—me and a sixteen-year-old, single-engine airplane. Just me and—the good Lord, little airplane, and me, in that order of importance.

So, I've had a real interesting life; and the reason I wrote the book was to tell a kid who has it happen to him today that your life doesn't really have to be over, that there are a lot of exciting things that still can be done and that you ought to stick around and see what's going to happen. I asked my mother—my mother lived with me the last three years of her life, and I was her cook. She didn't really think too much of my cooking. [audience laughter] I used to ask her, I said, "You know, I kept thinking, why don't you brag on what I fix?" I said, "How was that, Mother?" "It was *pretty good*." [audience laughter] So I—*pretty good*? But anyway, she lived with me, and I, you know, the real heroes are not fighting battles and flying airplanes and all that stuff. The real heroes are the people that are suffering and are going on anyway. Because my mother suffered something awful there when she was with me. I mean, she could still get up and down, and she and I—I fixed the meals, and she toughed it out. But I asked her one time, when she was going through this, I said, "Is there anything good about getting old?" And she said—she thought a minute, and she said, "Well, you get to see how things turn out."

[audience laughter] And you know, that's true. That is really true, and it's worth seeing how things turn out.

I reckon—I said something about Vietnam, but I—I reckon my deepest compassion is with the Vietnam veterans. They've gotten all this terrible publicity, because they interview these people who are psychotic, psycho, and who are crybabies and all that sort of thing. We had that same group after World War II. We had people who went crazy—I mean I had a boy go crazy in the bed next to me. He absolutely went psychotic. He started talking to his wife, and she was in the United States, and we were in England. And he thought he was trying to be poisoned. And then we had guys that all they wanted was three hot meals a day. And they are still out there. The only difference is they didn't interview them. They didn't glorify them. I mean, the boys that came back from Vietnam are bigger heroes, if anything, than we ever were, because they did their service, and they didn't get anything when they came back. We were treated like heroes. They were treated like they were killers. And we're the ones that sent them over there. But I do feel this about it. I feel that we learned more out of Vietnam than any war we've ever fought. When we ended World War II, we were too big for our britches. We had won the war; we had beat [sic] the master race, and that made us the master race. And we had a lot of people with a vested interest—when we talk about foreign competition, a lot of that is American companies going over there because the labor's cheaper. And so we had a lot of people with vested interests in doing this sort of thing, and the extreme case was Vietnam. It was a stupid war that was fought just like the British tried to take over this country; everything was against us militarily. And we sent our kids over there. And so, they're going to be our leaders. And I'm not a bit fearful about what they're going to do. I mean, we're going to have a great country because of the kids that came back from Vietnam.

Now, I had one very touching thing happen to me when I made this trip. I got a lot of publicity when I went to Alaska. It was a real thrill to me, because I'd—you know, I'd been a politician, I enjoyed being on camera and getting to talk and all that kind of stuff. The difference was, this time—I used to kind of grin when they'd interview me, because I used to be on television about four times a week. And somebody's always giving me hell about something. I mean, we'd messed up on something, and I was the point man, and they—somebody's after me. And I went on this trip to Alaska, and I was a hero. And everybody—didn't matter what I said or what I did, everybody just thought it was wonderful, you know. And I got interviewed all over the country, up in Canada and up in Alaska and then coming down back along the coast, and people interviewing me and all that sort of thing. But the thing that touched me

the most—I flew—I landed to refuel at Cheyenne, Wyoming, after I’d come back across—was coming back through the Rockies. And they had a—they came out, and they were a real aggressive group, and they led me into where I was going to get my plane gassed up. And I got my plane gassed up, and I was sitting there looking at the maps, getting ready to finish my trip for that day, and this fellow came out, and he was kind of a rough-hewn-looking fellow. He came walking toward the airplane, and then he started running, and he got up on the wing, and he squatted down, and he looked in there, and he said, “Are you the man we’ve been reading about? Who’s flying across the country?” I said, “Yeah.” He said, “We read about you yesterday.” And then he started talking, and he says, “You know, I was in Vietnam.” And he says, “I was a flight engineer on a DC-3 gunship.” These planes were—the last one was built in 1946. And they were still flying. They armored them—heavily armored them in Vietnam, and they used them because they could fly real slow and low, and they could machine-gun the enemy troops. And he said, “After I got through with my flying chores, and we got to the target area, my job was to direct the machine-gunners.” And he said, “And I went in,” and we talked about the fact that the kids who were doing that were younger than the airplane they were flying. They weren’t even born when the airplane was made. And he said, “You know, I went through two tours in Vietnam.” Said, “I was there for two full tours.” And he said, “Out of the forty-two men that finished training with me, nine of us survived.” And he said, “You know, it never did bother me.” Said, “I never did have any trouble at all, until the other night, I was watching television, and all of a sudden, I had a flashback, and I saw one of our ships going down.” And he said, “The tears started rolling down my eyes [sic].” And he said, “I told my wife, ‘I don’t know what’s wrong with me.’” And he said, “I went to one of these outreach clinics that the VA has, and,” said, “I don’t want to do that.” And said, “I thought about going to a psychiatrist, but,” he says, “you know, I think I’m going to just tough it out.” Can you imagine him telling me that?

I appreciate y’all letting me be with you. [audience applause]

MR. MACKAY: Clark, what am I supposed to do with this manuscript?

MR. HARRISON: Can you think of anybody else who’s well-connected, and we could pass it on to anybody that could . . . [trails off]

MR. MACKAY: Now, see, you didn’t think to bring along some forms [for book orders].

MR. HARRISON: I’ve already passed them out, I think.

MR. MACKAY: Ah, now, when are we going to get our book? You got my money.

MR. HARRISON: November—by November 25th, I'll have the book. The book—I wrote it myself, I wrote it out in longhand. I couldn't get anybody to type it, so I typed it into the word processor. They took the word processor and set the type from my—the same disc that printed this manuscript was used to print the book. It's got 580 pages; and, for better or worse, when you read that, you read what I wrote.

MR. MACKAY: Well, when did you start on the book? My wife—the only thing she was dubious about, since I can't remember things when I go to the grocery store—she couldn't understand how you could remember so vividly everything that happened to you for the last forty years. I mean, really, when did you—did you have a journal, or did you take notes?

MR. HARRISON: No, I didn't. I kept it all in my mind. I'm like Scott Candler. He used to—Mr. Candler'd say, "We spent two million nine hundred fifty-three thousand two hundred and ninety-seven dollars and fourteen cent [sic] on that." I said, "My God, Mr. Candler. How can you remember all those details?" He'd look around and say, "Who's going to check?" [audience laughter] [Mr. Harrison continues to talk, inaudibly, through audience laughter.]

MR. MACKAY: Do we have any questions from the audience here? We really have some time. And since we're not having our tea party, and this is a rare opportunity to get Clark on the spot, because there are several of your friends here who've been knowing you all this time, and I said, "That's something a politician can't stand, a long-term eye witness." [audience laughter] But do you have any questions that you want to ask about his book or anything that he's had to say? I can tell you this that the book is a tour de force. We—my wife and I—read a great deal, but I cannot remember many books [aside to Mr. Harrison]—now, it's not going to be 768 pages in your published form?

MR. HARRISON: I'll be 580. It's all in there—

MR. MACKAY: [interrupting] Five hundred and eighty pages. But I can't remember many books that just absolutely sustains [sic] your interest all the way through. Most books sag somewhere, but this book does not sag; and I think it's a treasure for the DeKalb Historical Society to have this. [To Mr. Harrison] And may this end up at the historical society, this manuscript? [Mr. Harrison nods.] Thank you. [audience applause] Any questions?

AUDIENCE MEMBER, off camera: Where do you order—I don't see where you order the book, or—

MR. MACKAY: You didn't get one of the slips.

MR. HARRISON: [To audience member] If you just give me a check for twelve dollars—

MR. MACKAY: [interrupting] Fourteen ninety-five.

MR. HARRISON: Well, it's fourteen ninety if you want it mailed to you. [Inaudible exchange between Mr. Harrison and Mr. Mackay]

MR. MACKAY: And tell them where your office is. I think most everybody knows.

MR. HARRISON: It's in—across the lobby from First--Fidelity National—it's in Fidelity National Bank Building, right across [inaudible].

MR. MACKAY: It sort of takes one to know one, and I was very interested that our member Max Cleland was right on hand at Peachtree-DeKalb [airport] when Clark returned from Alaska, and I think you read in the paper that Max Cleland will be here on the third Thursday in November instead of the fourth Thursday of November; and he is going to give his recollections. And I have said this about Clark and Max and Walt Russell. Walt Russell was shot through the head in Vietnam, was a West Pointer, was [inaudible] for the general staff. He was told he would never walk again. Another splendid man in this community is Chris Harvey. And those of us that were in the war but spared the pain and suffering that these men had have had four of the most inspiring—there are others, but these are four men that have inspired us and have inspired this nation, and Clark, we're going to have to have you back to talk about the center of your interest, and that is the Shepherd Center and the progress we've made in dealing with those with spinal injuries. I was moved in your book about the Shepherd boy, himself. I've done that—not that painfully, but I tried to dive into the surf one time, and I dived on my head. That explains a lot about me; but we have the swimming pool accident, we have the automobile accident, and all that sort of thing, and I think that you've given us a wonderful overview today. But I would like to project another "I Remember" Hour in which you center in on that part of your life because, to me, all these other achievements of yours are terribly impressive; but the main thing—and I didn't even mention it in my little review—is what you've done to—not only to give hope, it's more than hope that you've given to these young people, it has been—what is it? It's not a solution to their problem, but you've given them—

AUDIENCE MEMBER off camera: Courage.

MR. MACKAY: --courage, but also given them technique. That is what I've learned so much is that, as you said, they just said, "Well, you just sit there in that chair, and you repair watches." And what has happened is—and you named a number of people—I wish you would just tell this group, because it inspired me so much—tell me some of the other tremendous achievers who have had similar injuries and what they've done.

MR. HARRISON: The most outstanding is David Webb. He was paralyzed when he was fourteen, diving through a [sic] inner tube. If you have children or grandchildren, please tell them not to ever do that. It's the most dangerous thing in the world. You can break your neck just like that, going through an inner tube; and usually it's a high-level [spinal injury], and it's permanent. David is a high-level quadriplegic. He and his father designed the first van that I ever heard of that a quadriplegic can drive. He's got a big truck. A quadriplegic has very limited use of the hands, and he's got a Rube Goldberg thing on the back to get him in and out of the truck, and he drives himself. He finished high school, finished college, he finished Emory Law School. Now, I asked him—if you've been to Emory Law School, there are steps everywhere—how in the world he managed, because he's in an electric wheelchair. He can't push a wheelchair. And he said, "Well, a couple of fellows would grab the cuffs of my britches, and the others would get one on each side of my shoulders and carry me up there, and somebody else would carry the wheelchair." He graduated, and he's now the general counsel for Trust Company Bank. He's in charge of their legal department.

I think another real outstanding boy that hasn't made it yet, but he's a member of this community, is a fellow named Clyde Aikens. I met him when he was eighteen years old. He lives in Scottdale, Georgia. And he broke his neck on a trampoline. He was a good athlete, and he's a high-level quad. He finished Georgia State with a 3.6 or whatever—almost perfect average. And he never did have any transportation. And he had—different people would give him a ride to school. He— incidentally, right now, he's—he worked as a salesman for commodities for Merrill Lynch, and then he got sick and he, when he went back, they'd had to let a lot of people go because of the economic conditions, and they didn't take him back. And he's trying to start his own business. He's now about thirty years old. He's a black man but a real brilliant fellow.

But we've got—one of the most interesting cases, we had a man—and the difference with Shepherd, we had a man break his neck in August, and he was one of our first patients when we first

started the pilot program over at West Paces Ferry Hospital. In January he went back to work. He's a high-level quad. See, now we can put them in a van, an electric wheelchair, and teach them that they can swim—even take them canoeing, who are quadriplegics; and they've shortened the time. I was in the hospital a year and a half. But there's—you know, there's just a—they're doing everything now. They're operating computers, and there are just all kinds of things. Flying is—there's a quadri—there's a couple of quadriplegics who have learned to fly.

MR. MACKAY: Tell them your line about crossing the Rocky Mountains that you've got on your dust jacket. I just think that's one of your best lines.

MR. HARRISON [to himself, thinking]: What'd I say about the Rocky Mountains?

MR. MACKAY: Well, you said there are two ways to get across them.

MR. HARRISON: Oh! Oh, when I was coming back from California, I said that I couldn't walk, but I can fly. I was talking about flying across the mountains. And I said that I'll tell you one thing as an old infantryman, when it comes to crossing the California mountains, flying beats the hell out of walking. [audience laughter]

MR. MACKAY: There's one other thing. I had hoped that Frances [Mrs. Clark Harrison] might be here today. Many of us know Frances, but I got a new insight into the Harrison family and the Guess family and all your family, I knew your father and share your admiration for him, but I think that your tribute to Frances and your remarks about the meaning of marriage, the potential of marriage, was the most moving and impressive and believable testament that you have. The book is great because it is a testament; it is not just a narrative with what he did. But it tells what he felt and what he believed. And I did get a kick, as a preacher's son—he got a little hung up on the Trinity, because you pay a tribute to Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit and said they really helped you. [audience laughter; Mr. Harrison laughs] [Mr. Mackay continues talking inaudibly through laughter] . . . feeling like a committee.

MR. HARRISON: Well, I called on different ones at different times. [general laughter]

MR. MACKAY: [To audience] Do you have any questions? We're going to stop here in about five minutes.

MR. HARRISON: I'd say, though, that Frances is the hero of the book, don't you think?

MR. MACKAY: Oh, absolutely, and it's a beautiful tribute. But, as I said, the sum total of everything you had to say about transcended the book. I mean, it is striking. And I like the Clark Harrison--I was telling someone before you came in--we all experience rejection. I've had a little of that. [general laughter] But he really foxed the publishing industry. You know what he did when he got through writing the book? He just printed it. [laughs]

MR. HARRISON: That's right.

MR. MACKAY: He didn't send it off to Simon and Schuster and get a letter back and say, "This doesn't meet our editorial needs."

MR. HARRISON [laughing]: I got to tell you, Jim, I been turned down by *Reader's Digest* twice, and this is really something that just happened. I called a fellow—I sent him a copy of this manuscript, and I'd call once a month. And he'd say, "I see it sitting over there, and I'm going to read it." Finally he called me back, and he said, "This book doesn't really meet our" you know. And I [sic; means *he*] said, "Well, do you want me to tell you what's wrong with it?" And I said, "Well, I got a confession to make. I'm getting it printed." [laughs] You know, well then, this fellow comes into my office yesterday, and he's a former editor for *Reader's Digest*, and I'm going to provide him with an office, and he's going to help me sell my book. [audience laughter]

MR. MACKAY: Well, this is just a chance to buy the book and get his autograph and talk to him. Thank you for your presence, and hope you'll come down to Adair Park Saturday, and we'll see you. [Consults paper] Let's see what we got here—an order. [To Mr. Harrison] You got a sale.

MR. HARRISON [taking the paper]: That's what I need.

MR. MACKAY: If you'll wait just a minute, we'll go down to the main floor and then you can visit.

MR. HARRISON: Don't leave till I get down. I don't want to go off the edge.

END OF RECORDING

Transcribed by CS