JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH: MR. WILLIAM CRAWFORD

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DATE: JULY 23, 1984

PLACE: CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

# INTERVIEW TOPICS
## CEDAR RAPIDS: THE EARLY DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I. PERSONAL LEAD-IN QUESTIONS

1--When were you born? Where?
1--How long have you lived in Cedar Rapids?
3,4-5--What are your parents' names?
--Where did you go to school?
--Are you married or single?
--Did you raise a family? How big?
--What has been your occupation (career) during your adult years?

II. COMMUNITY TOPICS

A. Technology in the Community
1. Transportation
--Railway travel (Union Station, trips to Iowa City on Crandic)
3--Trolleys (the Interurban)
4,9-10--Horses and First Automobiles
10--Mud roads and the seedling mile
--Hunter Airport and the first planes
13-14,15--Cedar River (ferries, floods, dams)
11-12--Bridges 38-39--Firefighters
2. Communications
36-37--Newspapers
35-36--Radios
--Advertising
35--Telephones
40--Library

B. People in the Community
1. Amusements/Recreation
18--Motion Pictures
15-16,22--Cedar Rapids Parks
--Dances
--Carnival Week
--Chautauqua
--Community Theater
--Little Gallery
--Symphony Orchestra
20-21--Circus/Carnivals
7--Greene's Opera House
20--Amusement Parks (Alamo)
--Camps
--Community Centers (YWCA, YMCA)
16-17--Manhattan Beach
19--Vaudeville
2. Famous Characters
--Cherry Sisters
--Grant Wood
--Carl Van Vechten (<u>The Tattooed Countess</u>)
--Marvin Cone
2--McKinley and Taft

3. Lifestyle
   19--Life before air conditioning
   16--Winter Activities
   22--Holidays (Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas)
   --Clothing
   --Toys
   --Saloons/Taverns
   --Farm Life

4. Family Life
   --Household Help
   42-43--Women's Roles
   --Childrens' Activities/Behavior
   --Sunday activities (Church life, Sunday Blue Laws)

5. Ethnic/Minority Life
   --Immigrants (Czech, Greek, German, etc.)
   --Indians
   --Segregation of Blacks
   --Jobs Available

C. Organizations and Institutions in the Community
1. Education
   5--Cedar Rapids Schools
   --Coe College
   --Mount Mercy College
   --Cornell College

2. Government
   --City Services
   --Streets/Roads
   --Relationship with Marion (Courthouse Dispute)

3. Medical
   --Hospitals
   --Patient-Doctor Relationship
   --Broken Bones
   --Polio, TB, Debilitating Diseases
   --House Calls
   --Home Delivery of Babies

4. Business and Economy 31-34--Business Cooperation
--Local Factories (Douglas Starch Works, Quaker Oats, etc.)
--Local Brewing Companies
--Retail Businesses /Department Stores
--Professions
--Banking and Finance
--Restaurants (Greek Restaurants in 30's)
8 --Businesses that no longer exist (old groceries, drygoods, icehouses)
--Farmers Market
11 --Mills on Cedar River
6,30 --Buildings Erected
28 --Manual Labor/Types of Jobs
--Companies (Labor Unions, Strikes, Pay)
26--King's Crown Plaster

5. Attitudes/Values
--Children/Discipline
17 --Sex/Petting
--Charity
--Divorce
--Work
--Working women, Voting Rights for Women
--Patriotism (World War I)

D. Historic Events in and Outside the Community
1. Catastrophic Events
--Clifton Hotel Fire (1903)
25--Douglas Starch Works Explosion(1919)
--Bank Closings (1933)
--Lyman-Stark Building Collapse(1913)
39--Public Library Murder(1921)
25--Quaker Oats fire

2. National Historic Events
--Womens' Suffrage
23-24,40-41--World War I
--Roaring 20's
45-46--Prohibition
26-30--Great Depression

Mr. William Crawford was born on May 27, 1896, the son of Norval and Chrissie Collman Crawford. His grandparents were immigrants from Holland and Germany in 1838. He attended Cedar Rapids schools and Carnegie Tech. In 1917, he enlisted in the Ambulance Service in WWI and served in France. When he returned to Cedar Rapids, he was employed at Rude Auto Company until 1922, when he went to work for his uncle at King's Crown Plaster Company. In 1929, he became its head. In that position until 1968, he saw many changes in the down-town area. His memories include bridges and floods, downtown building and business developments, and Cedar Rapids during the Depression years.

Junior League of Cedar Rapids Oral History Project

Interview with Mr. William Crawford, July 23, 1984

LMD: Mr. Crawford, can you tell us when you were born and where?

Crawford: I was born in Boone, Iowa, May 27, 1896. Mamie Eisenhower and I were both born there that year and both moved to Cedar Rapids a year later.

LMD: Then, can you tell us how long you've been in Cedar Rapids?

Crawford: I've lived in Cedar Rapids since 1897.

LMD: Tell us a little bit about your family, your wife, your children.

Crawford: One child, Joan Bailey. My wife is Mildred Marshall. Her father was one of the owners of the Gazette. That's about it.

LMD: Mr. Crawford, can you tell me about your mother and father; where did your family originally come from before they came to Iowa?

Crawford: Well, my mother was born in Chicago and my father was born in Sublet, Illinois, near Dixon.

LMD: Are they originally immigrant families? When did they come to the United States?

Crawford: My mother's father came from Germany in 1838. My mother's family came from Holland the same year. My grandfather and grandmother were married that year.

LMD: So, your mother and father were first generation.

Crawford: Yes, they're first generation Americans.

LMD: I'd like to start talking about the early part of your childhood; the early 1900's and growing up as a child in Cedar Rapids. What are your earliest memories?

Crawford: I think my earliest memory is watching Company C of the Iowa National Guard go to the Spanish War. Probably the next one was standing on the railroad tracks on Third Avenue and Fourth Street and watching a train go by with William McKinley on the back platform. I was on my uncle's shoulders. I've been reminded of this many times, so it isn't all memory. Some of it was impressed on me by repetition.

LMD: But, you do remember the trains going by?

Crawford: I also remember standing in Greene Square. William Howard Taft was making a talk from a bench then in the middle of the Square.

LMD: Those were the days when the President had to come here to do the talking.

Crawford: There was no radio, no television, no communication like that.

LMD: Where did you live in Cedar Rapids?

Crawford: I originally lived on the corner of First Street and Second Avenue, where the American Federal Savings and Loan Building is. We later moved down the block to the corner of Second Street and Second Avenue, which is now a parking lot. In 1910, we moved to 17th Street and Second Avenue East.

LMD: So, you were really close to the downtown area.

Crawford: Yes, I saw a lot happen when we lived practically downtown. We crossed the river at will. The streetcars all crossed on the First Avenue bridge. The streetcar lines converged at either end and on the west side; they went down to Ellis Park and 16th Avenue and King's Addition on the west side by Roosevelt School. On the east side, they came together and one of them came up to 16th Street and E Avenue. Another one went to Marion and Kenwood. Another one went down Third Street to the packing house. They were all steel bridges with wooden plank floors.

LMD: At that time, what did your father do for a living?

Crawford: At the beginning, my father was in the shoe business. Then afterwards, he became a Christian Science practitioner. That was his whole business.

LMD: So, you really came into your adult occupation. It was not a family-owned business. You bought that business.

Crawford: No, not particularly, no. I went to Washington High School. Then I went to Carnegie Tech. At Carnegie Tech, I saw Woodrow Wilson running for office; again, from the back end of an automobile this time. From Carnegie Tech, I came back here and went to the University of Iowa. I joined the United States Army Ambulance Section and was sent to Allentown, Pennsylvania, and from there to France, where we were turned over to the French Army. We stayed with them all during the summer of 1918.

LMD: You came back from there.

Crawford: I came back from there. I was driving a Model T Ford and the natural thing to do was to get a job in the Ford Garage. I went down to the old Rude Auto Company, run by a gentleman by the name of Barry Rude, who was a very fine automobile dealer. He gave me a job. I worked there for three years. Then, my uncle, William King, by marriage, had an opening for me in his business, so I went into that and I stayed there until it was sold out in 1968. That was King's Concrete Company.

LMD: I want to come back to that because that's such an important part of Cedar Rapids. Can we go backfor a moment to growing up? Where did you go to elementary school? What was a typical school day like that you remember?

Crawford: I went to Madison School. That stood on the corner where the Police Station is today, on Third Street and Second Avenue. Then, when we moved to Second Avenue and 17th Street East, I went to Washington High School, walked back and forth twice each day. No school busses, and once in a while, a bicycle. Most of the time, just walk.

LMD: What was the length of a school day? How long was it?

Crawford: We had an hour and a half for lunch, so we would walk home. We started usually about 8:30 in the morning until 12:00, and then 1:30 until 3:30 or 4:00, depending.

LMD: What were the main subjects that you studied?

Crawford: I suppose about the same thing they study now--a little bit of Latin, as little as possible. I took a good course in mechanical drawing, which turned out well. You had the usual chemistry and physics. That was high school. The grade school was just the run of the mill. You learned to read and write, that's all.

LMD: Do you have memories of particular teachers who were really important to you?

Crawford: Yes, Abbie S. Abbot was the principal of Washington High School. She was a character of the highest order...and a good one. She was good for everybody.

LMD: Was she a disciplinarian?

Crawford: Yes, pretty good. They always said she was part Indian, and I think she was.

LMD: She never scalped anyone, did she?

Crawford: No, but she threatened to. I don't really have any outstanding teachers who branded me for life.

LMD: Do you remember Miss Schermund?

Crawford: She taught Latin and I got out of that as soon as possible.

LMD: When you were growing up here in Cedar Rapids and a child at home, do you remember having very definite responsibilities?

Crawford: Oh, yes, when we lived on Second Avenue, in 1905 or '06, the Second Avenue bridge was finished. It wasn't joined together. There was no island at Second Avenue, so the bridge stood there

in two pieces. Then, they paved Second Avenue East and the bridge was filled with bank sand. Then, they paved Second Avenue West and they brought the material that they dug out of Second Avenue across the filled bridge and dumped it in between the two halves of the bridge. They kept dumping it in until finally the street was paved. The Memorial Building sits now on what was nothing but water with a pile of stone up near the First Avenue bridge, marking something that nobody was ever able to figure out.

LMD: Were you required to work when you were growing up?

Crawford: Yeh, I carried water. I wasn't so old then, I must have been ten years old, maybe. I carried water and got a dollar a week, I think, because everything was done by hand. The grading was all done by men with shovels and thrown into a one-yard dump wagon. The dump wagon had a team on it and they pulled it across the river and dumped the bottom out. Another bunch of fellows on the other side were shoveling it in.

LMD: Did you have jobs to do around the house?

Crawford: I don't know of anything in particular. Run of the mill, I guess. We had a big garden. I never was allowed to be idle.

LMD: Was your family really involved in church activities? Did you have a lot of religious activities?

Crawford: No.

LMD: What did you do for fun? Did you have particular games or activities that you remember that are outstanding in your mind as the things kids used to do when they were growing up for fun?

Crawford: I think it was the same thing that kids do all the time. Not as a kid I didn't play golf. Over there on the west side, there was a big backyard that we used to flood in the winter-time and skate on. My neighbor across the streets father was stage manager at the old Greene Opera House. We saw many good shows, among them were Ben Hur, with the chariot races, on the stage from the top of the switch box. He put us up there. We saw a lot of things there-- Wizard of Oz.

LMD: Tell me what you can remember about that production of Ben Hur.

Crawford: I remember the chariot races. I couldn't tell you anything else. They had real horses on the stage on a treadmill and they ran. That was a big production.

LMD: How many people could be seated at Greene's?

Crawford: Probably, at least 1,200. Not less than a thousand and, I don't think, over 1,500. There were three balconies besides the first floor. The balconies, one right after another up to the ceiling.

LMD: How often did you go to Greene's?

Crawford: Every time I had a chance.

LMD: Did the shows run there?

Crawford: They were big road productions. The scenery came in in big pieces. They had special wagons that used to haul them; long wheel-base wagons. There was a big platform out in back along the alley where they unloaded the stuff onto and carried it in and the stage hands put it up.

LMD: Would Ben Hur run for a week or so?

Crawford: I don't know. I don't remember. It would run more than one day, I know.

LMD: Do you remember going back to see the same production?

Crawford: No, just once. My parents took a dim view of me hanging around the opera, you see. It probably wasn't the best place for a young kid. They figured you'd learn things you shouldn't know so young.

LMD: When you were growing up, what can you remember about your mother's, for instance, shopping habits? I know that grocery stores weren't the same as they are now. Did she go out to a grocery store? How did she handle that?

Crawford: Well, we lived on Second Avenue and there was a shopping center on Third Avenue, between First and Second Streets. There were two Italian food stores, a very nice grocery store. Oh, Smulekoff's were over there, and the People's Bank was there. You'd usually send the kids for a dime's worth of meat and tell them to throw in some bones for the dog.

LMD: Did you do that on a daily basis, then?

Crawford: We carried milk from a little milk station there. You bought or took your own can and they took it out of their can and put it in your can, measuring it out by the quart. You were very careful to let the settlings stay in the bottom. Fisher Drug Store was a great hangout on the west side. That's on the corner of First, and it's still there.

LMD: Was that a place where you would go for ice cream?

Crawford: Yeh, and all the politicians hung out there. The city politicians. If you wanted to find any of them, that was a good place to go at night usually.

LMD: Was that true when you were growing up?

Crawford: Yeh, when I was growing up.

LMD: Can you remember a typical Christmas holiday when you were growing up? What it was like? What you did?

Crawford: Well, we went to a big Christmas dinner and had a Christmas tree. Lots of presents.

LMD: Do you have any special family?

Crawford: No. We went to my uncle's. They always had Christmas. They had no children. That was about it.

LMD: Was Christmas or Thanksgiving a bigger holiday?

Crawford: Christmas.

LMD: When you were growing up in Cedar Rapids, people were, in many ways I think, more self sufficient than they are now.

Crawford: Oh, I think so. Every place we went, we went with a horse and buggy in the beginning. Then the automobile comes along. The first one that comes along looked like a carriage, only they had a gasoline engine in them. Bill Haskell had, I think, one of the first ones. They used to ride it up and down First Street on the west side there. Then, along about 1905, the automobiles

began to look like the automobiles that we have today--two in the front and three in the back. The first one we had was a Buick chain-drive, two-cylinder, with an engine under the car and the gasoline tank under the hood. No windshield and no top. If it rained, you got wet. That's all there was to it.

LMD: Did you have an opportunity to drive that car?

Crawford: Yeh, I learned how to drive it. You bet!

LMD: Where did you go?

Crawford: Oh, any place you could get away with it. We used to go--Sunday was a big day. We always went some place, probably to Fairfax and back. That was a big ride. These were two-cylinder cars. They had innertubes. If you punctured the tire, you got out and patched the tube and pumped it up and put it back on again.

LMD: Now, if it rained while you were out...

Crawford: Then we got wet. And you got into trouble, too. No chains and no non-skid tires.

LMD: I guess the roads were pretty muddy.

Crawford: Oh, sure. The only paved road was between Marion and Cedar Rapids. That was a crushed rock road; dusty. The streetcar followed it.

LMD: One more on growing up, and then I'll let you off the hook there. When you were growing up in Cedar Rapids, what can

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LMD: One more on growing up, and then I'll let you off the hook there. When you were growing up in Cedar Rapids, what can

you remember about your favorite treats, your favorite foods that you ate, for instance?

Crawford: I liked them all. Oh, I think strawberries and stuff like that out of the garden. We had a lot of it. My food tastes changed after I lived in France for a couple of years.

LMD: We were just talking about bridges, and I'd like you to tell me more.

Crawford: Well, when I was a kid, there was one, two, three, four... there were four iron bridges across the Cedar River. The First Avenue bridge carried streetcars. That was a heavy bridge. That stayed there until 1919, I think, when the present bridge was built. The old dam stood there. There was a dam there ahead of the dam they tore out to build this one. This is the third dam that I remember. On the other side were a couple of flour mills that used water power and a millrace to turn the wheels and grind flour. They became obsolete, I guess, it must have been about 1910 or so. At any rate, they quit grinding flour, but the millrace stayed there. Then the second dam was built along about 1917 or '18 maybe, and that had a good millrace. Iowa Electric Light and Power had three turbines on that dam that took water. The flow of the river water was so uncertain and unpredictable that it wasn't considered a very good investment. They didn't get enough power out of it to pay for the trouble. They tore it down when the new five-in-one went in. They didn't want any part of it.

The first arch bridge was built on Second Avenue. That's the concrete arch bridge--the same bridge that's there now. The second one, I believe, was built on Third Avenue. That was built along about 1913 or 1914. Then, there was one built down on Sixteenth Avenue. In the meantime, the Third Avenue bridge was moved down to Eighth Avenue and set up there again, which was replaced with the bridge that's there now. The original dam had no control on it. The second dam had gates on the top of it, which were hard to use in high water. They were extremely dangerous to monkey with. We lived along on First Street there, and the river was across the street almost. It was a part of our life.

LMD: How did you cross over before all these bridges?

Crawford: Well Third Avenue and First Avenue were the iron bridges, see. Then, Second Avenue was the first concrete arch bridge that was built in Cedar Rapids; and one of the first in Iowa, I guess. I think there was one in Des Moines ahead of it. That was the first of the arch bridges, you see.

LMD: Who funded that? Was it the city?

Crawford: It was the city, yeh. Second Avenue ended a dead-end at First Street, Second Avenue West, and also Second Avenue East. There was no way of getting across there. Then, Second Avenue was built and after that Third Avenue, and then F Avenue on the west side and B Avenue on the east side.

LMD: Tell us about what you can remember about any floods on the river.

Crawford: I've been through them all, I guess. When we were in business, we had the sand pump up above Ellis Park and we barged sand down the river. In extreme high weather, we were in jeopardy. At times we lost equipment over the dam. In 1929, the river reached a probably 50-year peak and all of the area between Ellis Park and the Northwestern Railroad tracks was covered with about two feet of water. Then, the west side was covered with water every place but Second Avenue and First Street. That stood out. I got in a boat on First Avenue and First Street and rowed up First Street to our plant on I Avenue. Everybody was under. Well, then the city got busy the next year and stripped the over burden off the Ellis quarry up above Ellis Park, and a dike was built along the west side of the Cedar River. It's never repeated, although the water was about as high several times. You can't see the river when you cross the bridge up there. It's high, and it needs to be that high because that can really get a lot of water in it.

LMD: Was that the only thing that was done after the flood? Were any other changes made?

Crawford: The whole river was improved with this last dam and bridge that opened up. The old dam was a bottleneck. Both of the old dams were taken out. This new dam is a roller dam that the water goes under and makes it freer. The channel has been cleaned up and the bridges remodeled so water can go through them. It would take a pretty bad flood to really cause any trouble like 1929, I would think.

LMD: People had to leave their homes and everything.

Crawford: You bet. They were building a temporary dike up along First Street. I was up there at three o'clock in the morning. Without warning, the dike washed away and everybody ran. They ran banging on doors for people to get out because the water was coming. It didn't get deep enough to drown anybody, but it was unpleasant the next morning. Yourowed out over your knees.

LMD: Do you remember barges or any river traffic on the river?

Crawford: We had sand barges. We went up above Ellis Park and barged sand down, but there was a boat called the Parlour City, a steamboat. I don't know how long it lasted, but it was up there. It sank later. The old boiler laid on the side of the river there for a long time by Ellis Park.

LMD: Was it a pleasure boat?

Crawford: A stern wheeler. That's the only boat I ever remember of any consequence. Lots of launches.

LMD: It's a difficult river to traverse, isn't it?

Crawford: We dredged a reasonably good channel, I don't know how well it's filled in now. We dredged up beyond the Edgewood bridge, maybe a mile. We had to run our boats up and down, so we had to keep it open.

LMD: When did you do that?

Crawford: We started dredging sand in about 1916. We kept it up until we sold out in 1968.

LMD: They don't do that any more, do they?

Crawford: No.

LMD: Are there any other stories, while we're on the river, that you'd like to share with us? Do you remember ferries that went across here?

Crawford: No. The only ferry in Cedar Rapids, of any record, was run by my uncle's father, David King. David King came here in about 1839 or '40. His homestead was at the end of the Second Avenue bridge. He platted a town there called Kingston. That's where the Kingston Stadium got its name. The west side of Cedar Rapids was Kingston originally. Then it was taken into Cedar Rapids in later years, but all the abstracts and platts still speak of what was formerly known as Kingston. He died fighting a prairie fire in the 50's when my uncle was just a small child. At one time, they owned the whole west side out there. Robert Ellis came here. They were friends and semi-relatives. He came here a year ahead of the Kings, I think, and he established his homestead at where Ellis Park is now. The old brick house where he lived was still there. I don't know if it's still there now or not. I haven't looked lately. It used to be up there. The caretaker lived in it.

LMD: At that time, they did have to have ferry travel across the river because they didn't have bridges yet.

Crawford: Then, the city bought the park from Robert Ellis and they named it Ellis Park up there and Ellis Boulevard up to it. There was nothing up there when I was a kid. The road was very sandy and hard to get along with the automobiles of the day. You didn't do it very often until he had the road built afterwards.

LMD: Did you use the river for recreation? Did you boat on the river?

Crawford: We used to canoe and boat and fish. We lived on the river. It was a wonder we didn't get drowned. In the wintertime, we skated on the river. Pretty thin ice, too, at times.

LMD: When you were in high school, did you have parties where people would all come and you'd build a bonfire, or how did you do it?

Crawford: No, I don't remember that.

LMD: You just went out and skated, you didn't make a big deal out of it.

Crawford: We went out and skated. Also, we went on the slough. It wasn't heated in those days. The Light Company uses it for cooling water now, but in those days they didn't. That froze over and that was a nice place to skate. Cold! Real cold!

LMD: Where is Manhattan Beach?

Crawford: Well, do you know where the skating is up there? Up on Ellis Boulevard. That originally was a dance hall there, and the dance hall was called Manhattan Beach. There was a band up there, I don't know how many nights a week--three or four nights a week. Good bands and big crowds! The automobiles were just beginning to get thick then, that was along about 1914, 1915, 1916.

LMD: So, that is something that you would have done in high school.

Crawford: I was in high school then, sure.

LMD: Did you go?

Crawford: Sure. Everybody went. The streetcar ended up at about where the Ellis Park pool is, and then you had to walk from there on up. It wasn't so bad walking up, but then coming back about eleven o'clock at night was a little rough.

LMD: You bring up a subject I'm really interested in. When you, for instance, went to Manhattan Beach or went out to have a good time, did you date in couples? Were you allowed to take a girl out and keep her out for a certain length of time?

Crawford: If I could raise enough money, I could. Nobody ever financed me.

LMD: There weren't a lot of restrictions that parents were...

Crawford: When you were in high school, you didn't have too many restrictions. It didn't do much good. It was no different than it is now, only it was more secret.

LMD: What were the attitudes? Things were changing pretty rapidly in those days, and the car had a lot to do with it because it was so easy for youngsters to jump in the car, have a lot of privacy and get away. Were there a lot of things changing, do you remember?

Crawford: Sure, everything was changing, but at that age they were raising just as much hell then as they do now. There's been no

great change of morals, I don't think.

LMD: Some things always just go in circles.

Crawford: Some things always go around just the same.

LMD: What do you remember about the first time you went to see a motion picture, for instance?

Crawford: A nickel! It cost a nickel. In a store front; they were converted storerooms. If there was a real good feature came along, it cost a dime. That was a big deal. The big deal was the Majestic Theatre. See, the Majestic Theatre stood on the corner of Third Street and A Avenue. That was when we were in high school, too; long before we were in high school. On Saturday afternoons, they put on a Saturday afternoon performance and every kid in town could get in for a dime. That was a big deal. That place, they jammed that thing full every Saturday. That was a vaudeville house, and a real good one. A fellow by the name of Victor Hugo ran it. He wasn't the French Victor Hugo.

LMD: Do you remember movies before they introduced the talk, the voice?

Crawford: Oh, sure. Theda Bara was the great vamp, you know. I remember her particularly. I don't know how many more I can recall, but she was a good one.

LMD: Did they have music?

Crawford: They had a piano player. Usually, on the first ones they only had one machine, so when they ran out of the reel, they stopped,

turned on the lights. The piano player played and they took the reel off and put on another reel, started over and started up. Then the picture went on. Then they got more affluent and they got two machines, so they didn't have to stop. Then the day of the big theatres came along.

LMD: How did you keep cool in those theatres in the summertime?

Crawford: I'll tell you, you didn't go too often in the summer. You didn't keep cool. Until the Iowa Theatre came along and the Paramount, I don't think there was...Greene's Opera House never had any cooling in it. Then, there was another theatre, a small theatre, full-size theatre, down right at the end of A Avenue and First Street on the east side--People's Theatre. That was a vaudeville theatre, too. I believe that was built before the Majestic. I'm not sure about that. It was down there. That was cheap for kids, also, on Saturdays.

LMD: Did you ever see vaudeville?

Crawford: Yeh, sure, you saw it every Saturday.

LMD: Of course, I guess Greene's had some of that, too, didn't it.

Crawford: No, Greene's never had any vaudeville. No. It had big road shows, always. Real big ones. Good ones.

LMD: What vaudeville shows, do you remember any one in particular?

Crawford: There was a million of them. How did they start? They usually finished up with the jugglers. There was a lot of vaudeville.

It was like some of these variety shows on television.

LMD: Just lots of different acts, one right after the other.

Crawford: One act, then another act. Different people. Acrobats, singers.

LMD: People who came through town and were part of that and then went on somewhere else. The Chautauqua circuit was going on then.

Crawford: I don't know anything about that. They always had one and the tent was pitched up on the Coe campus usually. There was a lot of room up there in those days. That was a cultural affair that I wasn't so very interested in.

LMD: What about the Alamo Amusement Park?

Crawford: Oh, that was a good place! You bet. Alamo was out there, again, on B Avenue West, just north of Roosevelt School. That was the old Alamo out there. There was a roller coaster, and a chute-to-chutes down into the water. There was a vaudeville show, too, on that. That ran in the summertime--the Alamo Park.

LMD: Was that just run by a private owner? Somebody owned it and you paid an admission to get in.

Crawford: The old Cedar Rapids Carnival used to be out there, too.

LMD: Was that a carnival that did a circuit, too, or did it stay there all summer?

Crawford: No, it didn't stay there all summer. The Cedar Rapids Carnival stayed there for a week. They had big parades.

LMD: This is different from the circus.

Crawford: Oh, yeh, this is different from the circus. The first circus I ever saw was over here on 16th Street and Third Avenue, where Grande Avenue starts out. That was the circus ground. There were no houses beyond there. We drove over from the west side in the horse and buggy, tied the horse up there, and went to the circus.

LMD: What was the difference between the circus and the carnival?

Crawford: The circus was a one-day stand, under a big tent, and all the animals and stuff. The carnival was like a carnival now, only the same kind of honky-tonk shows, as much as they could get by with. Anything they could get by with. They had horse races. There was a grandstand. They had good horse races. They always had horse races. At night, they had big fireworks, too. Big, good ones--professional.

LMD: Not just on the Fourth of July?

Crawford: No. It helped draw the crowd out there. There was a big crowd for the fireworks. That was a big deal.

LMD: Was that the Alamo that did that?

Crawford: Well, no, the carnival, I think. I don't think the Alamo ever had any fireworks. They wanted you to stay around the concessions there, go to the show and spend your money, and ride the rides. The carnival would have a ferris wheel on it, too, but the Alamo didn't.

LMD: The fireworks make me think of the Fourth of July and that's a big event here even now.

Crawford: A lot of fireworks, a lot of firecrackers, a lot of people got burned and hurt. Anything went. They always had somebody who made a big, patriotic speech. Some politician who liked to hear himself talk got to make a speech. They waved the flag and made a big deal out of it.

LMD: Was there then a parade and a lot of crowds down there?

Crawford: No, I don't remember any Fourth of July parades particularly.

LMD: Where would he speak, then? The politician.

Crawford: In one of the parks some place.

LMD: What was your favorite park when you were growing up?

Crawford: It depended on what you wanted.

LMD: You went to a lot of them.

Crawford: Ellis Park was the best park if you liked to boat. They rented canoes up there. You could have a canoe and take your girlfriend out for a canoe ride. That always was kind of interesting. Bever Park had animals and that was a good place to go for a picnic. At Ellis Park, they had picnic tables all over the place originally. A place to cook out. Then, they built the golf course up there afterwards.

LMD: When did you start golfing?

Crawford: Right after World War I.

LMD: You were grown then.

Crawford: Yeh, I was grown then. I had lived in Europe two years. Yeh, I was really grown.

LMD: Since you are kind of at that stage, I'd like for you to tell about your involvement in World War I.

Crawford: I was a Carnegie Tech and I had the good luck to be rooming with a fellow whose uncle was a senator. We went to Washington and got there just in time to sit in the United States Senate and watch the United States Senate declare war on Germany. That was quite a night. Then I came home, quit school and came home, and this ambulance section was being organized at the University of Iowa. They were all over the country. It was to be a real quick deal to get to France to show the French Army that the Americans were going to get there sooner or later and hang on a little longer. They sent us to Allentown, Pennsylvania, and we were there for about five months. Next, we were loaded on a transport and went to England, across England and on another one to St. Nazaire and we stayed in Nazaire for about a month and put our four ambulances together. Then we started for Paris, and we met the French Army at Versailles and turned us over to the French Army. We got French rations, French gas masks, French everything from then on. Food; everything. Then we went on up to Toul where we were attached to the 165th Division of the French Army, which was expendable. After they got most of them killed or wounded, there was no division left, so we went with the 42nd Division of the French Army, which was just the opposite. They were coddling them.

LMD: What was the difference? Why?

Crawford: The 42nd Division of the French Army in the Battle of Verdun captured Fort Dumont, which was the toughest one of the bunch and held onto it in spite of everything. They were decimated at that time. They were called "chasseurs a' pied," meaning "on foot" and they were good soldiers. After the thing was built up again, they never got in until the last week of the war. Then they got into a bad one, and we all got into a bad one. That ended the War and we went to Germany with them.

LMD: You were only with the French Army, then, the whole time you were over there.

Crawford: All the time we were with the French Army. We were never with the American Army.

LMD: You went out into the battlefield and picked up the wounded?

Crawford: We went out into the battlefield, all right. We went to the regimental first aid station, which they called the "poste de secour" That was the first aid dressing station. We picked them up there and took them back to a triage, and then they were sent back with big ambulances further on. We could go pert near where a man could walk, and we usually did. We lost a lot of them, ambulances and two or three men.

LMD: That must have given you a whole new different feeling about war.

Crawford: You see the futility of war. Then, it's over with and everyone's friends again. Only they have 7 million dead to show for it in Europe.

LMD: When did you come back then?

Crawford: June, 1919.

LMD: When you came back to Cedar Rapids, were there a lot of celebrations going on?

Crawford: No. The novelty had worn off. That was just another soldier coming home.

LMD: What about when you went over?

Crawford: We enlisted in Iowa City--and supposed to not go for a couple of weeks. I got a telephone call to come down tomorrow morning ready to go. We went and I was never home again. Never home once after that.

LMD: You and I were talking earlier about the fact that you missed out on one of the big events here in Cedar Rapids, or one of the tragic events here in Cedar Rapids, because it was May of that 1919 when the Douglas Starch Works exploded.

Crawford: I saw two big deals! In 1907 (I think, I'm not sure) the old Quaker Oats plant blew up and burned up in a terrific fire. I stood on the end of the First Avenue bridge on the west side and you could feel the heat from it. There were wooden elevators with corregated iron sheathing on the outside. Those things got red hot and were flying all over town. It was quite a night. The other was the Penick & Ford dry dust explosion in 1919. I was on the Atlantic Ocean when that happened, but it was sure a wreck when we got home.

LMD: I wanted to ask you, I know you took over as the owner of King's Crown Plaster in 1922?

Crawford: No, I quit the Rude Auto Company and went to work for my uncle at the King's Crown Plaster Company then. They made plaster and building material and pumped sand. Then, as time went on, we went into the ready-mix concrete business, enlarged our sand business and finally sold out in 1968. We went through a big boom in Cedar Rapids.

LMD: When you first went into that business, you were going into the Depression years, weren't you?

Crawford: Yes, pretty much. I went to King's in 1922, and we went from 1922 to 1929 and there was no Depression. In 1929, when the Depression came, in October, 1929, and the bottom fell out of hack real good. All the banks closed.

LMD: How did that affect your business?

Crawford: There was no building because nobody could get any money to build. Building and Loans were all tied up. There were only three of them here then. There was Bohemian, Perpetual, and the old Cedar Rapids Building and Loan, which is now the American Federal. All the banks failed, except the People's and the Merchants. There were big crowds in front of both of them all one afternoon. They paid them off in money. That night in the paper, the two banks surviving took out a joint ad and asked people to be orderly. If they wanted to draw out their money, they had money in the bank and they could pay them off. Just

be orderly and not block the streets, because certain routines had to be followed. The next morning nobody showed up. Psychology.

END OF SIDE ONE - BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LMD: Mr. Crawford, will you continue on People's Bank and tell about your involvement as a director during that time.

Crawford: I was made a member of the Board of Directors of the People's Bank in December, 1929, and I'm still on the board today.

LMD: You were pretty young, weren't you?

Crawford: Yeh. King died in 1929.

LMD: Can you tell us how you came to be involved as a member of the Board of Directors? You were just about 33 then, weren't you?

Crawford: Yes, when the run came was '32 or '33. That was the real serious business. We sat in the director's room and watched all our friends and neighbors go in and carefully draw their money out of the bank. As they got it drawn out, they didn't know what to do with it. Some of them hid it here and hid it there. After the bank holiday, the People's and Merchants were allowed to re-open on a full-bank service business and, of course, the people had no place else for their money. Things were pretty safe and the money began coming back into the banks and business resumed. The banks started loaning money again. It slowly picked up, but it was a long Depression going to be ahead of us. That's for sure.

LMD: How did the Depression affect your business?

Crawford: There was a lot of made work by the government. A lot of money poured in public works, paving, and a lot of things that local taxpayers couldn't afford, but the government did afford. That forced building. It created enough business to keep us going. It was a little rough, but we kept going.

LMD: Can you talk about the wages that you paid in those days?

Crawford: Well, during the Depression, as I remember, the highest paid skills in the building trades were bricklayers, plasterers, maybe electricians and plumbers. The top scale was about 62½ cents an hour, which is a considerable difference from today.

LMD: Who did you draw your employees from? Did you have a lot of employees from the Czechoslovakian community?

Crawford: We hired truck drivers wherever we could get an experienced truck driver. They came from all over. Our truck drivers were usually affiliated with the Teamster's Union, and they were a source of supply.

LMD: Did you ever have any difficulty with the unions?

Crawford: Not particularly.

LMD: I suppose that during the Depression that they were really not pushing very hard.

Crawford: We got along all right with the Teamster's Union for many years.

LMD: Did they ever strike against you?

Crawford: No. We never had a strike.

LMD: When the Depression first hit, did you find it necessary to lay people off?

Crawford: Yes, our business slumped very fast. There was no unemployment insurance and there was nothing. All you did was pay them off and tell them "Good-by! We'll call you when we need you." That's the end of it and they had to scrounge for themselves. It was pretty rough going.

LMD: How long did it take before you were able to begin hiring people back?

Crawford: Oh, I think, it was pretty slack all during the '30's. Along in 1938 and '39 it began to pick up. There was housing picked up. In 1939, Collins first building was built here by the Austin Company. That was a big pick up for the Kenwood area.

LMD: Can you remember how the community dealt with the needs of the people during the '30's? In the larger cities, there were bread lines and all kinds of hunger. Did you find that that was true here?

Crawford: Henry Haegg, who was a paving contractor and very active in the American Legion, ran a soup kitchen over in the Memorial Building basement. Anybody who was hungry and, at noon, wanted something to eat, they were welcome to a bowl of good, nourishing soup. Henry raised the money and provided the stuff. It was well used.

LMD: People just volunteered to help him out? So, the community kind of helped take care of its own in that situation?

Crawford: Everybody took care of their own, that's right.

LMD: Were you involved in any of the big buildings? During the '30's, were a lot of the public buildings put up that we have now?

Crawford: Yes, we furnished building materials: sand, gravel, cement, brick, to a lot of the buildings.

LMD: Were there any downtown that you were really involved with?

Crawford: We furnished a lot of material on the Roosevelt Hotel. We furnished the material on the new Post Office when it was built. We furnished the Iowa Theatre. That was just a few of them. A lot of the Quaker Oats buildings that were built. They were built after the Depression started, too. We furnished a lot of material to Quaker Oats Company.

LMD: We talked before about how decisions were made in the community and how changes, policy decisions, that came about and affected the growth of the community eventually were made. Do you think that when you were involved in your work and in the boards during the '20's and '30's, were most of the decisions made through the city government or were they made by business leaders who got together, or how did that happen?

Crawford: Yes, I think it was pretty much the decisions were made, and a lot of things were influenced by the Gazette, which was behind almost all moves to help in Cedar Rapids. Everybody in Cedar Rapids cooperated well on the acquisition of new industries.

In one case, Howard Hall offered to loan one company ninety of his best machinists to man the factory until they got started. That was Miehle, Goss, which is now Rockwell International Graphic Industries.

LMD: Now, that was probably later on. In the '40's or 50's?

Crawford: That was after the war, in the early '50's.

LMD: I really like that story, and, I think, if you would expand on it--tell how they came to town and how impressed they were.

Crawford: The committee that was selected for Dexter, Miehle, Goss who were selecting the sight, came to Cedar Rapids without anybody's knowledge. In fact, they were brought here by the Fantis Factory Locating Service. They were well prepared on the merits of Cedar Rapids, but they came here to take a physical look at it. They called a breakfast at the Chamber of Commerce at eight o'clock one cold February morning, and we were confronted with three members of the top executives of Dexter, Miehle, Goss Company, who made newspaper printing presses which the Gazette used. They were surprised and pleased with the cooperation of all the local businesses they talked to. That was where Howard Hall offered to loan them machinists to get their plant in operation. They could pick out anyone they wanted, he said. Beale Perrine was representing Howard there. The Machinists' Union was very cooperative. Lou Boudreaux of Penick & Ford spent a couple of hours with them on business taxes. Before they were through, they were thoroughly impressed with Cedar Rapids. They told us afterwards that the kind of cooperation and the welcome that

they got here, they agreed among themselves (but they didn't tell us for six weeks) that they were choosing Cedar Rapids as the spot for the new plant, which was built here. That's part of Rockwell International now.

LMD: So, you think that's really been ongoing?

Crawford: They sell presses for newspapers, and that's an important thing in the newspaper business today.

LMD: I mean the policy making...that there has been this cooperation over the years.

Crawford: All the time I was involved with the Chamber of Commerce, the cooperation between the Chamber of Commerce and the various industries in the town was very top notch. They were very cooperative to get other good plants located here.

LMD: Were there any big conflicts during that period over whether certain factories or certain plants should come in?

Crawford: Not particularly. Oh, I suppose there was, but I don't remember anything very serious.

LMD: If you had to point to one thing during the period of the '20's and the 30's right after World War II that you think was a great acheivement, could you pick one thing out?

Crawford: You mean that happened in Cedar Rapids? I suppose the permanent location of Collins Radio was the biggest thing that happened. That happened in 1939.

LMD: Now, but that almost didn't happen, did it?

Crawford: Yes, there was a lot of controversy over it. Arthur Collins, himself, settled it and picked the site where the first original plant was built.

LMD: Would you mind telling that story? I know that's right on the edge of the period that we're talking about, but it really is a wonderful story.

Crawford: I don't think that's the story that ought to be put on tape.

LMD: Will you just talk about that process of helping Arthur Collins?

Crawford: Arthur Collins was recognized by the United States Navy as a genius. They wanted to use his know-how and his ability to invent communication systems and finance the original Collins' factory. The only thing Collins had to do was find a sight. The original sight was in a residential area and was turned down by the Zoning Commission. Then Collins came to the Chamber of Commerce. I happened to be on the committee. After searching the area over and all the abstract companies, looking for a sight, I walked into People's Bank and said, "The only sight they're really interested in is the old Leonard farm on 32nd and 34th Streets and it would take too long to get it because it was in an estate." Mr. Wolf turned around and said, "Well, that isn't right because the real estate man was just in here this morning and he has it listed." So, we got in touch with him and he got in touch with Collins. By the next Monday morning, Collins owned the site for the original plant. It was a cornfield.

LMD: Because of luck and perseverence, right?

Crawford: The contract was awarded right away and the building started within a very short time. The Austin Company of Chicago built the original building.

LMD: I think we had talked before about the cooperation in the community, but there was a court house struggle that went on during that time, too, between Cedar Rapids and Marion. Do you have any memories about that?

Crawford: Oh, nothing particular, except the court house was a sleazy old barn-of-a building on the Milwaukee Railroad back of the City Park up there. It wasn't fit for anything, and still they couldn't get enough votes out to move it to Cedar Rapids where all the business was. They finally did that and built the building on the island about 1923 or '24. It's now become inadequate and outgrown. The jail has had to be doubled and the Tax Department has moved over on the west side and is still growing.

LMD: I think it took five tries. Harold Ewoldt told me it took five tries.

Crawford: Harold Ewoldt is an expert on early Cedar Rapids. He's made a study of it.

LMD: He says he's not an expert; he's a specialist, and specialists can make mistakes.

Crawford: That's the way with me. I'm no expert either.

LMD: Let's go back track a bit. One of the areas we didn't cover when we were talking about transportation and technology earlier.

Another area of technology that changed so much during the '20's and 30's, and even before then, was the communications. There were telephones introduced, radios. Tell us about your first telephone.

Crawford: Originally there were two telephone companies in Cedar Rapids. One of them was the Bell Telephone, and I forget what the other one was. Everybody had to have two telephones because so many customers were on the wrong phone, so every business had to have two telephones with two different, separate companies. Later, they were put together. I guess the Northwestern Bell emerged out of the thing and it went along pretty well until the trust-busters busted that up. They spoiled a real good telephone company.

LMD: Do you remember when you had your first phone at home?

Crawford: I wasn't very big. It must have been in the early 1900's. You turned a crank on the wall, or picked up the receiver, turned the crank on the wall and gave the operator your number.

LMD: Tell me about your first radio, what you remember about having a radio, and how you used it at home.

Crawford: You can almost remember the first radio.

LMD: Not quite. I wasn't born until '46.

Crawford: Oh, you're a latecomer. I think it was in the early '20's that they began to show up.

LMD: Was there a station here in town then?

Crawford: Yes. There was WMT, I think was here. I know it was. KCRG was here, owned by a different party than the Gazette. It evolved over the 25 or 30 years into television. Now, the whole business is electronics.

LMD: Did you listen to radio as much as we watch television now?

Crawford: Yes. 'Amos and Andy' was a big deal. There were a lot of serials that were real important in those days.

LMD: Did you use the radio to get your news, or did you primarily use newspapers?

Crawford: Newspapers were the primary source of news, always.

LMD: Talk about the newspapers that you had here.

Crawford: Originally there were two newspapers here: The Cedar Rapids Republican and The Cedar Rapids Gazette. The Republican was a morning paper and The Gazette was an afternoon paper. In those days, the dominant paper was the afternoon paper. Today, the dominant paper is the morning paper. The Gazette has gone to morning, successfully and most papers have gone, because the expert coverage of spot news by television--the evening is taken up by people watching the tube and they don't read the paper like they used to. The morning is the best time.

LMD: You mentioned earlier that The Gazette was a force in helping to attract people to the community. I guess that Mr. Marshall was very involved.

Crawford: Yes, Verne Marshall and Joe Hladky. You see, Joe and I went together to the Meely-Goss meeting. That was a big joke because Joe had just bought a million dollars worth of presses from them. As far as cooperation is concerned, The Gazette has always been extremely cooperative with the acquisition of new industries or new businesses of any kind in Cedar Rapids. From the start to the finish, from way back in the Miller, Faulkes Marshall days up to the present generation of Joe Hladky as publisher, they have been very helpful and extended themselves to the utmost for the betterment of Cedar Rapids and the betterment of good industries and good people moving in.

LMD: I suppose, especially during the '20's and 30's, radio was such a new thing that it really wasn't a force in the community, or was it? Was it primarily the newspaper that was a force in the community?

Crawford: The newspaper was the force in the community in the fact that the newspaper has always been the force in the community. It still is. Some people might argue that, but the printed is still pretty important in any community. The Gazette is a very important means of communication in Cedar Rapids.

LMD: We had talked before about local historic events that you remember. I kind of lumped these all together here. We had talked about the building collapse, the Quaker Oats fire, but one that we didn't mention was the Clifton Hotel fire. That was back, and you could have been only about seven years old, 1903. Can you remember that?

Crawford: Yes, that's about right. Yes, I remember. Again, it burned in the night and we lived on Second Avenue and Second Street West, about eight blocks away from the hotel. We didn't know there was a fire that night until the neighbors came in and said several people had been burned to death in the Clifton Hotel fire. Then, of course, all the kids hot-footed it for the fire, but they were digging for victims then.

LMD: What was the Fire Department like in those days?

Crawford: They were horse-drawn. The chief had a single horse and the gong on it. He led the parade. The first one I remember was on Third Street and A Avenue in an old wooden building, almost in the shadow of the Quaker Oats Company. Then, at that time, there was one on First Street West between Second and Third Avenue. There was one on 14th Avenue and Third Street and another one out in Central Park. Besides the downtown one, that was it. They were all horse-drawn, and it took quite awhile to get to a fire. Most of them had a Dalmatian dog that rode along with them. Just like the pictures.

LMD: Did they just run their hoses into the fire hydrants, like we have now, or did they have to go to the river for the water?

Crawford: No, they pumped water right out of the fire hydrants.

LMD: It was just a hand pump, I guess.

Crawford: No, just the force of the city water. They had no pumps. Cedar Rapids didn't have a pump in the Fire Department on a piece of equipment for a long time after the Quaker Oats fire.

LMD: That has a lot to do with how those big fires could get out-of-hand.

Crawford: Cedar Rapids has to have a real good Fire Department and a well-trained Fire Department because of the nature of some of the major businesses here is a dry-dust explosion and grain elevators. That is a pretty bad one when that happens. Penick and Ford blew up with one, and Quaker blew up with one. I think Quaker, before they put in a fire extinguisher system, they had several of them that didn't cause as much damage. They happen all over. It usually is the result of too much dust accumulating and not being properly cleaned up.

LMD: Another event that I didn't mention the last time, but the Cedar Rapids Public Library stuck this one in, do you remember the Library murder in 1921?

Crawford: That Library was there long before 1921.

LMD: No, there was a murder in the Library.

Crawford: Oh, a murder. Do you know the name of the man who was murdered.

LMD: No, I don't.

Crawford: I think he was a brother of one of our truck drivers. I think he shot a policeman, or there was a policeman involved. I think the policeman was the brother of our truck driver, that was it, who was killed. I remember now; his name was Gillen. It was right across the street from The Gazette. They had an exclusive story in about five minutes.

LMD: Do you remember, was there a trial afterwards?

Crawford: No, but the Public Library, the present Public Library, must have been built about 1902 or '03. When it was finished, all the kids, the school kids in town, were paraded over so many at a time. We walked over from Madison School, paraded into the Library. They had little red chairs there that we all sat in. We were just little kids. There were no book stacks in the middle at all. The only book stacks there were were around the edges. That's the way the original was.

LMD: The Library has been kind of a source of conflict in the community, hasn't it. Some people have been in favor of building this new one and some people have been against it. I don't know if that went back to the original Library or not.

Crawford: No.

LMD: Let's move on to some of the national events that were happening during that period and your memories of how they affected Cedar Rapids. You were in World War I and left here and came back at the end of the war. Do you have any memories or any knowledge during that period of whether the Germans in this area were discriminated against, whether there were things that happened to the large German population here. Did people take a dim view of them during that time, or do you know?

Crawford: I don't know. I was at Carnegie Tech from 1915 to 1917. Then I came back here, joined the Army, and was gone until 1919. Those war years were out of the picture as far as I was concerned.

LMD: We talked about the patriotic feelings during that period, too. Do you remember that there was a lot of furror and excitement? How did people feel about the war?

Crawford: Some people didn't like it, like all wars. After you go through one, you don't like it either.

LMD: What did you think it would be like when you went over there?

Crawford: It was like I thought it would be--a lot of dirt and corruption, a lot of noise, a lot of discomfort, and a lot of fun when you got away from it all.

LMD: There were some exciting parts?

Crawford: There were some compensations, but I wouldn't trade it for anything.

LMD: The experience?

Crawford: The two years I spent in the French Army, really, I wouldn't trade it for anything. It was good, as long as I didn't get killed. I got gassed once, but I didn't get killed.

LMD: You did get gassed. Did you have a gas mask?

Crawford: Mustard gas. You're not supposed to live with it.

LMD: So, you actually got some of it.

Crawford: I didn't get it in me; I got it on me--burned. That's not very good either.

LMD: 1919 was the year of Women's Suffrage, when voting rights came to women. Of course, you were just coming back to Cedar Rapids. Do you remember that there was any excitement about that?

Crawford: No. That didn't impress me very much.

LMD: We had talked earlier about the role of women in Cedar Rapids and how slowly that changed. Would you talk a little about the people you know who have become a part of policy-making bodies--women who have managed to become a part of policy-making bodies during your period on boards.

Crawford: Coe College took two women, I think, as board members after a vigorous struggle. I'm not sure but that Roby was one of them. I may not be right, but she was on very shortly after that. I forget who the other one was. There was one woman elected once to the Iowa Electric Light and Power Company board.

LMD: When was that, do you remember?

Crawford: That was in the '60's.

LMD: So, that's pretty late. During the '20's and '30's...

Crawford: There were no women on any boards in those days. Never. In fact, there isn't only one or two women on any bank boards in this town now. Esther Kanealy is on the Brenton Bank board, the local board here. I don't know of any others. There may be some, I don't know.

LMD: That's evolved real slowly. That involvement has come about very slowly.

Crawford: Yes.

LMD: You had mentioned, too, that Robert Armstrong worked to help bring Roby Kesler onto the Coe board, and that he was really in favor of that.

Crawford: Robert was very much in favor of it. There were some others on there that were very much opposed to it. It caused quite a bit of feelings at the time.

LMD: The first time is always hard. Do you remember, since Cedar Rapids is a city where 25% of the population is still Czechoslovakian descendants, certainly the immigrants were an important part of the economy.

Crawford: It was all to the good.

LMD: Mr. Crawford, you've been here for 88 years, only left for the war and came back and have lived through all the different things that happened during the Twentieth Century here in Cedar Rapids. Why did you stay in Cedar Rapids?

Crawford: My roots were here. I think it's about the best town I've ever been in. I've been all over the world, pretty near.

LMD: Did Mrs. Crawford have anything to do with it?

Crawford: Yes, I met Mrs. Crawford here. Her roots were here, too. Our roots have been here ever since.

LMD: You just think it's a good place to live.

Crawford: It's a real good place to live. I have no fault to find with it. It has its ups and downs. There are some things that could be improved with it. Taken as a whole, it's a pretty darn good city.

LMD: It seems to me from just being here for four years, that it has a sense of community. People think about being a part of this community and sometimes they don't in other places.

Crawford: Yes, it does, I think. I believe so.

LMD: Is there any other area that we have talked about that you have a comment about?

Crawford: I can tell you what happened in 1898 better.

LMD: I know what you mean. Those memories are clearer than the ones that come later.

Crawford: That part of your brain isn't used much, so you can just store things in it.

LMD: We had talked about some of the famous people, or infamous, of Cedar Rapids, and I had asked you if you had any memory of the Cherry sisters. That dates back to 1898, just about, doesn't it?

Crawford: Yes. We were just little kids when they were running around. We didn't go to the theatre.

LMD: I had asked you if you knew Grant Wood or had any stories about Grant Wood. Mostly, you said you just knew him. You wouldn't tell me who were the characters in Carl Van Vechten's <u>Tattooed Countess</u>.

Crawford: They were ahead of my day.

LMD: That really does go back to before the turn of the century. O.K., if I can't get any more gossip out of you, I guess I'll have to quit. In relationship to famous events, of course one of the most famous events of the '20's was Prohibition. Do you remember--I'm certainly not asking you to reveal any personal information here--what can you tell me about, was there a system for getting liquor in Cedar Rapids during that period? Were there bootleggers? How did that affect this community?

Crawford: Oh sure, there were bootleggers. You could get supposedly good liquor from a drug store on a prescription. You could buy moonshine. They would bring it up from Arkansas or down in the southern states some place, in barrels in the back end of cars. Alcohol was sold nearly every place. It was a highly disregarded law. It got so bad they had to cut it out.

LMD: So even if you went into a restaurant during that time...

Crawford: No, you couldn't buy a drink of hard liquor in Iowa. You could buy nearbeer and pour a little alcohol in it. Put your thumb over it, and turn the bottle up and down. Then drink it. That made a pretty good drink.

LMD: Do you remember any of the local breweries that existed here before Prohibition?

Crawford: There was only one brewery here. That's the Magnus Brewery. The Magnus Hotel was just torn down downtown. That was the Magnus estate. The Magnus Brewery was right over there on B Avenue or

C Avenue. It was over there along the slough where the Light Company is, right below the powerhouse there. They made a local suds called Magnus beer.

LMD: Was that in the early part of the Twentieth Century?

Crawford: Yes, that was early. That was ArtTschirgi's uncle. Art Tschirgi's mother was Mrs. Tschirgi. Mrs. Tschirgi died just last year. The old Magnus Brewery made a lot of beer. I don't think there was any other. I never remember hearing of one.

LMD: I think the Amanas had one.

Crawford: I don't know whether they made beer, or not, but they made a lot of wine down there--rhubarb wine.

LMD: So, you're not going to reveal the name of your own bootlegger during that period.

Crawford: The guys who brought this moonshine came up here from--they used to kid around about it. The sheriff of Little Rock, Arkansas, ran the operation. It was never any crime. Moonshining was no crime in those hills at any time. You could always tell a moonshiner. He had a ridge across his nose because he drank out of a mason jar; the edge came up and hit him in the nose, so he got a crease in his nose.

LMD: I think that covers all my questions. Thank you very much.

END OF SIDE TWO - END OF INTERVIEW