

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Lloyd F. Love

COLLECTION: 4700.1208

IDENTIFICATION: 1942 LSU graduate; WWII veteran, bomber pilot; 1946- 1947 Student Government Association president; 1948 LSU Law School graduate; lawyer for nearly 50 years in Ferriday, Louisiana

INTERVIEWER: Jennifer Abraham

SERIES: University History – Student Government Association Past Presidents

INTERVIEW DATES: December 6, 1999; May 25, 2000

FOCUS DATES: 1930s -2000s

ABSTRACT:

Session I

Tape 1766, Side A

Introduction; Love was LSU Student Body President from 1946-47; many veterans returned to LSU after WWII; he planned to stay in the service, was stationed at Chennault Field in Lake Charles, Louisiana; while at LSU for football game, his roommate's girlfriend set him up with her friend, Ann; after this blind date, Love decided to leave the service; he wasn't penalized for leaving because he had accumulated enough points during his service; he flew B-26s called Martin Marauders, they were bombers; explanation of the aircraft and personnel on board; they bombed German ammunition dumps, bridges, etc.; he flew missions out of Sardinia; learned to fly through LSU's Civilian Pilot Training [CPT] program; he went straight into the army from LSU, the various cities and bases where he was trained and stationed, starting with Fort Knox, Kentucky; got his wings in August 1943; flew seventy-three missions in a B-26, returned to the US and flew out of Del Rio, Texas, until the war ended; starting at LSU Law School in late 1946, his class had twenty-five students, following semester there were 175 students; they didn't have to take the bar exam because one of his classmates was a state senator; his class included many later politicians and judges; Love born in Concordia Parish, Louisiana; parents were farmers on land owned by his mother's family, the Campbells; his father, James, was once sheriff of Concordia Parish; they had a garden and were well-fed; they lived on Black River; they would hunt and fish for brim and white perch; commuting to and from Baton Rouge by ferry, bus, and hitchhiking; he has one brother; his chores as a child included milking cows and chopping wood; his mother kept their clothes clean and patched, he explains her method for washing; they made their own soap and butter, grew corn and took it to a gristmill; nobody had any money in those days; parents sacrificed to send him to LSU; his first year, he had two scholarships but had to give one up his second semester; his roommate helped him get a job as freshman manager to the

baseball team; he got to watch the New York Giants baseball team's spring training at what later became Alex Box Stadium; he played baseball at Monterey High School; there were fifteen students in his graduating class; at LSU he majored in Forestry; costs and benefits of lumber, other crops like soybeans; LSU was the only school he wanted to go to; his family seldom visited Natchez, Mississippi; he was overwhelmed by Baton Rouge at first; LSU cadet trips organized by Huey Long, who would haggle with railroad officials to get students free passage; he hadn't travelled much, had been on a train before but only for short trips; story about a student who demanded admission to LSU even though he only had two dollars for tuition;

Tape 1766, Side B

Story about his friend Lee Berwick who was assigned to cut weeds on the levee road; Lee later captured a whole battalion of Germans in WWII; Huey Long was dead by the time Love got to LSU; Huey's man James Monroe Smith, LSU president who was sent to prison; everything Huey Long did helped poor people like Love; Love knew Russell Long through being a lawyer; LSU Alumni Federation and members; seeking funding and starting LSU Foundation; it helped keep LSU in a competitive position; recent firing of LSU football coach, prospects for next season; ROTC was life at LSU, all the cadets lived together in the Pentagon; he was in Delta Sigma Phi fraternity; his various roommates; undergraduate major in Forestry; two law degrees awarded by LSU; he had an F in one class; as a senior he worked in the library; he didn't know T. Harry Williams, but LSU has several nationally known professors like him; Edwin Edwards could have done more for LSU but he was trying to stay out of jail; he didn't have much money to spend on entertainment but did go to movies and restaurants on Chimes Street; he could eat at the boarding club for \$15 all month; he was getting a flying lesson when news broke about the bombing of Pearl Harbor; he was learning to fly before U.S. involvement in the war; flying lessons were free; he failed one physical due to a heart murmur, paid another doctor three dollars for a second opinion and passed; he learned to fly on a Piper Cub; the Baton Rouge Municipal Airport was at the end of Government Street; he and his friend Percy Rountree never registered for the draft, they were reserve officers ordered to duty; ROTC and CPT program at LSU prepared him for training; "washing out" was the term for people who failed the flight test; people crashed frequently; after getting his wings, first assignment at Barksdale Field in Shreveport; that period of time was a highlight of his life, describes visiting family in Jena and visiting other towns in Louisiana; explanation of how he and his cadet friends hitchhiked to and from Baton Rouge, stops along the way, taking the ferry across the river or taking a bus; the trip usually took about four hours; roads were different and roads exist now that didn't back then; towns they travelled through;

Tape 1767, Side A

His first impressions of Baton Rouge, he was intimidated because he grew up in the country; inexperience in social interactions with women; events on freshman day; he had to be in his dorm by 8 PM, his roommate was always up studying; Dairy School students got all the milk and ice cream they wanted; his family rarely had ice because they didn't have the dime to pay for a block; many people got work as carpenters when Camp Livingston and Camp Polk were being built; young men working for the Civilian Conservation Corps; as a child, he could pick cotton for fifty cents per 100 pounds, it was hard work; he made some money with his uncles cutting cross ties for the railroad; people logged and plowed with mules in the area where he grew up; in the army, he was stationed in several Texas towns, then Barksdale AFB, then sent overseas to

Sardinia, then finished the war in Del Rio, Texas; his mother was Christian, his wife is Methodist; family went to church every Sunday; he recalls church events like dinner on the grounds and the delicious food people prepared, especially fried chicken; he came home during his first summer at LSU, other summers he took classes or attended ROTC camp, also worked surveying oil fields; his younger brother, Junior, was several years behind him in school, he went into the Marine Corps, was an expert shot who served as a bodyguard; Love's father sold cattle to help pay his LSU tuition; he never knew he was poor because nobody else had any money either; his granddaughter, Emily, was just pictured in the newspaper; a picture of Love where he resembles Elvis; Emily attended LSU on a TOPS scholarship; difficult to finance three of his children at LSU at the same time; when he attended LSU, it cost forty dollars per semester which didn't include living expenses or food; costs for a room and meals at the boarding house; he mailed his laundry home; he didn't visit home as much as he got older; he wouldn't change his decision to attend LSU; he agrees that before the war, LSU was like a village, everyone knew each other; system for sending invitations to dances; dances were held in the Gym Armory, tickets costs, bands, formals, chaperones, extended curfews; he doesn't recall any incidents of trouble although he's sure people broke the rules; kids from New Orleans were more experienced; interruption and discussion of broken heater; spending a night in New Orleans with a relative during Mardi Gras, the first time he was ever in a big city;

Tape 1767, Side B

Military students were always competing, he participated in cross-country and the rifle competition; he never missed an athletic event; football was a big deal when he started at LSU, he recalls players from that time; halftime show featured the band and majorettes; basketball players he was friendly with, he would play with them on eight-person teams occasionally; changes at LSU after the war, fewer people involved with the military; military students no longer lived with each other and he feels that contributed to more students dropping out; to be a student at LSU, you had to be "free, white and twenty-one"; student retention rates have improved tremendously; influential students during his time included Russell Long, Jimmy Stoker, J.B. Frye, Charest Thibaut, J.W. Sanders; names other people he remained friendly with; Gillis Long was the most competent person; he and Stoker were the class of '42; he always enjoys seeing Gus Kinchen at alumni events; Love ran for Student Body President because his roommate didn't want to; he thinks being a veteran helped his chances; story about his friends Fred Blanche and Hap Sevier, Hap arrested for spilling a drink on someone at a football game, somehow avoided being charged; Love is surprised that LSU students don't all get tickets to football games; campus bookstore charged a lot but needed to make money to stay in business; Harding Field is where the airport is now, it was built as a fighter base; National Student Association conference he attended in Chicago was supposedly infiltrated by a communist group, if so, he was too naïve to notice; at the time, people like Joseph McCarthy were worried about communism; as Student Body President, he got to select Homecoming Queen, he chose his present wife, Ann, who he was already dating; browsing a yearbook for photos of his wife and himself; he points out Walter Piggy Barnes who acted in John Wayne films; his wife's maiden name is Jackson; photo of Love smiling while Ann is crowned; he spent Christmas 1943 in Casablanca, Morocco, he thought it was a dump, it wasn't like in the movies; in Algiers, introducing himself to a woman who had a witty way of revealing she was a prostitute; spending time at rest camps in Capri, Rome, France and Florida; his crew once crashed on takeoff with a full load of bombs that the bombardier had armed on the ground, they shouldn't be alive; one

mission where a plane in formation went straight into the ground; begins story of injury to his eye; tape cuts off.

Session II

Tape 1921, Side A

Introduction; his father had forty acres of farmland, land originally owned by his great-grandfather, Louis Campbell; Love gives some history of the Campbells and other relatives; ring levee built around Concordia Parish; when he was growing up in Monterey, they would go to Harrisonburg to avoid flooding; during floods, people would leave their livestock on high ground and feed them from a boat; his friend from LSU, Lee Berwick; Love had to choose between two scholarships at LSU; worked as freshman manager for the baseball team and got to see the New York Giants play on campus; the Giants spent money on the baseball field but it was Skip Bertman who really started the program; Alex Box, for whom the baseball field was named, was the first LSU student killed in WWII; Love's high school was small and didn't have many athletic programs; the 1958 LSU Championship football team included several players from Ferriday; Love was an honorary member of the coaching staff for the championship game; describing a signed photo with signatures from the team; photo of the 1960 LSU Board of Directors; LSU Foundation started with no money; discussing other people in the photo; General Troy Middleton told them how to get money for LSU from Russell Long who was Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee; Love was on the board because he was president of the Alumni Federation; many on the board members were lawyers; LSU Foundation has been instrumental to growing LSU, the state legislature has not made LSU a priority; in 1938, most students were broke; Love was good friends with Leander Perez, Jr. at LSU; everyone in the military was on equal ground; difficulty of budgeting for food a month at a time; he heard about the 1927 flood, it was before he started school in Monterey; explanation of the levee system at that time, areas upriver that flooded to protect New Orleans; three brothers who drowned in the Mississippi River; spillways on the Atchafalaya River, Red River, etc.; hydroelectric dam near Vidalia is just now generating money for the area; Ferriday benefits from Fruit of the Loom in Vidalia and industry across the river in Natchez, Mississippi; he originally lived in Homer when his father worked for Gillen Oil Company; mother instigated the move to Monterey so his father left Gillen and what would have been a better income; farmland in Monterey was hard to cultivate; his father had cattle and would sell some to help pay Love's tuition; father was a game warden and once was sheriff of Concordia Parish; Love was Student Body President in 1946-47 and Alumni Federation President in 1959; when he complains about being old, he is reminded of an article about an eighty year old man who climbed a mountain with no use of one knee, realizes he is fortunate; problem of people not doing what they should, uneducated kids in jail, people unable to earn a living; Louisiana has a considerable number of people in prison, including many people of importance; programs to help the poor are twisted for ulterior motives, neglecting the people that the programs are designed to help; national organization for students started when he was Student Body President, he was elected president of a regional group that was supposed to meet the following year at LSU; problem because there were no integrated facilities on campus; students voted to invite African-American students; Shelby Jackson persuaded the Presbyterian Church to host the visiting students;

Tape 1921, Side B

Student at the regional meeting named Billy Martin who Love ran into years later; event at regional meeting held on hotel roof in downtown Baton Rouge; people in Louisiana don't recognize the unique aspects of the state, like steamboats; constant problem of everyone (teachers, legislators) wanting more money but no one being willing to pay; problem of LSU graduates leaving the state; describing a photo of Love with the LSU chancellor and his friend Percy Rountree; standards for acceptance at LSU have changed; high drop-out rate when he started working on the Alumni Board; he feels compulsory military kept more students in line and made them study; some scholarships now based on ACT test scores; LSU is attracting better students but can't keep them in Louisiana; when he was at LSU, there were Indian, Asian and South American students, also students from the North, but no black students; people will always have differing views on integration; he doesn't think the higher proportion of black inmates has to do with their race, it's their lack of earning opportunity; you don't see many people with Ku Klux Klan leanings anymore; Gillis Long brought a stripper names Stormy to LSU when he was campaigning for student government; Love was questioned by and FBI agent about the national student conference he attended and possible communist activities that took place there; veterans returning from WWII changed the makeup of the student body, mainly because more people could go to school on the GI Bill; law school class size ballooned in just one year; Edwin Edwards' years as an LSU student; after the war, his decision to leave the army after being set up on a blind date with Ann, now his wife; explains the growing number of students and how most made it through with GI Bill support; Lee Berwick's job cutting weeds on the levee, the older student supervising forgot to pick him up and he was there into the night still cutting weeds; another student nicknamed "Twobuck" because he came to LSU with two dollars and demanded admission; the greatest contribution of LSU to his life was the opportunity to rub elbows with high-status politicians and lawyers and his work with the alumni federation and other civic activities; he feels the need to speak out about what he sees and that sometimes gets him in trouble; he struggled but made it through LSU with a law degree and pregnant wife; tape cuts off.

TAPES: 3 (T1766, T1767, T1921)**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 4 hours, 17 minutes**# PAGES TRANSCRIPT:** 128 pages (Session I - 96 pages; Session II - 32 pages)**OTHER MATERIALS:** Correspondence (3 pages); newspaper articles (6 pages); consent form (3 pages); LSU Salutes write-up; obituary**RESTRICTIONS:** None