Oral History Number: 020-002, 003
Interviewee: S. (Simon) Rae Logan
Interviewer: K. Ross Toole
Date of Interview: circa 1968-1969

Note: S. Rae Logan’s wife, Frances Logan, occasionally speaks throughout this interview.

S. Rae Logan: I remember Joe Dixon [Governor Joseph Moore Dixon] speaking at Stevensville [Montana] on his behalf. I think that went against the grain on anything he ever did. Donlan was the guy who ostensibly, later on, owned the Missoula Sentinel. He was a Republican owner of the Missoula afternoon paper and, of course, it was the job of the editor of the Missoulian to write Republican editorials for the morning paper and Democratic editorials for the afternoon paper. Well now, Joe said—I can hardly forgive him for that myself, now that’s a fact, but there was talk about Ed Donlan’s religion—“That must not enter into this campaign.”

K. Ross Toole: This is at Stevensville?

SRL: Yes, a man’s religion must not enter into anybody’s campaign at anytime, anywhere. So you see he protected himself a little bit you see to make it a generalization. He said, “I remind those of you who may need this reminding, that I have been a member of the Masonic Lodge in Missoula for many years. Weigh what I say, this must be kept out of this campaign. Of any campaign!”

KRT: What was he [Donlan] running for?

SRL: Governor. He couldn’t read, but that didn’t make any difference as Aronson [J. Hugo Aronson] proved later on. You don’t have to read very well, certainly not very much as proved by Governor [Tim] Babcock.

KRT: Living proof.

SRL: It was a rather new thing in those days. Governors up to that time had been able to read.

KRT: Where did Ed Donlan’s money come from, Rae?

SRL: From the Anaconda-Montana Power. He was considered perhaps the chief lieutenant of the company. Of course, that involved the Northern Pacific too.

KRT: The whole complex. He was quite wealthy.

SRL: He made a lot of money in the timber industry. He lived in Sanders County. He was prominent. He was in the Senate for years and years, his record there reminded me of that of the machine teletype operator who had worked for 19 years with the company. He told me
when I bought a horse trailer from him one time; his father, he said, had for many, many years operated a newspaper in Montana, owned by the Company. He was guaranteed a salary to depend on. He said...You know he had quite little liberty. He had quite a lot of leeway. Practically all that was absolute required of him was that he was to keep a certain senator in the Senate, term after term. There mustn't be any change in that. The other was that he was never say anything that could be harmful in any way to the company in his paper. Outside of that he could suit himself. (laughs)

KRT: I have heard that explanation, Rae, very recently. I am curious about one thing, why was Joe Dixon supporting Donlan in view of the—

SRL: He was a Republican, period. That was all. You know party loyalties in those days were pretty strong. He had come from the Blue Ridge Mountains where if you were a Republican you were pretty doggone committed. My folks are Republicans down there. They had gone out with Abe Lincoln. They had freed their slaves before the Emancipation Proclamation, a long time before. Part of their family had been secessionists which made it more bitter. I remember I was persecuted plenty. I got some early education by being persecuted in the schools down in North Carolina where I went to school. So Dixon come out of there he's a Republican like the Missoula Republicans, like the Maine Republicans.

KRT: They had a lot of party love.

SRL: They were like leopard who didn't change their spots, but they fought fiercely as partisans. I explain it partly that way.

KRT: Rae, just for this record, how did you meet Joe Dixon first?

SRL: Oh, well, I arrived in Missoula when I was age 13 with my farmer family from North Carolina, the foothills, well, way back in the mountains a ways. We found there a rising young lawyer who was qualified, gradually, for the responsibility of owner and editor of a Montana daily newspaper, the Daily Missoulian and for partnership with Theodore Roosevelt and the Pinchot people and for a place fairly prominent in the line of—very honorable line—of conservationists and limited supporters of democracy against plutocracy, operating primarily at the time within the Republican Party.

KRT: You're talking about North Carolina?

SRL: I'm talking about the nation here now, nation-wide. Joe Dixon gave us a lot of reassurance by appearing on the scene when we arrived in Missoula—I was age 13 as I say—explaining our strange new environment to us, available to us as an attorney, a friend, and really a lifelong counselor for various members of our family. He satisfied my natural cravings as I grew a little older as an adolescent for a hero. At that age, you are usually inclined to take a bold saint, or a god, or a bold devil—Satan. I had no excuse, can claim no credit for turning down the public
devil and taking over the public benefactor, such as Dixon. Dixon was very magnetic, reassuring personality.

KRT: He must have been.

SRL: Very deep musical voice, never hurried, quite studious and kindly, not malignant like me. (laughs)

KRT: Rae, how do you account for the fact that the fellow is almost totally eclipsed in Montana history? It is an obvious question, but—

SRL: How do I account for the fact that Thomas Jefferson was eclipsed? Here was this Joe Dixon who arrived here from North Carolina where he came from, in the foothills which had produced Thomas Jefferson and which had nourished Thomas Jefferson in his cause. It was not surprising that he had to be consigned to oblivion. By so doing, I would say that the despoilers of the state and their successors, who had been begotten in their own likeness, were saved quite a lot of trouble. People who came after Joe Dixon's rally were saved a lot of trouble by having the memories of this champion of the public obliterated as far as possible.

KRT: I'll get back to Dixon in a minute, Rae. Let's get you to Montana at age 13 and proceed for the first three, four, and five years. You arrive in Missoula. First of all why?

SRL: Well you know. (laughs) The only thing we had too much in the Blue Ridge Mountains were babies. Just as the essence the Blue Ridge has spewed out, the settlers of the west, at various latitudes, saw and proceeded to do its part among the with Kentucky and Tennessee and so on for Montana. The bolder spirits are willing to take a chance, more than others and try to rise above the population explosion and poverty and ignorance. Broke loose and headed for the west, and we broke loose following a little exploration by father's young son, Will, as a cowboy in North Dakota.

KRT: Your older brother? He just pulled out and had good reports of the country or what?

SRL: Yes, he just pulled out and spent time in New York, sort of a half-way adoptee of the friend of the family who was engaged in business. Like my father, he worked in the oil fields of Pennsylvania a little bit. He came on West and, of course, invested in the first opportunity in the first war that came along. Went to the Philippines weighing 188 pounds, coming out weighing 80 pounds.

KRT: Is that so, malaria?

Rae, what kind of man was you father?

SRL: Very intense sort of a person, very black eyes that could see right through you.
KRT: How well educated?

SRL: Not very well. You see in the Blue Ridge Mountains about all we inherited were debts. Quite a lot of land on our hands, but couldn’t find the money to pay the taxes, so he served for a number of years as a revenue collector. He, along with Will, for the fun of it, went out and gathered in the moonshiners and destroyed the stills, that kind of thing to supplement his income. He did go to school some. He attended a school called Mars Hill. The Blue Ridge in North Carolina is just dotted with those old classical Greek and Roman names, and then they were shut off, you might say, from communication. The roads were not developed, and it was just simply isolated from civilization. Culture went around it. You couldn’t get through or over the mountains as easily as you could elsewhere. So I remember hearing about his going to school, a semi-military school at Mars Hill operated by an old timer whose name was Lewis. He couldn’t tell me—he was very young—whether it was Meriwether Lewis or a relative of Meriwether Lewis, but that is where he went to school. My mother was better educated.

KRT: She was? I was going to ask you.

SRL: She was born in New York around Buffalo [Ticonderoga County-Erie] and had been preparing for teaching as most of her sisters did. (laughs) When she married my father at age 18 and moved down into the fundamentalist country of Blue Ridge, herself a foreigner, a Unitarian.

KRT: It must not have been too easy on your mother.

SRL: She was suspect. She was alien. She was not acceptable. She was no more acceptable to them than she found the typical native of the area acceptable to herself. Negroes were different. The old slave Negro of the locals named by relatives of Logans were her chief comfort. They understood her and she understood them. There was communication, sympathy, mutual respect, and affection.

KRT: How old would she have been you came to Montana? Roughly? You were 13. Was you brother Bill...were you all born in North Carolina?

SRL: I was born in 1885. We landed here in Montana in 1898. She was a real test of the tolerance of my grandfather preacher Logan for whom it had been necessary to post Union troops to protect him from the degenerate Ku-Kluxers. Necessary also for his first cousin, Judge Logan. I believe they were both in the constitutional convention that brought the state of North Carolina back into the Union, or confirmed the fact that it had never been out. They had a new constitution to adopt.

KRT: They were probably both in it?
SRL: Yes. They were both in the constitutional convention and of course marked for persecution by the Ku Klux Klan element. Then of course, her strangeness suggested to my preacher grandfather that he ought to do his best to get her to join the church, the Baptist church. She said, “Why, I’m a Unitarian.”

“Well,” he said, “what difference does it really make? If I baptize you and you come into the church with brotherly love and become acceptable to the others, and they become more acceptable to you because you’re not so different. It seems to me that would be a good thing to do. Quite practical.” He did it. He soused her under. He even introduced a Methodist elder one time to speak from his pulpit and he’d had representatives of other denominations heard in his church!

KRT: A revolutionary, wasn’t he?

KRT: And another thing very violently he had done, when old Aunt Sarah died, she was a great big Negro from Africa—slave of the family. One of the chief reliances of the community. When there was a wedding she was responsible for the cake. When there was a death, she was responsible for comforting and helping the family, an extraordinary character. Wouldn’t sleep in the house when the weather at all fit. Always slept outdoors, a character, a real personage. When she died, my grandfather and one of his brothers went into the mountains nearby and cut out a great granite stone for a monument. When I took Frances down to see from what depths I came in the Blue Ridge, I took her to the old graveyard, Bill’s Creek. She said, “Why is that granite slab, the biggest here, why doesn’t it have any inscription?”

“Well,” I said, “none needed. That’s where old Aunt Sarah is buried, and everybody knows about her and no inscription is needed.” It is the first time I’d ever known of a black person being buried in a white cemetery. I haven’t heard of any since. So, he was more or less a heretic and that came down, I guess, to us not only from my mother’s side, but also from my father's side. Father himself became a heretic, a free thinker. He was never a member of the church.

KRT: What literally drew your family to Montana? Why not North Dakota?

SRL: Well, he had been looking this direction for a long time like most of his brethren of the hills. I remember well how he and my mother especially studied the maps and all the railroad literature—colonization literature.

KRT: There was an awful lot of literature. Rae, would it have been the colonization literature that was fundamental in getting them to Montana rather than someplace else?

SRL: Not fundamental. The only bearing it had was whether we should settle in the neighborhood of Missoula or the neighborhood of Kalispell. (laughs) More of less accidently we settled in Missoula. The first year we rented a ranch out at the junction of the Bitterroot and...
Missoula rivers, out by the old Foley ranch near McClay Bridge. Three hundred and twenty acres and the end of that year we bought a place in the Bitterroot, South Bench, near Stevensville—a stock ranch.

KRT: Cattle?

SRL: Oh yes, cattle. I found myself carrying a rifle at a sheep and cattle war up there when I was 15 years old.

KRT: When you first got here, for instance, and you were out at Foley’s, where did you go to school or did you?

SRL: Well, I rode six miles across the plains there on horseback to Missoula. J. M. Hamilton, later became president of the State College and dean of students was superintendent.

KRT: Was this the high school you mean? Missoula High School?

SRL: That was elementary school. When we were sent to him for classification, he was quite puzzled. Questioned us at length my brother and I. It came out accidently that I studied Latin a little bit, just a little, which was not unusual in the South. So he concluded from that I must have perhaps had more schooling than I appeared to have. (laughs)

KRT: Rae, just out of curiosity, where was the school building located?

SRL: The old Central building. It has been replaced now.

KRT: You’d ride six miles on the horse to go to school?

SRL: Yes. Go straight to a shed we had rented to keep our horses out of the blizzards. We returned there at lunch time to give our horses some oats and eat our lunch in the stable with them.

KRT: How many kids, roughly, would have been in that school, Rae? Thirty, forty, twenty?

RL Oh, my guess is...I was in school actually in North Carolina, and here, below the college level, probably not more than...Well, I’d say about maybe 30 months or so because at the high school level when I was batching and preparing over at the university, batching over Deschamps butcher shop and living on baloney and oatmeal—

KRT: Where was the butcher shop?

SRL: Down there in the Higgins Building. There at the high school level...Oh incidentally, I mustn’t leave this out. The town was as wide open as it could be at that time, with the

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education of boys. At high school level—the prep department level—I, with my brother and the two Buck boys from Stevensville, Fred Buck and Charles Buck, rented a little house thereby Prescotts where we batched. The Buck boys went into the fraternity there after the first year. We continued arrogantly and proudly to be plebes the rest of our school lives.

KRT: Fred Buck only died not too long ago. What was the other? Charles Buck? Fred and Charles Buck?

SRL: Oh, they were nice chaps. They were always friends of mine. Fred Buck was for years and years the state engineer. He always tried to preserve his own professional integrity as fully as he could. Whatever testimony he gave on behest of the governor, who had him, he succeeded pretty well in protecting his integrity -professional integrity as well as his personal integrity.

KRT: Quite a job.

SRL: Clarence, his younger brother, went to Chile as an engineer for the company. Charley Buck went back to run the store he inherited there in Stevensville from his father. Well, finally, he wound up in the old people's home there.

KRT: No Bucks left now.

SRL: No more.

KRT: Now you batched with these people, but now you're talking about college?

SRL: Yes, college. There, of course, we never entered before about the middle of October or maybe way into November, fall. We left about the first of March in the spring for ranch work. (laughs) I remember I went to play basketball in Helena with the team one time. All of them got called on the carpet for going around after the game and seeing the town a little bit. Judge Knowles's daughter, who was teaching then, Eloise, came to my defense when my name came up. No, no, I wouldn't be involved in anything that wasn't just quite okay. In fact, Judge Knowles had selected my sister, my brother and myself to take care of their mansion over there for about three years after we were at the university [University of Montana]. Supplying us with a couple of milk cows, a couple of horses, and a sleigh.

KRT: Where was the mansion?

SRL: I thought you'd surely know about the famous old time mansion which is at least as ancient as that of the Greenough’s, I believe. Big brick house way out north on about Second Street, I guess.

KRT: Is it still there?
SRL: It’s still there. It is beginning to look a little dilapidated, brick though is pretty durable. It was quite a mansion. Incidentally, Judge Knowles’ name was given to our Knowles site, our Knowles Paradise Project. They were our benefactor in more ways than one.

KRT: Rae, who was at the university when you were there? Who was president?

SRL: Well, Dr. Craighead [Oscar J. Craig], jolly, old, jovial old Virginia gentleman was the first president of the University of Montana. He used to come up to the Burnt Fork, on the Bitterroot occasionally and go fishing. He was so huge we could barely get him into our little rock house there on the south bench. He seemed to like it. He took a kindly interest to me I remember. For example, when I was courting in the assembly room in the auditorium there at one time, where my lady-love was practicing the piano, he came through from one door to the other across shaking his old fat sides all the way though. He was chuckling benevolently and gave us his blessing. He asked me when I was just starting the third year of the prep school, especially [to] become a member of his college class in history. He was always benevolent.

KRT: Well, now Rae, who else would have been there that you remember?

SRL: Well, there was Father Aber.

KRT: Of Aber Day?

SRL: Yes, he used to go around, just a little man, but still he was able to reach the tops of those trees when they could be crystalline with the ice and the snow, shaking them you know. He judged a debate that I engaged in at one time. No, not engaged in it was a declamation contest. He was a pretty dry fellow. I was in his Latin class and made an A, but he didn’t appreciate me as an orator. He marked me down to 70, and some of the others he marked up pretty high. Seems to me that Ed Simons came out on top, but Congressman Evans gave me a certain amount of comfort, consolation. He was a sentimental old politician. I think an admirable Democrat. My topic was public sentiment.

KRT: Period? (laughs)

SRL: Period. So for my effort and my subject, he gave me a mark of 95 which was top marks of all my competitors. I forget who was the third judge, but anyhow, it didn’t average high enough. Ed won out.

KRT: Did he? Well, who else? That’s Aber and Craig...

SRL: Well, Professor Scheuch.

KRT: Scheuch?
SRL: Yes. I was always quite fond of him.

KRT: This was quite early in the university system.

SRL: Yes, quite early. This was in 1901 I guess.

KRT: Just when they got started. The main hall was built in 1907.

SRL: Incidentally, I wouldn't have been there, but when my brother and I reported for the eighth grade to J. M. Hamilton's office...Well, first we reported to the eighth grade teacher in Missoula, coming down from Stevensville. She said, “You’re to report to the superintendent.” Well that sounded ominous.

We went on in, and he wrote out a little piece of paper and he said, “You’re to take this over to Dr. Craig.” He said to Dr. Craig, “We’re not going to have these boys here any longer. We think they’re ready for you.” So under protest we went.

The winter before, about the 1st of February, my seventh grade teacher has sent me up to the eighth grade teacher, a semi-annual promotion, apparently. I stayed there about an hour. I came back and told her that I guess I would stay with her. She said, “We can't do that. You'll have to go up there.”

“Well,” I said, “I like it here.” But that was no good so I said, “Okay, if I can't stay here, why, I have to go out in a short time for ranch work, so I'll just go and help.”

She caved in and said, “No, you can stay her until you leave for the ranch.”

KRT: A little less formal, Rae, then it is now?

SRL: Oh, yes. The president of the university himself would not have been permitted to make my schedule out, part college and part prep.

KRT: No, no, it couldn’t be done.

SRL: No, it could never be done now.

KRT: Well then, when did you get out of the university, Rae? This must be 1903 or 4?

SRL: Well, I got a lot of scrub bruises on my head trying to scrub football. Thought I had to do that in order to amount to something you know.

KRT: Was Rittenour there when you were there? In the university?
SRL: Don't remember, don't remember him, no. I remember quite a few of those old boys, but he was very young, very young. Well there was Rhodes—J. P. Rhodes—who remained always a friend of mine while he lived and there was Harkins.

KRT: Now that's one I never heard of.

SRL: Professor [William D.] Harkins, a chemistry teacher, who has a spot in the history of Montana of no little importance. It was he who worked on the question and problem of pollution of the air by the [Anaconda] Company.

KRT: Was it really that early?

SRL: I saw him demonstrate by the dissection and analysis he made of a cow's liver, a cow that had lived for a long time and acquired the ability to consume a lot of arsenic. [He had a] little vial about that long which would of killed a whole herd of cows if it was administered immediately, I suppose.

KRT: Pure arsenic I suppose?

SRL: He went from the University of Montana to the University of Chicago and discovered a...what do you call it?

Frances Logan: A by product?

SRL: No, no, no, in basic elements, a chemical element.

FL: He discovered one of them.

SRL: It was supposed to have been the last chemical element there was.

Mrs: They've discovered a lot more since then, but at that time he was just filling out a table.

SRL: What do you call it?

KRT: An element.

SRL: Element, element, that's all there was to it.

KRT: In other words, he was a pretty distinguished fellow.

SRL: He discovered it you know and it remained the last for quite a while. I guess there been quite a number since then. Harkins. Very able. Yes he also, he married one of my teachers, very young. [Alice] Hatheway her name was.
Mrs: What happened as a result of his analysis of the cow's liver generally?

SRL: Oh, it finally came to Theodore Roosevelt's attention.

KRT: It did?

SRL: He brought about the reopening of the case which gave justice eventually, (more or less justice), to the people, particularly the ranchers around Anaconda. One of those ranchers had come over and become a neighbor of ours in the Bitterroot, completely ruined. Forgotten his name, but a good many of them had been driven out completely. It was one of my schoolmates at the university who produced the mechanism, the filter, whatever was necessary to extract the arsenic from the fumes from the smelter, which made the company a lot of money.

KRT: How did you schoolmate fare?

SRL: They [Anaconda Company] resisted it you know until they had to do it and when they did it they found it was extremely profitable.

KRT: Sure, sure. Now Rae, how did you get up here? Did your mother and father come up here from the Bitterroot?

SRL: Oh no, no I was teaching.

FL: You haven't even got back to North Carolina.

SRL: No, I was in North Carolina and I'd been teaching there a while.

KRT: Now wait a minute, just for fun, how'd we get you back to North Carolina now?

SRL: (laughs) I skipped that one, while that's the most humorous of all.

KRT: Wait till I get a cigarette.

All right now, we've got you from Montana to North Carolina.

SRL: Well, I say that was comical. I was dancing one night, in the evening in the girl's old gym at the university—good looking girl to, very attractive. Suddenly there popped into my mind the reminder that you're in the wrong place, you're in the wrong university. So a few days later I'd written to the University of North Carolina, and as a result I got a scholarship. I was then in the freshman year at the University of Montana. The next year I went to Chapel Hill. Well, you may not believe this, years before when a doctor friend of mine, who lived nearby, brought a very
handsome and very pleasant gentleman over to our house to sit on the porch with my parents. I was hanging around for an hour or more. I gathered that he was president at the University of North Carolina. I thought he was a wonderful specimen, and when mother called me over to her chair—[she was] sort of an invalid—when he left she said, “Rae, are you going to the university?” I knew she meant the university that he came from. Fortunately she didn’t say, “Are you going to the penitentiary?”

KRT: You would have said certainly? (laughs)

SRL: I would have been making a straight course to the penitentiary, probably. My unconscious would have taken care of that. But here it suddenly came to my consciousness that I was connected up with the wrong president and the wrong university. So I went on down there and got my bachelor’s degree.

KRT: You went three years then?

SRL: Yes and I taught a while at the university and was offered a job there by Frank Graham. I was in Frank Graham’s classes. I don’t mean Frank Graham. I mean Ed Graham, a cousin of Frank Graham’s.

KRT: This was in North Carolina?

SRL: Yes and Ed Graham was the war [?] president, first war president of Chapel Hill, very remarkable a fine young university administer.

KRT: Now, was this education, these three years at Chapel Hill, what did they call...? What were you specializing in, if anything?

SRL: Oh, we didn't specialize in those days.

KRT: You didn’t have the major and minor business?

SRL: No, it was pretty classical—lots of philosophy and that kind of thing.

KRT: You said you taught when you got out. Did you teach there in North Carolina?

SRL: Yes, part time. The head of the English department was the Ed Graham—later became president—and he offered me a job.

FL: Wait a minute, you mean Frank.

SRL: I mean Frank Graham. No, I mean Ed Graham. Ed Graham didn't live long. I don't think he lived through the war. He was a brilliant young university president, a real democrat with a
small d. (laughs) His cousin, Frank, was a hall-mate—dormitory-mate—just two or three doors from my cell. He was a year behind me, and he was even a finer democrat. He was elected, when he was history professor later on there, he was elected by the 100 university trustees. You know North Carolina has 100 university trustees? They still do.

KRT: Yes. They still do.

SRL: [Elected] to become president. He declined so they elected him again. He said, “No, I don't want to be president. Have somebody who's more competent.” He declined again, I recall, and on the third time, they elected him he said, “Well, it you absolutely must have it that way, why the blood is on your own head.” So he accepted it.

When they raised a great row later on, all the press, you know, all the aristocratic people, the people that count and North Carolina raised a row because he went down there to Alabama—Birmingham—as the official of the...I forget what it was called, but it involved the tenants, southern tenants, and including Negroes. Well, he went down there and talked to them. He brought out all the people against him as president, and they had him up before the board. He said, “Well, that's fine. I never wanted to be president anyhow. Take the job.” So when he proved to be so much against holding the job himself, they insisted upon his keeping it.

He told us when we were down there on the way to get some sunshine in Florida one winter—stopped to say hello. It was shortly after Franklin Roosevelt had been there. Frank said, “You know Franklin Roosevelt was here just a few days ago? And the first thing he said to me was, 'Frank, what the devil were you and Eleanor doing down there in Birmingham?' It's not only a national incident, it's just about an international incident, and it's giving me a lot of embarrassment.” (kidding) What had happened down there, she had spoken too. She had sat in one of the seats with the Negroes!

KRT: This was down in Birmingham?

SRL: Yes. Which crossed Jim Crow. She'd sat in the Jim Crow section—the First Lady. The officials in great embarrassment implored her to go up on the stage. “No,” she said, “I belong down here.”

Still they were distressed, and finally they said, “Will you turn around and face your audience from where you sit?”

She said, “Will that help you?”

“Yes, it certainly will. We'd be most grateful.”

She said, “Fine.” (laughs)
Well, they ribbed the press, they ribbed Frank Graham as a Reb [Rebel]. They couldn't make that stick, so they fell back on the time-proved cry of black, Negro, and they made that stick better. They made it a foundation for throwing him out. I mean refusing to re-elect him. They elected some tobacco magnate to take his place to the U. S. Senate to which he had been appointed by one of the more enlightened North Carolina governors.

KRT: He wasn't very safe on the racial issue?

SRL: He was declared (Frank) to be a radical and so forth. Later, he became one of the important emissaries of the United Nations in trying to settle the disputes between Pakistan and India.

KRT: Quite a fellow.

SRL: Yes, one of the really big names in our liberal tradition, really. Fit to be associated with Thomas Jefferson.

KRT: Rae, what did you teach there? Part time?

SRL: Well, something I didn't know. (laughs) I taught German, but I couldn't. I didn't really know German. Who does? (laughs) I had been appointed, named for the following year to English, which you know I thought I had more claim to.

KRT: Yes, but did you stay for the following year?

SRL: No I didn't. It happened this way. My father and mother were becoming rather old and had quite a little land on their hands, and none of their children were at home. I had made arrangements—tentative arrangements—for a trip to summer in Germany—a cattle boat. When they wrote me so piteously about their situation, I cancelled everything and cancelled this business of teaching at the university the following year and went back home to the Bitterroot. There, I was disconcerted to find both my other brothers there too. They had done the same thing. (laughs)

KRT: You all came at once.

SRL: After having served for a year as first water commissioner on Burnt Fork after the adjudication under Hank Meyers, son of the late senator, Henry Meyers—

KRT: Yes, I want to ask you about him in a minute.

SRL: —I moved out to the reservation to rent some land maybe, get ready for the opening again. My partner persuaded me into it pretty much, [he] became my partner later. He was a

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cousin of Joe Dixon. Name was Worth—Arch Worth.

KRT: W-i-r-t-h?

SRL: Yes. No, W-o-r-t-h. He was the first cousin also of Henley, the grocer in Missoula. He never had any experience in farming or anything of that sort, but we rented some land from my old friend Fred Morgan. Fred was a mutual friend of Joe Dixon. He was agent and superintendent at that time. My first night on the reservation was spent at his house at the old Crow agency at Arlee.

FL: Not Crow Agency, the Jocko.

SRL: Jocko, yes.

KRT: Well, Rae, was land closed here on the reservation then?

SRL: Yes, it was still closed when we were out here in December and we entered into a rental agreement with Antoine and Sophie Moiese. Moiese was sort of an aristocratic family, one of the representatives in the group that welcomed the Black Robes, you know, really from St. Louis. They were good people too. We liked them very much. Well, I rented from them. That summer was the summer, fateful summer, of 1910.

KRT: That was a bad summer in some respects.

SRL: For the world was in constant punishment, physically you know. It was a year of strain because my partner had gone off his head when the snow was still on the ground. I had been busy getting equipment, horses and so forth. Before we started we had fences to build, sheds to build, and so forth. I didn’t have much money to put in. He never got around to putting any of his in. One day his eyes were all clouded, and he looked up towards to the agency, where there was a lot of smoke. He said, “Rae, you’re the only friend I have in the world. Tell me, what’s all that, all those fires about?”

I said, “Why, that’s some Indians burning some straw stacks up there. Oh, they are Indians all right they are going back and forth here heating the rocks. The rocks are for me. Hot rocks for hot water.” An hour or so after that I asked if he’d go up to the gulch where we’d been getting our posts and bring down some sledge hammers and wedges. He was gone a long time. When he came back, he said, “It’s a good thing I went up there. There are fires breaking our all over the canyon there. I put them out.” And so it went. I took over half a day getting him to the doctor at the agency.

He was much larger than I was—very fearful. I was given bromides that I was to give to him—once in the middle of the night. We lived in an old Indian cabin, vintage about 1885, one room downstairs, a little loft upstairs. We added an addition downstairs. There was a very, very
stairway. As I would go up with those bromides for him, I had however to get through a fortification of tin pans, easily breakable glass, and such up to the floor [of the] loft, and then move over to his cot where he had on one side laid on a carpenter’s box a very, very sharp lathing hammer he’d used as a carpenter. On the other side an old Spanish American bayonet which had been sharpened up to a very keen point. I was always afraid that as I lifted by head, one of those instruments was going to descend on me. I always ducked. Finally I got his cousin, Henley, from Missoula to come out. We made a settlement whereby I paid him wages from the time we started although he hadn’t been able to do anything yet for several months. We got his sister, a trained nurse, to come take him back east with her. The poor fellow died about 2 years after.

KRT: He had never recovered?

SRL: He had a stroke working on a high smokestack in St. Louis. He told me later on how the nurses had taken his clothes all away from him, and how he broke out and ran down the street trying to find a lodging house keeper who would take him in. Naked.

KRT: That’s hard to do.

SRL: He found it considerable difficult.

KRT: You’re now stuck with renting this land now from the—?

SRL: From the Moieses.

KRT: Did you go into operation that season (1910)?

SRL: Yes, I operated there for two and a half crops.

KRT: Is this wheat or what?

SRL: This was mainly wheat. After that, well, while I was still on the job, engaged in butchering a great big barrow [castrated pig]. Of course you know what a barrow is? On a very cold day—November day—I wasn't too good at it, and the barrow was entirely too big for me. Oh, he weighed over 300 pounds. I looked up and saw a neighbor of mine, John Innis, and he was there as a representative of the school board. He asked if I would be interested in becoming the first superintendent of this big school district that resulted from the opening of the reservation all that part that lay in Missoula County. I told him I sure would be!

KRT: As of that moment you were.

SRL: He said, “It may not pay you much.” I didn't care how much it paid so he sent me around to see George Beckwith, talk to Resiner and Floyd Mason, who was for ten years mayor of
Missoula and two others. They said they wanted me.

I took over about January 1, 1913. I had to furnish my own transportation—no roads. We had to have two horses to do the job—two saddle horses—pay all my own expenses, do all the clerk's work as well as be superintendent. I was to receive the sum of 1,500 dollars per year with the idea that eventually the district might be able to pay more. That didn't seem very promising because we had nothing to tax out here on the reservation at that time to speak of. The land belonged to the Indians or to homesteaders who hadn't moved up. We were dependent pretty much upon the six mill levy from Missoula County. Our darn greedy idiots in Ronan and Polson had put over a little later on a movement for the creation of a new county. So they could have—one of [the towns] at least—could gamble on a having a county seat. Then everything would be rosy. Well, that was several years later after I'd went on the job.

KRT: Where was the school though then, Rae?

SRL: Well, there was a school then at Arlee—an old building at Arlee—one at Ravalli and one at St. Ignatius and one at Ronan and that was all. We built then all over the country, all over the district.

KRT: Well, how many did you have that first year as superintendent?

SRL: Oh, one, two, three, four. We closed some of them later.

KRT: You had Arlee.

SRL: I had Arlee, Ravalli—one room school at Ravalli, two room school at St. Ignatius, three room school at Ronan. That were four. That was the size of it. Now let's see, there were one or two little one room schools that were just getting started that they had started before they hired a superintendent. Well, we closed all of them later on under a consolidation program—under a centralization program—which had one of its goals, providing a high school within the reach of every home in our school district.

KRT: What do you mean by reach?

SRL: Well, they could attend the school.

KRT: Yes, but I mean was there a mileage limitation?

SRL: Well, we didn't have any roads then, of course, to speak of, and we didn't have any school buses. We didn't have any money to pay for transportation, but we agreed that we would furnish darn good schools with the assistance of our friends at the university and others if parents would get their kids to school. That is the way we operated.
KRT: Well, let's get back to 1913. How often did you have to go to the four schools involved?

SRL: Well, I was on the road most of the time.

KRT: How did you travel?

SRL: Horseback.

KRT: Only?

SRL: I had a very stylish German coach—Oldenburgh coach I guess it was—a stallion. When he would approach a school, for some reason or other he'd immediately go into his circus acts. He'd stand on his hind legs, and he'd bow his neck, you know, prance around and disrupt the schools altogether. Here would come the teachers and the kids rushing to the windows to see the show.

KRT: Rae, where and how did you get these teachers?

SRL: Well, I had the very active support of the state superintendent and this rural inspector. I had the very active support of the university [University of Montana] people, the Dillon people, and to some extent the State College [Montana State University] people at Bozeman to help me to recruit a staff fit for a new area. New country, populated by newly arrived idealists who wanted to have a perfect community and a high standard school system for their children. The sky was the limit as far as ambition and imagination were concerned. See, here we were starting fresh, and now you guys help me really make a demonstration here. They certainly were splendid in that regard and we did have some awfully fine people. Well, you know, for example, Dean Leapheart's sister was one of them, and she was very, very good.

KRT: And she came from Missoula?

SRL: She came from Missouri really. The sister of Mabel Rich—long time court member of the Missoula county high school's faculty—Caroline Rich, who had homesteaded out here, she was with us for years. A very superior teacher.

KRT: Rae, what in that early time, roughly, what would they be paid to teach? Say to Ronan or at St. Ignatius?

SRL: Well, No teacher was paid very much, but we were paid considerably less than the average, but this ideal appealed to them.

KRT: Did they have a teacherage?

SRL: Some of them. We built a teacherage for some of them, but we didn't have money to
work with. So we got settlers to put their labor and skills and what little equipment they had and horses and so on to build schools houses of sorts that we would rent for nominal prices—the district would rent—until such time when there were taxes to enable us to provide them with permanent structures and transportation and so forth. But that would be a long time to wait. They were the first co-ops on this reservation!

KRT: And they did?

SRL: And they did, they did.

KRT: How far would some of those kids come to school? A goodly distance, I judge.

SRL: Oh yes, most of them on their own transportation or buggy pools or a little later on we had some school wagons running, in fact, at one time we had 17 school wagons running.

KRT: Wagons? Running how many kids? Twenty, thirty, fifteen?

SRL: Well, we'd average, I suppose, about 20 to the bus. Later still we had some busses, automobile, auto busses. They were largely Fords worked over, but we jumped the gun on consolidation.

KRT: How much agitation, Rae, at this time, say 1913, '14, '15, along in there is there for better roads on the part of parents and part of yourself?

SRL: Well, we were beginning to make progress largely through cooperation with the Missoula County commissioners.

KRT: Were there any groups formed to agitate for good roads that you can remember, better roads?

SRL: No, we all kept after them, and they'd come out. No, that was before the day of commercial clubs.

KRT: There was no organized effort?

SRL: No, the only real organized effort ever made by commercial clubs was by the Ronan and Polson commercial clubs to put over this gym, we had a new county long before we were ready for it. I resigned from my job of superintendent in order to be free to take on that fight.

KRT: You were opposed to the county?

SRL: Oh, yes, but not until I got the figures. When I got the figures I could see that it would be ruinous to my road and school system. I took them to Branjord, I. M. Brandjord, who had
recently been elected to the legislature and who inadvertently promised to introduce the bill for a new county. Edward Donlan had promised to see that it went through. Well, I showed Brandjord, who was a high class man and he was terribly distressed. He said, “But I promised.” So when they introduced the bill and got it well advanced over there in Helena, I just deserted the post here and went to Helena to lobby. It came about in this way, Polson and Ronan cliques had called a meeting at Ronan in the new opera house—new theater—to elect temporary officials.

KRT: County officials?

SRL: County officials to go into the bill which was about to be introduced or had been introduced.

KRT: Rae, would this be 1917 or thereabouts?

SRL: Yes, about that time. Well, I sat there from early morning until 11 o'clock at night before the chairman would recognize me. The word got out—off the reservation so to speak. When they nominated me for county superintendent on assurance that I would get the salary of both district superintendent and the salary of the county superintendent, they could hardly withhold recognition. When I got it, I gave them the figures and warned them that they were really creating a county and it was entirely too soon—to consider anything of that sort. Maybe when we got good roads and so on we wouldn't have to have [the extra county?]. I sat down in a terribly frigid silence. Then one of my primary teachers was nominated, and she accepted. As I went out through the door of the theater, I saw one of my old neighbors, Jim Sterns, a tough guy. I said, “Jim, are we going to take this lying down or are we going to fight?”

[End of Reel 1]
KRT: All right now, I guess we're all right.

SRL: You got to the point of the circulating petition hadn't we?

KRT: Yes, you'd come out of the meeting and decided with Mr. Sterns that it ought to be fought.

SRL: Yes, so we started petitions. I went to see George Beckwith, chairman of my school board, and told him that I was practically on my way to Helena to fight the thing. Well, he'd allowed his clerk—the name was just in my mouth just a moment ago—a chap whom the company had picked up and made Speaker of the House for a couple of years. It starts with an L, Lucas, no...[O. W. Beldon?]

KRT: Where did he live? St. Ignatius?

SRL: He lived in St. Ignatius. Clerked for the store there for years. Anyhow, he had given his clerk leave of absence to go over and help Ronald Higgins and others with whom he'd been in the legislature to put over this promise of Ed Donlan's for a new Lake County. Well George said—I had him pretty well convinced about the water right matter—and he said, “I advise you go to Ronald Higgins first.” So I did.

I got over there and I saw him about the time the session was closing for the day. Ronald said, “Who are supporting you?”

Well, I said, “Well the Catholics, for one at the mission, George Beckwith understands it.”

“Well,” he said, “It's gone a long ways, it's ready to pass. It will be on the third reading in the morning for passage. If you can get here before the session opens and present me 100 telegrams, I'll see what I can do. I'll consider it.”

KRT: How considerate. He's giving you until the following morning then.

KRT: Yes, the following morning.

SRL: Boy he's asking a lot. (laughs)

SRL: I went to a telephone booth out in the yard against the house and I called Jim Kearms. Told him what the condition was and he said, “Well, that can't be done.”

“Well,” I said, “Of course it can be done.”

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“What makes you think so?”

I said, “Because you’r doing it.”

“Well, hell,” he said.

“Well,” I said, “I’m waiting for those telegrams, and every telegram must be paid for out of the pocket of the fellow who sends it.”

So he went over first thing to see my old friend Calkins, over here, maybe at that time a member of my school board, a very fine person. They organized enough help so before the legislative house opened, I had the telegrams.

KRT: You did?

SRL: Ronald Higgins went into the chamber. I grabbed him and handed him this great sheaf. I said, “Every one of these has been paid for by the guy who sent it.” Well sir, he marched right straight down to the Speaker’s desk. He went down there and he said, “Mr. Speaker, I just what to tell you that there’s not one iota of merit in this proposition for creation of Lake county. It’s a humbug! A fraud!”

KRT: Is that so!

SRL: Well, he just blew up all over the place! Consternation! When I got back to the Placer Lobby that afternoon or evening here was this bird making eyes at the clerk in the lobby, and he said, “Logan, don’t punish me.”

I said, “You’re going to get whatever you have coming to you.”

He said, “No, I’ve been punished enough.”

I said, “What do you mean?”

“Well I’ve had to sleep”—I forget how many nights he said—“with A. J. Brower, who is a lobbyist and they raised 700 dollars to be exact of slush money from Ronan to fight for the new county. Stanley Scearce in the same room! Now I ask you, ‘Is that enough?’” (laughs)

I said, “I doubt it,” and then we went on to the hearings.

I had no money; of course, I had to pay my own way out of my pocket. I had nothing and no help. Just one man over there to help me—an old stockman from North Dakota with an immense capacity to consume booze, strong. All he was really able to do for me was to consume Brower’s and Scearce’s, the other fellow’s booze—keep it away from the others. He

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really did a lot. (laughs) Testifying at the hearing, I was especially discouraged to find a Catholic priest over here just lying from beginning to end.

KRT: From St. Ignatius?

SRL: Yes, he served us over there. He had been raised as a newspaper boy in Chicago and thoroughly imbued with the ethics of the streets at their rawest. He was that kind of a guy. Took great pride in smuggling booze in here during the Prohibition, for example, which I thought wasn’t entirely becoming to a priest. I was up against it. So, should the committee believe a rural school teacher, or should they believe a holy man of the church? Well apparently, he wasn’t their first holy man who had ever been weighed and found in the balance, and they believed me. Well anyhow, that thing was fought over until the closing days of the legislature. It was a matter of pride for Ed Donlan and his bunch, and, of course, determination on the part of these patriots down here in Ronan and Polson. I lived in Ronan at the time. When I hopped off the train—they had a train then—and came up the street to my house, I could feel it. In fact, when I had gone out the door down there at the theater, I was told that certain people were expecting to lynch me that evening. (laughs)

KRT: Is that so? They were getting a little warm.

SRL: Yes, so I was just about the most traitorous person who ever hit this reservation. At least if you consulted the people around Ronan and Polson.

KRT: Rae, what would it have done to your school district?

SRL: Well, we would get nothing, where we were getting six mills from Missoula County.

KRT: You would have really gone broke.

SRL: We really had nothing at all from Missoula County at that time. We staved it off for two years or three. That gave us a little time. It did set the schools back badly.

KRT: When it came two years later.

SRL: My old friend Branjord, he just said when I was over there fighting this thing, “Logan, I’m so sorry, so sorry.” When I first went there he said, “I want to save you as much money as possible, I know where it’s coming from. You come down here and bunk with me at the Park Hotel.” I bunked with him at the Park Hotel for about a week there and ate a good deal of his grub. He was my life-long friend for as long as he lived. I used to get letters from him in Winetka for example.

KRT: Where was he from, Rae?

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SRL: Well, he was in the lumber business here at Ronan with George Beckwith. I used to get letters from Ronan which would say, “Logan, about once a year if not oftener, I get to thinking how much I owe you for introducing me to the New Republic during the war.”

KRT: Is that so? (laughs)

SRL: Whenever he had one of his big ideas to expound, such as the constitutional amendment to provide for a fund—a state fund—from (unintelligible) and gifts and all sorts of things. When he had that ready, came right down for me to read. It was passed. He had a grand scheme for organizing the world, or something like that, worked out in detail. Sent it down to me. You can find his ideas, and find something of his life in Who’s Who. Only man we have had in Who’s Who in the whole of the reservation I suppose, until recently.

KRT: Rae, about two years later, did it finally come in by petition?

SRL: Came in by petition. We killed it over there pretty dead for two or three years. Legislatively, it couldn't be.

KRT: You couldn’t kill it by petition, but you tried to? Could you have killed it by petition?

SRL: I was away then for one thing. Nobody was here to take the lead. Well, there was one man who took the lead against it at the time, that was when one of our principals of Ronan that I picked up at the University one summer, Frank Becker. Frank was quite a bright fellow. He had taught philosophy under John Dewey at the University of Minnesota...maybe California. I forget about that. He was teaching at the university that summer, sort of a Western outing. I seduced him to the ideas of country life and homestead.

KRT: Fringe benefits, they call it. Yes.

SRL: Yes, by that time George Beckwith had been very much strengthened in his feelings about the betrayal of the school district rules by Ronan and Polson. He told Frank that he would finance him if he’d put in the time to fight the thing here. No. I’m telling you about the wrong thing. It was to prevent the splitting of the school district. Anyhow, he furnished the car. He gave Frank a car, and then immediately he used it against Frank. This terrible MM Company had seduced him and put him on the job.

KRT: The reason I’m curious, I wondered if it wasn’t vastly harder to stop a petition system after it was passed then it was to kill it in the legislature.

SRL: Much harder. You can get signers and petitions for anything.

KRT: Anyway, it was devastating.
SRL: Yes, it was devastating.

KRT: Now you had left the school system by this time.

SRL: I went from here to Hardin in 1919, July. Hardin included all the Crow Indian Reservation as well as that great area outside—a district about six times the size of this district. They used to say this was the largest school district in the U. S.

KRT: Before I get you to Hardin I have a couple of questions. Tell me something about Henry L. Myers.

SRL: Well, Henry was a likable fellow. Such matters as bribery and things of that sort. I think he was honest, but a little bit too stupid to escape such people as the Corettes (?). (laughs)

KRT: Rae, you rode as a district judge—we call them ditch-riders—water commissioners or whatever it was. What was he then, a judge? You must have been a district judge?

SRL: He appointed me as a district judge as water commissioner on Burnt Fork after the adjudication which required considerable amount of execution to make it work. When that big fraud, the Bitterroot Valley Irrigation Company, put its first canal—High Line Ditch they called it—across the Burnt Fork valley and a big flume—

KRT: Yes, wood.

SRL: Right, a wooded flume. I measured that. I remember that very well. In those days we were making some progress toward settling the guerilla warfare. I remember this is mighty unusual. There was always a bitter contest between the people on a certain canal on the North Bench which came out right at the mouth of my father's and his neighbors' ditch on the South Bench. Except one opened out from what they call the dry channel and the other channel, the North Channel, had become rather dry. It was before my job as commissioner; although, we were still having trouble with water thieves. When I was about 16 or 17 years old, before I had any official authority, my job for the Baker ditch people was to go to the mouth and rule out any obstructing rocks and see that the water came down. That was putting the rocks into the other's fellow's mouth. (laughs) My opponent was an outlaw type of character in appearance. He had a lot of big hound dogs. He was a coyote hunter, carried two pistols and wore chaps and rode a high horse. He was hired by the North Bench people to keep their ditch full.

KRT: Roll the rocks back into your ditches?

SRL: So I had to do sort of a Viet Cong on this thing. I'd hide in the brush. He'd ride up there like a general or something—a bandit—and roll my rocks out. Just as soon as he was gone—he couldn't stay around long, he had more important business elsewhere—I would roll them back, meanwhile keeping an eye out for proper cover. (laughs) I had the better of it, and of course
when the judge came along, with Joe Dixon to help us—his attorney—we got a proper adjudication. When I was commissioned later on, I had a little official backing.

KRT: Well, tell me a little more, Rae, about Henry L. Myers.

SRL: I didn’t know too much. He became—after his service in the legislature—district judge. Or was it after he served in the Senate that he became district judge?

KRT: I don’t know, Rae. I’m curious about him for just one reason.

SRL: I think I had some correspondence with him when he was in the Senate, but I haven’t run across it.

KRT: The legislature was still electing Senators in 1910, when it goes through a whole series. The have a terrific stalemate, and in the end the only official record is a total dark horse, Henry L. Myers. Nobody ever heard of him and he goes to the United States Senate and is elected on the 28th ballot in 1910.

SRL: It was never necessary for anybody to buy him.

KRT: No, there was, of course, tremendous company pressure.

SRL: He would be a fool.

KRT: I was curious as to what...this again is a complete blank. Where does Henry L. Myers comes from in 1910? Why?

SRL: Well, he was a cut or two above the average Bitterrooter.

KRT: Was he? That particular election is one in which T. H. Carter is involved and the company is very, very much involved, and nobody got anywhere, except in the end, Henry L. Myers.

SRL: For a time he thought he was independent of the company, but I don’t know whether he ever learned that he was far from it.

KRT: I’m curious whether he ever learned it, whether he ever knew it. Anyhow, he did their bidding, as you know in Montana is often the case. The verdict is perfectly innocent and simply stupid.

SRL: Yes. Often times stupidity placed in our hands on the other side. I mean even with their ability to hire brains, these exploiters often times perversely played right into our hands unintentionally through their stupidity and arrogance.
KRT: Rae, let’s get you now to Hardin. Why did you leave here? You had resigned your job?

SRL: I resigned my job and I had to leave here.

KRT: You didn’t come back to this school district after the bill was killed?

SRL: No. I kept my farm. I did a little bit toward maintaining continuity here. One thing I always regretted, I helped select, more or less, the superintendent who followed me, but he was one of these solid people who believed in sound scholarship and all that sort of thing. Didn’t have time for frills, fads, and fancies. Well, I thought such things could become the very life blood and essence of the inherited school values.

KRT: Rae, to jump ahead a long way, was there any germinating idea that subsequently blossomed in Winetka that goes back to the reservation days here?

SRL: Yes, in Hardin too. Before I ever went to Winetka I was reading John Dewey very thoroughly. Colonel Parker, where my wife went to school, was one of the modernizers and others experimenting themselves. Accidently more or less...no, accidently, I was a responsible servant of the people now and trustee of the people to come—grownups. Caroline Rich and some other teachers and I got a hold of a few high school students and asked this question, “Is it a hard life we’ve taken up here, our parents and everybody? What can we do as students, as young people, as pupils and teachers to contribute not only directly, but indirectly, to help our people get out of the bondage of poverty and ignorance?”

One of the main kinds of bondage we are suffering from is our ignorance of the corporation. We’re hearing on all sides about Roosevelt’s trust busting and Wilson’s “New Freedom,” and we were hearing from our parents about their trying to develop a cooperative consumer-owned self-help movement to help them get more for what they have to sell and pay less for what they had to pay. [Have] more money and hold up their heads and so on.

I myself will remember the Society of Equity. Then another thing and very noticeable—a small thing maybe—we don’t have much to eat on our tables except maybe sowbelly and that kind of thing and maybe not enough of that. Maybe somehow or other we could help people to enjoy some delicacies. There was no fruit. There was no honey. There were no bees.

We pointed out various other things. There ought to be something in our interests and our language to tie the children and the parents, teachers, and others together. More than they are tied together now. We thought these things might do it if we acquired the vocabulary of our adults and the worries of our times and the hopes as children and teachers along with the others that would be contributing something to the educational lives and the unity. We had a lot of things to say and then particularly learning about corporations. It was all mystery to most people, the corporations—all a mystery. You couldn’t use a technology or a machine of any kind unless you knew how to use it. Here the corporation was even more important to

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civilization in our times, I think, than the domestication of the elephant was way back then. It very urgent. Mergers were occurring. We were helpless, but that was because we were so ignorant. The reason we made mistakes was because we were so ignorant.

Anyhow, it resulted my going down and talking it over with Joe Dixon. I said, “Senator, I would like to have you print us up or at least donate to our Bee Company, the most flamboyant stock certificates possible. They'll sell for 25 cents, and anybody can buy them that's interested. An open outfit company. I've written to the A. I. Root Company and told them about our conditions here and about the fact there were no bees and no honey production in this area. We were trying to get our clovers started and a little fruit. We were trying to get some fruit started. Pollination was important.”

They had written back. “Well, we'll put a certain number of hives and all that goes with them—live colonies—and see what you can do with it. You're to keep us informed.”

That's what we did and I said, “We are ready for these stock certificates.” Well, he had, of course, always been as intensively interested almost in the Flathead as he was in his own family. Here it was his baby, not only the opening up of the reservation, making land available irrigated with power also—public power. That was all his scheme. It would have turned out even better, but the counterrevolutionary movement following Wilson hadn't set us back a lot.

KRT: You hit at the wrong time?

SRL: Yes, when they found that our dam here had—that was now Kerr Dam—had been started under good government auspices to supply power, our national administration was very much embarrassed. They wanted to unload somehow or other, fast. Of course, the Montana Power Company wanted the site badly. So, it was quite like the story of the Grizzly bears and the cold hunter. One of them wanted very much a good warm overcoat, and the other wanted very much a square meal. They got together, and each was more than satisfied. Well, that's what happened here. The Montana Power Company and national administration finally got together and lived not ever after happily but quite a while. The company found it, of course—the bonanza of the foundation of the empire. Didn't cost anything to build the dam hardly, a chunk of concrete there between the rock sides. And they had this great national reservoir, 35 miles long and 15 miles wide. Tremendous donation comparable, in a way, to give to the Northern Pacific.

KRT: You bet, very valuable.

SRL: More so, because they had become more nearly even a keen monopoly—a strategic monopoly—in Montana than the Northern Pacific ever became as a monopoly corporation. (laughs)

KRT: Rae, I want to go back to the Bee Company. Who did you first talk to about the Bee

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Company? The teachers and the kids together?

SRL: The high school teachers and the kids both. Now the younger kids came into the picture, and teachers of the younger kids came into the picture, because they were encouraged to write themes, essays, so on, to make some study of insect life: a nature study. The grasshoppers were eating us up at the time and that connected a bit. The teacher was supposed to teach nature study. To the stock shares were available to members of our board; they didn't carry any voting rights. We had a very special arrangement of these certificates. (laughs) George Beckwith had quite a few certificates, but he couldn't vote. He was chairman of the board.

KRT: Because the bee company is pure Winetka.

SRL: Yes, when I came back here from Winetka, I bumped into Addy Sterling's daughter, wife of Dr. Brooks down here. “Say, do you remember when I wrote an essay for you about bee culture and how to run a corporation?” (laughs)

KRT: This is very similar to the corporations and companies in Winetka.

SRL: The question was here, one of the important questions, was whether it shall be a stock company where control is exercised on the basis of property qualifications, or in a cooperative where control is exercised on the basis of manhood suffrage—one man, one vote. They quickly reached the national mettle. George Beckwith and the other boys didn't really understand what the full implications might be.

KRT: In other wise, the implications were there. That same question arose, as I recall, in Winetka when the rather wealthy boy says that “Just because I have the 50 cents, and you have 25. I shouldn't out vote you.”

SRL: Well, actually, this idea of the school being an embryo, in which the chromosomes of evolution could be pre-planted - a social revolution in an economic democracy.

KRT: You said a minute ago that perhaps Mr. Beckwith didn't quite understand it.

SRL: Some of our boys didn't fully understand it in Winetka.

KRT: Did anybody in the neighborhood around here, when the bee company was formed and so forth—?

SRL: Nobody blocked it. Some of them pricked up their ears a bit when you called it a co-operative, even then, but then relatively the cooperatives were very highly respected, compared to what they became in the public estimation later. After the National Tax Equality Association had smeared them with all sorts of communism and everything else.
KRT: I want to go back to just one thing. How strong is the Society of Equity right now, at this period?

SRL: Well, the main leadership is coming from down in Missoula. I had 100 dollars in it. That's quite a lot of money. First people around here were buying wholesale and trying to distribute more cheaply, undercutting their competitors on the market by buying carload lots and that sort of thing. Well, that was all right as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. They didn't have the ingredients of continuity and unity and so on—permanence. Those who upset the Society of Equity program, some of them had a good bit of understanding about the Ruchadale Cooperative plan and how successful it had been. They undertook to teach us.

KRT: Who was the moving spirit?

SRL: The man who had been most clearly in mind was Graves. I believe he was F. W. L. Graves. He lived in the Orchard Homes. He was a secretary of the Society of Equity, but he tried to teach down the genuine classical cooperative principles.

KRT: Was the society at this time strong enough to have any resentment in the neighborhood here or in Missoula?

SRL: Some of the merchants were, but not awful strong. They just laughed at us. They never thought we'd amount to anything. The employees weren't smart enough.

KRT: How smart a fellow was Graves, do you think?

SRL: Graves was quite smart. He was too far ahead of his time for the farmers themselves. Farmers couldn't see this idea of taking a chance on having a distribution at the end of the year.

KRT: What about now?

SRL: They could see more vividly the idea of making the savings right when you paid the money and took the goods.

KRT: Rae, during the time when you were active in the Society of Equity, also active in the disturbance intent upon county busting, also experimenting with the bee company, how was your [school] board reacting to these activities?

SRL: Board went along all right for the school project. There wasn't a word of opinion.

KRT: How about your membership in the Society of Equity? This didn't disturb the board?
SRL: No, nobody ever raised the point.

KRT: How did the board feel about your going over to Helena on their behalf?

SRL: Only one of them had strong reservations on it—name, over here.

KRT: On what grounds?

SRL: Just a general conservative feeling that we ought to go along with the town. Chamber of Commerce knew best. They called it Commercial Club in those days.

KRT: The same thing, though. Were there any other nascent cooperative movements around here then?

SRL: Yes, the first chapter of the Farmers' Union in Montana was established out here, at Mud Creek, about a few miles west of Ronan.

KRT: About when?

SRL: About 1912, that was before we got going on out Society of Equity. A very small feeler you might say came out of Oklahoma or Texas, whenever the Farmer's Union started.

KRT: Were you a member of this first chapter?

SRL: No, I didn't know very much about them. One of my teachers was active in it over there around Butte. Robideau, I think it was. I didn't recognize the full significance of it. Neither did I recognize the full significance of this inspiration with reference to economic citizenship.

KRT: What's that?

SRL: Cultivation in the schools of an understanding of all the relationships involved in a corporation, any kind of a corporation, all kinds of corporations.

KRT: What do you mean you didn't recognize the situation?

SRL: I didn't realize fully at that time.

KRT: But you were doing it, nevertheless.

SRL: I was doing it, but I would have done it much more systematically and thoroughly if I had realized the full educational and civic implications.

KRT: You would have done it a la Winetka, in other words.
SRL: I would have done it much more thoroughly even in Winetka if I had understood it thoroughly and if I hadn't been spread so thin. When Carl went away for the war, for example, not only did I not have an associate superintendent as he had, I did not have a county or as many supervisors as he had. I took the whole business on my shoulders—mine and his—in an attempt to do the job during the war. I delegated a lot of this stuff and spread my enthusiasm. This was just one thing I was developing. Otherwise, I do believe, especially if I could have acquired a senior high school—I had only up through the eighth grade—I could have made something of that.

KRT: The Bee Company, though, apparently arises out of a pretty earthy background. “There are not bees,” it begins with.

SRL: That's right. We weren't quite realistic and stark as it was here, but to compensate for that the children were crown princes and important. Even more important per individual then those here in a way.

RT Now, let's flash ahead. I don't want to get you into Hardin. I want to stop you. I don't want you to go to Hardin if you don't mind until I get back from Hardin. (laughs) When the Bee Company was formed, just for fun now, each stock certificate...Joe Dixon printed you up some very beautiful stuff. Did he contribute them?

SRL: He was very much pleased.

KRT: Now, you sell the stock certificates, for what?

SRL: Yes, for at least a quarter! Please excuse me, I'll be back in a moment.

KRT: (To Frances Logan) You wouldn't be aware of the significance of the Bee Company. I am terribly interested in the evolution of the idea because that is what happened at Winetka much later. This sounds to me like the germ, which interests me greatly.

FL: Ask him where he first ran into Rochedal principles. I'm not sure about that.

KRT: The evolution of the Bee Company...the thing that fascinates me is that it begins right here, and it begins with poverty. It begins with a vague idea that corporations are all around us. This is the period of trust busting, corporate dangers, fear of them, admiration for them, et cetera.

FL: The recognition that is essential to be able to use them or you will be used by them.

KRT: Correct. Which of course is what later becomes to fruition in Winetka. The kids there, of course, were corporate in all respects. They were corporate in the cafeteria, and they had all

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kinds of companies.

FL: The tragedy of this is it's all gone.

KRT: It is also, of course, the first application of John Dewey on a practical basis in America, really. But we'll have to get the educationists in on this part of it.

FL: Are there any educationists out here in this school who would...?

KRT: I think there is one and only one. Very young, and this fellow, I'm very careful about approaching them because if it's a bad one he is not going to get the point. I think this fellow, whom I would like in due course to bring out...but that is not the point. Now the Rutledge principle, where did you first encounter the Rutledge principle?

FL: Rushdale.

SRL: Rushdale. I ran into some of this in my reading long before, but not much. I hadn't seen it and felt it and been in the midst of it as we were here.

KRT: You were perfectly aware of it?

SRL: Oh yes. I was aware of the theory of it.

KRT: Now Rae, on the Bee Company, what was the reaction of the kids for instance?

SRL: Oh, the high school kids were old enough to do their part. The board consisted of high school kids. I think there were five or seven, something like that. They used to go with me after I got a car—a Ford—to drive around in. They used to go with me to three or four high schools that I had in the district. There were four full time...that is four year or two year schools in the district before I left here. They would go around, and we'd take some of the elementary children and these high school kids would explain how a corporate business works. Whether it's a profit corporation or a cooperative corporation or public corporation, what have you. They didn't understand too well, but they were learning. The younger children might read some of their essays about insect and nature studies. We had glass hives in the principal schools. There was a fellow here the other day checking up on my assessment, and he said, “Do you remember when I was a small boy in the St. Ignatius School, learning about bee companies and corporations?”

KRT: Is that so? He still remembers. Well, the Bee Company interests me greatly.

SRL: It’s a germinal idea that can mean much. When I started telling about it a bit, as part of our program of what I call membership education—our civic education for democracy, as a part of that program where all the members are supposed to learn a lot about their proper
relations and how they're supposed to function. How others are supposed to function in corporate lives when nearly all lives in modern times, at least the last 50 to 100 years in the U. S. have been corporate, whether a labor union, or a profit corporation or non-profit corporation or private or non-profit public corporation of various kinds...most universities, school districts, et cetera.

KRT: This wasn't as clear to you in 1917 as it is now?

SRL: Not nearly so much. I've had a lot of things impressed upon me and I've read a lot of books. Professor Gray on monopoly, things like that. (laugh)

KRT: Nevertheless, it was started then?

SRL: Yes, of course. [Theodore] Roosevelt and [Joe] Dixon and [Robert] La Follette and those boys gave me a pretty good head start.

KRT: What happened to the Bee Company upon your departure? That was the end of that I suppose.

SRL: Yes, my successor finally lapsed. The hives were put over into the hands of one of the parents who didn't understand the significance of it and didn't play his part. He just harvested the honey.

KRT: To jump way ahead again. This is stuff I would like to get into when we do Winetka. Is there any place in the United States, now any school operating on the Winetka policy?

SRL: Oh yes, lots of them attempted, and a lot of people are getting a lot of publicity, now talked about how they had designed individual instruction and adaptation to the individual child. Actually, it was (unintelligible) who went out to the Winetka schools 25 or 30 years ago. It boosted a very popular idea of reorganizing education in such a way as to enable individual children to be themselves—individual and make individual progress. The one thing they have fallen down most in imitation of Winetka, whether they give any credit to Winetka or not, has been what we call the social side.

That's where this Bee Company, among other things, comes in at the junior high school level and other things at other levels. We said from the very beginning there at Winetka—our hypothesis—that we going to see to it that at least half the time of the child went through meaningful studious experience in social activities. Having in mind—having pointed out—the various implications and connections of history and our present organization of society, et cetera.

I remember to emphasize the distinctive values when one of the superintendents of the Chicago schools spent a day or two with me. When he went back he wrote me a letter. I had

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visited his school where they had been doing a good deal in the way of writing materials or programmatic work you hear so much about. We were doing individual self-teaching programs. We had our own Winetka press. He wrote back and said, “I think that we have made real progress in adaptation to individual capacities and differences in that subject matter which is capable of such individualization—for for arithmetic and so on—but but I confess to you that what is probably the most important side of it from the standpoint of modern education for what the world is now to deal with, the social activities side is my despair. I am still despairing of any chance to do very much with that although I shall keep trying.”

They were having then (in the Chicago schools) 45 to 50 to a class. The frills and fancies frowned upon and not as much understanding and intelligence about such matters as our average Winetka parent had and so more handicapped.

The assistant superintendent of New York City, with such a huge thing as they had on their hands there, spent a day with me and he spoke in a somewhat similar way. They thought they hadn't gone quite so far on individualization of standard subject matter, but they had hoped to work on both fronts.

I received an invitation not so many years after that to go into the Board of Education in New York City [to speak] on that subject. They recognized in it certain possibilities. That was when I made a trip around the east—northeast—in which I visited such places as Columbia University, some of the state teachers colleges, the large school systems, and some of the very good school systems, like the Newton, Massachusetts school system. There I was flattered by an offer from the superintendent of a steady job as consultant for the development of this fine experimentation in the school system there. I considered it one of the very, very best school systems in the country, still is. I was also asked if I would consider such a position with the Baltimore schools or Philadelphia. I can't remember which.

KRT: In other words they were all terribly interested in it.

SRL: Yes. The point is that key people, the people who were concerned about the philosophy, the objectives—the whole spectrum of values on education—found it rather challenging. I could have had published many, many articles—three or four or five times on this general subject. Many of them having to do with, or concentrating on, economic citizenship, responsible membership in corporate, you might say, in these economic states. I just couldn't do it. It was stretched too thin. It was painful for me to write. It would have been a good deal of publicity, in the professional journals particularly.

KRT: I want to pursue this again, as I was telling Frances, with the young man from the School of Education, whom I would like to bring up. I can't even remember his name.

SRL: I gave you an awfully poor sampling of material I had on hand here.
KRT: Well, I want to bring him back. I don't even know his name. I have never met him.

SRL: I enjoyed talking with him. Larry Hodges, my son-in-law, knows something of Winetka schools and would take an interest I'm sure. He teaches library art in the School of Education.

KRT: I don't know him.

SRL: I'd like to have you know him and him know you. He's an intelligent fellow.

RT I want to be careful about the School of Education.

SRL: Yes, they're touchy. It might be of special interest to call attention to [E. O.] Melby who became chancellor here at the university and Walter Anderson who became Dean of the School of Education at Missoula. There was interest and knowledge from much personal visitation on the part of Anderson of our schools, especially the Junior High School.

Melby came up to me one day when I talked to an assembly of school people while he was at the university and said to me, “Rae, I believe it would be of rather unique value to the School of Education students in New York City University [NYU]”—where he was heading at that time—“if you would come with me and give students the advantage of your experience in a combination of junior high school administration and close teaching and cooperation with the children, the young people in the development and understanding of institutions of our times, partly through the practice child's scale level of organization and operation.”

KRT: This was when he was headed east?

SRL: Yes. These primitive forms of social institutions as they have evolved today are critically important institutions economically. “Now,” he said, “That is something in which very little has been done.” Meaning the different forms of corporate ownership and operation and what the responsibilities are for all who take part or have anything to do with it. That's relatively new, but it seems to me that nothing is much more vital or more critical to our future.

He said, “I couldn't think it would be wise at your age to give you permanent tenure, but I could do as I am doing with Kilpatrick”—that famous author and professor at Columbia University—“and give you half time.” (laughs)

Well, I said, “Melby, I doubt whether I could survive even half time in New York City.”

KRT: I don't think I could. Halftime is three or four times in New York City.

SRL: Anyhow, I never attempted it. My health really wasn't too good then.

KRT: Well I'll tell you if you went to NYU or any of those schools your health had better been...
good if you are 20 years old. It's uncivilized. I don't think you should have gone, but they sure
as the devil could have used you.

SRL: Well, I've been tempted, in retrospect at least, another example when the very successful
opulent firm of Perkins, Leedler, and Will offered me a job as their advisor on adaptation of
Shell, that is the plant, to the modern needs and functioning of education.

KRT: These are architects?

SRL: Yes, architects. They offered me a full-time job there shortly after I resigned or I was
superannuated at Winetka in trying to redesign and adapt the school plant to the immediate
modern social needs. Well, I was so flattered, I said, “My god, Larry, I'm not competent. I can't
do it. I wouldn't dream of doing it. I wouldn't attempt it.” I said, “I'm not even very good at
mechanical drawing.”

KRT: That's what they wanted.

SRL: “Well,” he said, “that's not what we want.”

KRT: Ideas are what they want desperately.

SRL: I did give them some drawings which they utilized in their long display pages in Life
magazine one time, and their contribution to the question on modern school architecture after
reading that I came to the conclusion that maybe I was better qualified then I thought I was.
(laughs)

FL: Larry Perkins took the entire credit for it.

SRL: Well, he didn't mention me, but he didn't need to.

KRT: Well, a mention doesn't cost anything, but it always irritates me when credit doesn't go
where it's due.

SRL: Anyhow, his firm has been pretty bold in innovations, architecture. Happily, I was largely
instrumental in getting him a job with Winetka Board of Education with Sarnana and Son to
build that Crow Island School in Winetka. That proved to be the beginning of their firm's
reputation. They had some reputation, but the depression hit and the war hit and no more
construction, no more work for architects. Then when it was possible again, they had a chance
to set the example.

KRT: They were on the ground floor in other words.

SRL: Yes, with a name like Sarnan and of course Perkin’s father and was a school architect so

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the school board members and superintendents and what have you trooped in from all
over—the cold climates, and warm climates, all around—after this demonstration at Crow Island
School. Then there were a lot of schools built after that.

KRT: These things interest me. I was thinking of the continuity that seems to be involved in the
bee company. It works both ways and the ideas involved, in what I guess is history, are
considerably more important most of the time then the events. I was thinking about Henry L.
Myers, who along in this period got terribly concerned about spies and communists and other
things in Butte and elsewhere. This is when, of course, Frank Little came at an unpropitious
moment into Butte and got himself lynched. Myers at that time was in the Senate and a
bombardment come from Butte and Anaconda, the Montana Council of Defense, and the great
powers of that time being Governor Stewart, about sedition acts and so forth. Myers got up on
his feet in the U. S. Senate and proposed an Alien and Sedition Act and related in the
Congressional record the horrible things that were happening in Montana in terms of
dangerous citizens, spies, et cetera. Our national Sedition Act directly attributable to the noble
tradition of Montana vigilantes!

KRT: Yes, it was. The thing that is quite shocking about it was that little old Henry Myers from
up yonder proposed and largely wrote the Sedition Act that has plagued the United States ever
since. He interests me because at that time he was being bombarded by Will Campbell, editor
of the Helena Independent. A man of vitriolic nature, suspicion and vigor. He was being
bombarded by J. Bruce Kramer. The only person who was keeping his head at this precise
moment was Burton K. Wheeler. What interests me, though, is that this little knot of fearful,
awful men in Montana, through Henry L. Meyers, were responsible for the National Sedition
Act, which has as I say plagued us ever since.

SRL: That right. He triggered a throw-back.

KRT: That's right. These funny little ideas that start locally, sometimes aren't so funny.

SRL: If you catch the public mind just wrong.

KRT: I would like to balance Mr. Kramer's and others' influence on the national scene with
Winetka and the bee factory as illustrative of the fact that at least it works both ways.

SRL: The thing that I realized was the inestimable value of having teachers and children,
particularly children, and parents teaching one another. Stimulating one another. Every
one of them had a different point of view. Every one of them was considered honorable and
honest, respected and every one of them listened to by the others.

KRT: Traffic going both ways.

SRL: Traffic going all ways and getting a lot more education and better quality of education

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then the taxpayers were paying for. They would have been getting lots more than they knew they were getting.

KRT: Rae, is your friend coming out this spring? Do you know the retiring superintendent of Winetka?

SRL: I think there is just a possibility that Don Kuelli [?] might come. I've written him and told him I think he is under obligation to write an account which will supplement a big book that Carlton and...What was his name who co-authored with him and who is now superintendent at Fitzburg (Pittsburg?)? He was superintendent at Winetka after I left, and the last I heard was a very likely new superintendent of the city of Chicago.

FL: This is one of the things you should talk over with Marion Russell. She feels that this book of Carlton's has left out a great deal that's important and that Rae should write what has been left out. Now there is no one who can give you a clearer picture of what has not been said about Winetka then Marian Russell, if you're going over there next week or so.

SRL: The former superintendent that I speak of—I can't think of his name at Winetka—wrote about the things that they knew about first hand while they were actually on the job. There was a good deal more significance than they realized—I think—which went on there in between times. Their last book covers a few years, [when] there had been four or five other superintendents. They didn't contribute zero, and perhaps they didn't detract an awful lot. I happened to be one of them. I was on the job there 20 years with a good deal of continuity involved, and I had been working more or less as Carlton's alter ego for a good part of that time and carried on for years after he was out of the picture. This book skips over the period of his superintendency.

KRT: Is this your successor?

SRL: Not my immediate successor, but he was a very scholarly sort of fellow with an extraordinary ability to expound either in writing or otherwise and Kern is a master of elucidation. Believe me. Both of them are. When they got together they produced quite a book, but I think they didn't fully emphasize some things that you only indirectly...Don Kuelli who was principal of a junior high school with me when I was superintendent—Don was filling in as acting superintendent while all these other superintendents have come and gone. He has been there all the time almost from the time I arrived there.

KRT: Is he retiring at the end of this year?

SRL: He might not. The board has kept him on for an initial year or two and they might do it again.

KRT: How old is he, Rae? He must be 66, 67 or so?
SRL: He's certainly not more than 65. I took him in there as a young man.

KRT: Well, it seems to me that something ought to be done with this because I'm not—

SRL: Well, if you think it really has significance that you would be concerned with, I certainly will make it a point to guide his footsteps.

KRT: Would you? From everything I hear. I haven't read the book, I'll get in from the library. I don't think the Winetka experiment, in terms of what could now be said about it in retrospect, has been said.

SRL: Not all of it, no. Certain things have been overlooked pretty much.

KRT: It sounds to me like it would be terrible valuable if he could get to work with you, with someone from here.

SRL: I think he might do it. He hasn't said no yet.

KRT: Well, it should intrigue him. He would be through with it if he retired. You're through with it. It's a long look backward. I know enough about the Winetka experiment to know what repercussions it had at the time and ever since. Something ought to be said, I think.

SRL: If his wife and he could write together, I might be able to help a little.

[End of Interview]