Reel E, Track#1
Interviewed by Laurance Schwartz ('64)
Nov. 18, 1963

Hop: … Dartmouth was about as near dead as a college… 'Twas about as near dead as a college could be in 1893 when Dr. Tucker came back here and he began a revival all along the line. It was a material revival, new buildings and revival of educational policy a revival of a religious sort. Everything. And he retired in 1910 and I've always thought that the trustees got a little panic-stricken at that. That's just hypothesis. But at any rate, a couple of men that they wanted to bring back couldn't or wouldn't come and they eventually asked Dr. Nichols back, who was one of the foremost scientists of his time. And he had done a thing I never understood even though I've heard him explain it a good many times. He had devised a method for weighing the weight of light and was weighing the light that came from different stars and so forth and at the time was very prominent in the scientific field. And he had taught at Dartmouth, but he had had no administrative experience. And they brought him back in 1910 and I stayed over and worked with him a year until he got the run of the office and so forth. And he told me within three months afterwards, he says, this is all a mistake. He says, I have worked in a laboratory all my life and he says if I had a problem, he says I took it into the laboratory and stayed with it whether it was 15 minutes or 15 months. And he says, here I get a problem and I take it home and think I'll try to solve it and I come back and there are 25 more. And he says I just haven't got the administrative mind. Well, he didn't have. And you simply have to understand that though to understand what happened to the college during the period, because it just stood still, that was all. And it wasn't any reflection on him at all, it was a reflection on the trustees who picked him. And so then they decided they needed a Dartmouth man to come back and I came back in 1916, and the momentum which Dr. Tucker had built up had been pretty largely lost. Things were pretty static. The student body was, as I remember it, somewhere around 1500, a little less than 1500. It was pretty provincial, the two biggest delegations and I think very likely they still are, but the two biggest delegations and overwhelming any others, were Massachusetts and New York. And we had practically nothing west of the Mississippi River. And… but it was a good student body, excepting it was local. And whether rightly or not, and that's been debated with me by a lot of my friends, I thought we wanted a wider distribution. And if the theory is right that one of the principal functions of the college is to breed

citizenship, I thought you needed contact with more citizens, that was the upshot of it. And then it developed after we practically were barred from getting representation west of the Mississippi because none of the schools there fitted for anybody who wanted to come to an eastern college from west of the Mississippi, had to spend a year in the east, at least, at Amherst or somewhere, getting qualified for our special set of requirements. And that is the basis of a thing which was pretty widely discussed at the time and now has pretty much dropped out because everybody is doing it. But we pulled out of all our intercollegiate relations and said we would set our own standards and I can just illustrate in one small way what that meant. And I don't wonder that some of our rival institutions thought we were throwing standards pretty well overboard. But the state of Oregon, for instance, in order to keep men from coming east, abolished classical history. And instead, gave the history of Oregon. Whereas all the other New England colleges were requiring classical history, we just said we'd accept the history of Oregon. And it was in little ways like that that we began to build up our quota from west of the Mississippi and getting a good deal more nationally distributed body. Which I still think is desirable, but opinions differ on that. One of my Harvard friends one time asked me, he says, I don't understand you at all. He says after all, all the culture in the country is here in New England, and he says you've got access to it, why go anywhere else? Well of course if you have that point of view then that conclusion is reasonable. But anyway, we finally decided, or I should say, in 1916 we weren't getting as many men as we wanted. And here I have to go into a detail of administration which [inaudible] you understand, but a college builds a plan allowing for future growth. The growth comes and you get up to it and then you have to build some more plans for some more growth, and so forth. Well we weren't getting enough men to fill and of course every man that you lack under your maximum capacity, why you lose money on. And so we started in to build up on numbers and in order to have our admission requirements right we put in the selective process which was condemned practically all over the country. Demoralizing standards and so forth, and then within five years everybody in the east had come to it. And practically all the Ivy League colleges, at least, are on the same basis now. But, what I'm coming to is that in 1916 which I judge is the beginning of what you want, the college was pretty passive, not very much had been done due to the Nichols administration and I don't say that in any reflection at all… I was very fond and admiring of President Nichols but he wasn't an administrator, and he knew it. Nothing much had happened during

his administration. In other words, things were pretty passive. But then in comes the War and that upset everything. I mean, as you well know, all natural processes stop in war and lots of the plans we had we had to put by and delay for four or five or more years. That was particularly true in regard to the library, which at that time, it was a slogan all around. You heard it everywhere: Dartmouth had the best gymnasium and the poorest library in the country. And it came pretty near being true, too, and that was one of the things that needed to be corrected. Then we needed… Chemistry was beginning to emerge as of very much more importance and we built the Steele laboratory, biology was emerging and we built the biological laboratory, and everything was in motion, not only at Dartmouth, but elsewhere it was the question of keeping up with the Joneses very definitely, during that period. But then the boys come home from the War and no college knew exactly what to expect when the boys came back. And the expectations, or perhaps the apprehensions, were not justified, because I don't think the college has ever had a more eager group of students than the boys who came back from the war, and that was in spite of the fact that you had your exceptions, as you always have. And we had a murder during that time, that was a bootlegging proposition, and that was the period that the novelists described as "flaming youth" you know, and I've been asked this a lot of times, but I don't remember any such hardships as some of the other academic men tell me existed during that period. I guess I was too busy, but things were going along pretty well here and the grade of the student body was being constantly raised and we were weak at that time in both numbers and quality on the faculty. Well, it's been during your time in college that all these retirements came and they were the young men that I brought in at that time, but we… I can't be entirely accurate about these things, because I don't remember accurately, but the proportion of students per instructor was something like 15 to 1 and we worked it down until it was about 1 to 12. And that isn't a very significant figure, as a matter of fact, but it has a little significance. But then early in the '20s we had a revision of the curriculum and threw out a lot of dead courses and put in a lot of new ones. It's a little hard to explain to people who don't understand, you see, at that time, as a matter of fact, the molecule was the smallest part of matter…. nobody knew anything about atoms or anything more of that sort and even for years after that, chemistry and physics were thought of as two entirely separate disciplines. But they were all the time growing together until it became as they are now, really one subject… just different wings of it. You might almost include biology in that too. The sciences, in

other words, are all growing together now, but they were all separate entities at that time. Well, I would say in general that it was a period of change. I hope it was a period of improvement, but it certainly was a period of change, because we were doing lots of things around here. Is that the type of thing you want?

Student: Oh yes. This is fine. I have some other things if you'd care to comment on… jot down some ideas.

Hop: Go ahead.

Student: I also was interested in knowing about the general attitude towards prohibition in that period at the college, and how the college reacted to it.

Hop: Well, I never had any use for prohibition and I didn't think it was enforceable to begin with. I mean I didn't have any moral convictions about it one way or another but I didn't think it was enforceable and the time came when I thought somebody besides the saloon-keepers better state what their attitude was, and I made what I thought was a comparatively harmless statement to the effect that it wasn't working and the public ought to wake up and realize it wasn't working and do something about it but all of a sudden I found a sensation on my hands. The movie people, the radio people, and so forth flocked in and then as you would expect according to how people felt across the country, why it was applauded or condemned and… But anyway, people began to speak more freely and I don't remember any college president that said anything about it at all, although I think they all felt the same in regard to it. But there was an element in the thing which was very unfortunate and that was bad liquor. Because it became profitable to sell wood alcohol or anything else and lots of people didn't hesitate to do it. We had some number of men that were made violently ill and two or three of them escaped death narrowly on stuff that was sold at a joint down at the Junction. And one thing I never felt I was in a position to explain, but there was a fellow over at Norwich… I don't know whether you ever heard of Joe Pilver or not but he was pretty famous at the time. Do you know, coming down Route 5, where the road forks off to go to Norwich, and there's a house at the corner there just in that fork? Well, Joe Pilver was running a bootlegging establishment there, but he was serving good liquor and that was one thing I never could explain to the FBI. They came up and they says the college is making no effort to close up this place over here, and I said no, we weren't,

and then they wanted to know if the college would help them on it and I said no we wouldn't. So that place continued so far as I know on the thing. And I had a talk with Joe Pilver. I told him the college would never aid in any prosecution on him as long as he sold quality stuff, and… But that was the way things were going then, because the students were making gin in the bathtub and it wasn't very good gin either. [Laughter] And prohibition actually increased drinking in the country tremendously, as I think almost any habit would be increased if it was forbidden, as that was. Your judges, much on the basis of how they personally felt in regard to the thing, would sentence a bootlegger anywhere from one to 25 years, depending just simply what judge you came before. But at any rate, it was eventually repealed and things began to get better all over, even today there's more drinking than there ever was before prohibition. And I think it's dangerous drinking in the case of driving… I don't care very much what happens to the driver who is drunk but I'm awfully sorry for the perfectly innocent people that get run down by him. This has no bearing on this, but when I was a small boy, I lived in Uxbridge, Massachusetts and our house was about two hundred yards from the New York, Providence, and Boston railroad, and my mother was desperately worried for fear the children would get on the railroad track and something would happen to them. No train on the New York, Boston and Providence ever ran over 40 miles an hour, and as I think back on it, it seems perfectly ridiculous… you see children now crossing the street with cars going 60 and 70 miles an hour. But that was the general attitude then and people were awfully afraid of railroad tracks and the enormous speed at which they went and so forth. But the '20s or subsequent to the World War… changes began with increasing rapidity and of course are going on today that same way. But thinking back over my own life I can remember when there was only one telephone in New Hampshire and that was in the office of a banker in Concord. And then in 1920, I came back and went as I frequently did up into the editor's office of the *Boston Herald*, for I was very fond of him. He was a man named Robert Lincoln O'Brien that had originally been here, but left and finished up at Harvard because he'd got a bigger scholarship there. And he said to me, he says, do the letters r-a-d-i-o mean anything to you? And I said not a thing and I said, what do they mean to you? Well, he says I don't know what they mean to me and he says I've got some of my men out trying to find out about it, but he says there's a report that something's been invented called r-a-d-i-o and he says I have been told that there's somebody over in South Boston here who's got one of them and says if you have one you can hear music being

played the other side of the city. That's within your own lifetime. And the changes have come pretty fast. What's your next question?

Student: I also want to know, did the students in the '20s take as many road trips? Did they leave the college as often as students do today?

Hop: No, they didn't have many because you see there weren't many cars. There were hardly any cars. I discuss that by the hours with my grandson and trying to get him to believe what I believe, that we had a better time when everybody didn't get out of town on the weekend. No, the exodus is entirely coincident with the incoming of the automobile. And I don't think I was representative because I didn't have any money, but the only time I left Hanover during my… I guess the four years, certainly the most of them… was at Christmastime. I stayed here through vacations and I had a good time too. But we used to… gangs of fellows… This was something quite apart from the fraternities. Groups of men would become acquainted with each other and they'd go to walk. One of the standard things was to walk around the reservoir and if you didn't feel energetic you took the one that only went around one reservoir, five miles, and if you felt more energetic you went around both of them, eight miles. And we'd go up to sugar camps in the spring and in those days, logging was… The river would be plugged with 16-foot logs from here to Pompanoosuc. And I've walked across the river on logs lots of times and that was… For those who were interested, those logging operations were interesting. There was something interesting happening all the time locally. You didn't have to go…. and we had no such preoccupation with sex as is prevalent today either. Nobody expected to get married until they were 25 or so. In other words it wasn't an insistent problem in any way. Occasionally somebody would… But in general… Well I was employment manager in 1911 for Filene's and we could get practically any college man we wanted at $12 a week. That's the way life was. I used to think when I was… I don't know… I think it was sometime after I got out of college that I thought a man with a hundred thousand dollars was pretty wealthy. You could buy more with a hundred thousand in those days than you could with a million nowadays. I get considerably amused in listening to some of these learned speeches on expansion and inflation and so forth. I don't know what else we've had since I can remember…. it's been inflation, inflation, inflation. What's your next question?

Student: Oh, yes. I was going to ask you about the library. The problems involved in creating Baker Library.

Hop: Well, the problem was to get the money to do it [Laughter] because without inflation it was a very expensive thing as compared with any other college building that you'd build. And a part of the unpleasant responsibility of a college president is to raise money. And so everybody that we had any contact with that had a million dollars, why I tried to cultivate. [Laughter] And finally found the open sesame in the fact that George F. Baker who was at that time one of the richest men in the country. His uncle graduated here. His uncle was named Fisher Ames Baker and Mr. George F. Baker very gradually became interested. He didn't originally expect it was going to cost anywhere near what it did. But we were very fortunate in that he was a great friend of Edward Tuck's and both of them in the banking field and then Mr. Thayer who was a trustee of the college was president of the AT&T then and they banked through the First Bank so he was an intimate friend of Mr. Baker's. And working all together we finally persuaded him anyway that this would be a nice memorial for his uncle. And so then… I've always been very happy about the way the library was built though. We spent two years before we turned it over to the architects at all asking all sorts of people what they wanted in the library and studying libraries in other places, and so forth. And finally we had… we knew absolutely what we wanted on the interior and we just turned it over to the architects and said put some walls around this. But the very fact of having a building began to attract donors and books and so forth, things became much simpler. We had a great piece of good luck in that Edwin Webster Sanborn whose father had been professor and librarian here and Edwin Webster Sanborn had come into quite a lot of money and he gave us, I think, a million or a million and a half for books and the library has grown and I don't think there's any question, but what we've got the best library of any undergraduate college in the country. But it took a little while to… and of course your ideas change from time to time. I was amused the other day in the opening of this beautiful new library for the medical school. The medical school wanted their library from the… in other words they didn't want to come in and be merged in Baker. And I felt then and feel now as a matter of fact, that at that particular time we wanted to get all of our library resources together before we began to distribute them at all, so we took from the Tuck School, from the medical school, and anywhere else that there were any books, and put them in Baker. And I think it was Mr. Lathem asked me the other day what my attitude was

about the opening of this thing and I said I thought I was right both times [Laughter] in insisting that they should be in the library at least until we got organized. Now the system is going so that they can work it perfectly well having the books apart. But that's the story of the library.

Student: Dr. Hopkins, I'm interested in knowing how the design of almost a copy of Independence Hall came about. Will you tell us whose idea that was?

Hop: Well, it was just a coincidence. I mean, Fred Larson, who was our architect and who is still one of the leading college architects in the country, felt that we wanted a dominating thing there. And he said that he thought some analogy to the Independence Hall would be desirable and wanted to know if anybody had any objection. We didn't. But that's how… but that brings up another thing. One of the biggest problems of my administration as a matter of fact was… I always felt that a library ought to be the center of the college plan and there were nine buildings on that quadrangle in which the library is and where the library stands was the best building the college had, Butterfield Museum. And it was a little hard to explain why at a time when we were dunning the alumni for money we would tear down the best building we'd got. But I've always been glad we did it because otherwise the library would have been off on a side street somewhere and so we bought up everything that stood on the place and tore down our own building and that's the story of the library.

Student: Do you have anything else that you…?

[Students talking together.]

Student: I'd like to ask another question. President Hopkins, you mentioned about attracting the faculty. Could you tell us how you built the strong faculty that is in the process of retiring who we see all around us today.

Hop: Well, you go about it in all sorts of ways. I had been presumably something of an authority on employment management before I came here and I found out almost immediately that nothing that I'd experienced applied to getting a faculty. Well, there wasn't any science to it as far as I was concerned. It was just simply an art of. If you heard of a good man and had any reason to think you could get him, you went after him, and there weren't any ethics about it or

anything else. [Laughter] You just went after him. And I can give you two or three illustrations. Sidney Cox, who was one of the best men here in English for years… Robert Frost asked me one time the first year I was up here, he says I've got a man I want you to look up sometime, and he says, he taught with me over at Plymouth when I taught over there and his name is Cox and he's teaching out in Montana. And I just made a record of it and the next thing… It was some years later, Robert Frost says, do you remember I talked about Sidney Cox? And I said yes. Well, he says he's just been fired from the University of Montana. And I says, what for? And he says they have a censor of publications out there and Sidney let a story get in that some of the editors didn't like, and out of the discussion why they fired him. Well, I'd never met Cox and it was wholly my dependence on what Robert Frost told me, but I telegraphed him right off asking him to come to Hanover and he came to Hanover and met the members of the English department and they thought he was good and that's the way we got one man. And another man named Mecklin who came here and he… I kept hearing about Mecklin. Hear one thing, hear another, and so forth but everything I heard was that he was a wonderful teacher. And my own attitude was that, and is now, as far as an undergraduate college goes, I don't care what a man has been or where he's been or anything, if he can teach. And everything I heard about Mecklin was that he was a wonderful teacher. And I went out to Michigan where he had been and talked with one of his intimate friends and he says John Mecklin is one of my most intimate friends, but he says I wouldn't advise a good friend who was president of a college to take him on, he says, he'd be in a row with you within six months. Well, I says, can he teach? And he says, yeah. He says, he was the best teacher we had here. And I said where is he now? And he said he was at the University of Pittsburgh. So I went down to the University of Pittsburgh and I don't know that this ought to be recorded but the president said he'd pay his salary if I'd take him off his hands. [Laughter] Mecklin had been fomenting against the steel people on which the University of Pittsburgh depended. But anyway, I became acquainted with him and I liked him and he finally came up here, and he resigned about half a dozen times in the first two years. [Laughter] Ended up as one of the most enthusiastic men we had around here and a great teacher. And otherwise, at other times, why you'd just go out and ask your friends in other places. I had a number of friends on the Harvard faculty. I'd go down there and if someone was around that was a good teacher, then if we could get him we'd get him. But in other

words there wasn't any science to it at all. It was a hit or miss proposition.

Student: Could you attract a man with money only? Or was there something… some special offer that you might make? Give us an example.

Hop: No. We worked the northern New England and the great outdoors to a fare-thee-well on the thing and deluged them with propaganda of course. But I found one thing true. I found that in most of the city colleges, places like Harvard and even New Haven, New York, there always were people that wanted to get into the country. If I could find the slightest sign that that was an appealing thing to them, we'd play it to a fare-thee-well. Nobody ever… I don't think anybody ever regretted coming. Of course, we were handicapped for a long time on the money we could offer, because when I came up here in 1916 the college endowment was only a little over three million dollars, and I was lucky, because it began to come in. I got it up to twenty-four million and John Dickey has done a good deal better than that. It's up at about a hundred million now and still going. I think probably the best thing I ever did, didn't have so very much to do with education, it's something that was for education, that was in developing the alumni organization and the alumni fund. That still remains… as one that knows anything about it. Beautiful job….

Student: ….celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Hop: Huh?

Student: It celebrated its 50th anniversary this year.

Hop: Yeah. I did that before I was president. I was just an alumnus. But I don't think… This isn't any effort to be overly modest, but I don't think that individuals are of such large importance in a college organization. It's a good deal more whether the organization works together or not. And I was fortunate in that people worked…. I think we had a pretty cooperative crowd. There's a vogue that irritates me very much indeed among college presidents that it's a particularly hard job. I don't think it is. I think it's a lot of fun. [Laughter] But the undergraduates were always cooperative, we never had any wild riots or anything, the faculty were cooperative and we worked together pleasantly on that and we had a good administrative crowd. Answering your question of course, the

college was growing all this time, and we had a new set of problems every year. There's bound to be some. I don't think we had any reason and I don't think we have any reason to refrain from going after anybody. It's entirely up to them as to whether they want what we've got or not. But in general it proves they do. As long as that remains so, why the college will fare pretty well. Is there anything else?

Student: I'd like to ask one more. Could you tell us about how the selective process came about. That you talked about a few minutes ago… as far as admissions.

Hop: I'm sorry. Would you…?

Student: Comment on how the selective process came about. Was that a natural evolving thing at the time…?

Hop: Yeah, it was a gradually evolving thing. I became very distrustful and still am of examinations as a sole basis for… and I found what I didn't know before, that that was a pretty generally accepted theory by lots of people, other colleges than here. I guess it came to a head one day in a discussion in the administrative group. I said that I honestly believed that I could go out and pick a class without any examinations that would be just as good a class as they got with examinations. I don't know whether I made it or somebody else did, but somebody said, well, let's see what we can do along that line, and we decided and everybody in the administration took a hand at it, and finally we drew up a bill of particulars of what we wanted in a Dartmouth student. Then I… This is an organization matter that I wouldn't want to publicize but that thing properly should have come from the faculty, but I was pretty sure that there were enough on the faculty who wouldn't like it. So I took it right to the trustees and got it approved by the trustees and there were some members of the faculty that felt aggrieved about that for a long time. But we got the thing approved and then issued it. And the academic world at large didn't think it was very good for a while. But they've all come to it now. But there again it was no one man's idea, it was an evolution and talk-out in regard to the thing. It's a very peculiar thing the way that works. Any man that comes along may be declined by four or five colleges and accepted by another, all of them on perfectly good reasons. Of course it imposes some difficulties, the confidential part of it which you never can make public figures pretty largely, but the…We had one year in St. Louis, for instance, the argument that… the alumni argument that they had

signed up probably the best college prospect there. Boy was a high-ranked man in high school and he was a football captain and so forth. Recommendations came in and they were all fine. Then comes in the school principal… a confidential letter from the school principal. And he says I just want to supplement what the record says in regard to this boy. He says if anybody should be denied a college education I would put him… because he says he's utterly selfish, he's utterly self-centered and I don't think he'd hesitate at anything that made for his own advantage. And then in comes the football coach's statement and he says I perhaps feel deeply on this subject, too deeply on this subject, but he says I would rather have a losing team than to have a winning team with him as captain. Well, we crossed him right off. Well, the St. Louis alumni came back and they says well, what the devil do you want anyway that this boy hasn't got? Well, you couldn't say of course and periodically we got that kind of thing, and it still prevails. I suppose sometimes we probably do an injustice but I don't think very often. I think so far as I know the admissions office is awfully well run. But you've got a … After all, human beings are running it and what looks good to one man doesn't look good to another. We may sometime get something better. I distrust certain parts of it which have come into being since it was started. I've got very grave doubts myself whether the aptitude tests are any good or not, but there seems to be a weight of opinion that they are, so they're included. I think the poorest system and there are a lot of people that would differ with me, but I think the poorest system was the old examination system. There are a lot of things about the educational system that you wonder about and I don't know who's to answer them. I suppose evolution is, eventually. I personally think the course… the American college idea of the course is wrong. I think Oxford and Cambridge do it a good deal better than we do. But there again… I guess the preponderance of opinion in the country is contrary to that. Got any more questions?

Student: I'd like to ask one more. About graduate studies. As I remember, graduate degrees were deemphasized as the century went on, but today we see them coming back. What's your opinion on graduate work in relation to a liberal arts institution? Does it have a place?

Hop: Well, here again you'll have to discount what I say, because a lot of people don't agree with me. I came to the conclusion that the PhD absolutely unfitted a man for teaching and he was a good teacher, he retained his interest in teaching, and then it came the third year and he had the writing of a thesis, and he was surrounded by

professionals and he pretty largely lost his interest. We had a man here named Jordan and his father was a professor of history at the University of Chicago and Jordan was an extraordinarily good teacher. And he came up one day and he said I think I've got to leave here. He says I don't want to but he says professionally I think I've got to. And I says, what's that based on? Well, he says I have great respect for my father's opinion and here it is, and he threw this letter across to me. And his father says I hear on every side that you're becoming a good and popular teacher at Dartmouth. He says just remember that teaching is the [inaudible] of scholarship and he says I want you to get into a graduate school, so he went down to Clark University and so far as I knew has never been heard of since. If he'd stayed here, he'd been one of our principal men. And therefore, I did what a great many people and a lot of the people regretted at the time. I began to take men out of the graduate school after two years of graduate work before they had that third year of isolation. And I remember President Garfield one time came up here in the middle of winter from Williams. He said that we didn't have anywhere near the number of PhDs on the faculty that he supposed you had to have to have a good faculty and was that because we didn't have money to hire them? And I supposed there were lots of people who felt that. I personally think we got better teachers but that is open to doubt too. But any man… We told any man that we took on that basis that we would give him a leave of absence after three years if he wanted to go back and get his graduate degree but we wanted him to get back into the routine of teaching. Does that answer your question?

Student: Yes I think it does. Would you also speak on this… We have seen teachers on the faculty move onto other institutions where they could teach graduate students. They wanted to get back into their own little niche and is it your opinion that they don't fit into the kind of teacher that's needed in a liberal arts institution? Just to pursue the matter a little further.

Hop: Well, I'm asked that an awful lot and I'm pretty hesitant to answer it as a matter of fact, because things move and change and changed conditions may require it, I don't know. I didn't believe in it formerly, and I just say in regard to today, I don't know. President Dickey will tell you that in his opinion you can't get a good faculty now unless you put the emphasis on the graduate degree. And if that's so, why I would go along with the thesis, because I think the whole question of whether you've got a good college or not is dependent on whether you've got a good faculty or not. And if you can't get a

good faculty one way why I would thoroughly approve of whatever is done to get it any way you can. But I don't… I still don't think myself that a man has to be a highly professionalized scholar to be a damn good teacher of undergraduate courses. There again as I say… I guess probably around Hanover you'd find three out of four who'll disagree with me on that. And I don't pretend to know what should be done. I have purposely tried not to follow the educational field since I got out because I didn't want to be in a position of double-guessing the administration or anything else and I haven't gone to many college functions and I gave up all my professional reading on the thing and I just don't know at the present day. It's a very interesting problem. I think what's going to happen… I happened to have been in the same division in the World War with Galbraith of Harvard University and so forth who I dislike beyond measure. [Laughter] But we were talking one night about the Dartmouth College case and he says, the most unfortunate decision the Supreme Court ever gave. And I says, on what do you base that? He says, I base that on the fact that I have no confidence at all in the privately endowed institutions. He says, if the decision on that had gone the other way, why all American education would have been publicly financed. Well, I says, why don't you resign at Harvard? He never answered me that. [Laughter]

[End of Reel]

Reel E, Track#2

Hopkins: But that's a point of view and I don't believe it. I think the privately endowed institution will always be a very important part of a democracy and I think the time that you turn it over… I'll tell you a confidential thing that I've always laughed at. I happened to know Coolidge very well. I'd known him when he was… I was handling public relations for the telephone company at the time he was lieutenant governor. And the favorite indoor sport in Massachusetts is to raise the taxes on the telephone company. [Laughter] So every year I… As lieutenant governor he presided over the Senate and every year I'd chase up to talk with him and find out if I could what was going to be done. And I'll say this for Coolidge. He wasn't subservient to anybody. I don't think he was very much of a president but in that way he was. And one year the thing was going to be a very close vote in the Senate and we knew it was. And I went up and asked Coolidge what he was going to do. He says I shall vote against it but I don't want any misunderstanding about it.

He says I shall vote against but I don't want any misunderstanding about it. He says that isn't from any interest in the telephone company. He says that's for the sake of Massachusetts. You see those things were coming along so regularly that both the state and the telephone company were maintaining a force of three or four hundred to be ready for the next investigation. Well, anyway that's how I happened to know him. And he sent for me, I guess the second year of this administration, and he outlined a plan which I don't think he believed in himself but anyway he wanted comment on it. And this was to establish a department of education, a federal department, with the secretaryship of the Navy and so forth. And we talked it over. He outlined the thing. And now he says you tell what you think about it. I says I think nothing at all of it. And he says would that be the opinion of the educational world? I says, I don't know. I'm just telling you what I think. Well, he says, why do you think so? Well, then I went into quite an elaborate conversation, talked with him a long time, I don't know how long, and finally, he had this portfolio, I can see him now, he shoved the papers in the thing. He says, all right, you've talked yourself out of a job. [Laughter] Whether I had or not I haven't the faintest idea because Coolidge was perfectly capable of making that kind of a statement. But I don't think… I mean I see it constantly in regard to our state institutions. You can't get a man as president of the University of New Hampshire for instance, who will stay more than two or three years. They've had a remarkably good group of men come in there but every one of them has got sick of the political prodding and so forth. And the same thing is true of Vermont. I know John Frye very well, the new president of the University of Vermont, and he's a humdinger, I think. He's awfully good. But I don't think they're going to be able to hold him there. Nag for the legislation, nag for the governor, nag for the public, and so personally I don't think… I don't agree with Mr. Galbraith at all, that it would be better to do away with all the privately endowed colleges. And personally I think Dartmouth is in a very happy position at the present time because the alumni are loyal, got a good undergraduate body, and I judge they've got a good faculty, I don't know very much about it, but they're certainly most carefully picked, much more carefully picked than they were in my time as a matter of fact. This is really a big common effort when you pick a member of the faculty today. I guess I did a lot of it individually.

Student: Sir, what was the role of the head of the department when you came, and how did you change it? I read a little… What was the basis of that?

Hopkins: Well, the head of the department was the oldest man in the department and he held the headship as long as he lived. And the result of the thing was that we were losing young men… [telephone rings]… Excuse me. [Pause] We were losing men constantly because they saw no future for themselves and it went really to absurd extent. Because the head of the department would sit down and he'd pick the best hours for himself, he'd pick the best subjects in the department for himself and then he'd decide, and the youngest fellow was going to get an eight o'clock assignment six days of the week and so forth and so on. So I began to feel around on the thing and see what the possibility was of getting it changed. Well, under the setup that we had at the time, it was pretty difficult because we'd got to get the heads of departments to legislate themselves out which wasn't going to be very good. And so eventually I got the trustees to inquire from the faculty whether the organization was right or not. And that went very nicely, as a matter of fact, because coming from the trustees that way we got it before the full faculty instead of before this personalized group, and so of course when it became an issue before the full faculty there wasn't any question about it, so we did away with the seniority on the thing and made it an appointive proposition. Does that answer what you had in mind?

Student: All right. Well, now carrying it a little further. How does the chairman become appointed now? Who nominates the… ?

Hopkins: The chairman of the department?

Student: Yeah.

Hopkins: The department itself. And then it goes to the president and unless he has some information that is contrary to it why it just becomes routine. But it's really the department's decision. And it works very much better.

Student: Sir, would you tell us a little bit about your relationship with Franklin Roosevelt?

Hopkins: Yeah, I'm glad to tell you. Well, to begin with, Mr. Baker asked me to come down during the World War, because… I hope you've got plenty of time, because this is a pretty long story. [Laughter] Well, I went down there and Mr. Baker says we've got a matter of organization, and he says, I'd like to have you go to work on that.

He says the quartermaster's department is under a man, he says, the quartermaster general has generally been picked on the basis of a sinecure and he says on that basis why somebody who didn't have anything at all in the way of attributes that you wanted you made quartermaster general and got him out of the way because we weren't in any war. But now he says we're coming into a war and we're short on everything, and… Well, I won't go too much into that, but anyway we finally got Goethals to come in. He'd just finished the Panama Canal, and… I don't know where to begin and end on this thing but Goethals said no he wouldn't come in because he said he didn't like Wilson. [Laughter] And Wilson was president at that time. Well, I don't know what Wilson would have said, but Baker was a great man, and he took all sorts of abuse during the War, but he was really a very great man. And Baker says well, on what basis can we get Goethals? And I says I guess you can't get him in on any basis excepting making it an independent sovereignty, because he isn't… Well, Baker says how does he feel about me? I says, he doesn't like you either. [Laughter] Well, Baker says how's he feel about me? Well I says just at present he doesn't like me very much either because I wouldn't take a commission, and I told him I was going to get out and come back to Dartmouth the first chance I got. I wasn't going to be tied to a commission. But as a matter of fact, Goethals did like me, fortunately for me, and… But out of that thing eventually I became Mr. Baker's confidential man, handled his confidential correspondence and so forth and getting to your question, my office and Franklin Roosevelt's office were adjacent to each other with a door here and when you wanted to smoke a cigarette I went in and smoked with him or he came in and smoked with me. And we had a very wonderful relationship, friendly in every way and so forth. And time went on and from the organization's standpoint, an interesting thing. I think the history of this country would have been very different if a man named Louis Howe had lived. Louis Howe was an old newspaperman who had the obsession that Franklin Roosevelt was destined to be president. And even in that day he used to talk with me about it and he hadn't even run for vice president at the time. But however that is, we talked and eventually the war ended and we went our separate ways. And then Roosevelt sent for me, wanted to know when I was coming to New York, and he says I'm in a peculiar situation, he says, I'm going in to practice the law, and this was after he'd run for vice president and been defeated with Cox. And he says I'm going in to practice the law and he says I don't know very much law but he says I think my name's good for something and he says I want a practicing

lawyer who knows–I'm quoting him now–he says, who knows a hell of a lot of law and has nothing to do with my social crowd. Well, I says, I know the man who would be good for you, but I don't know whether you can get him or not. I says he's a Dartmouth man named Doc O'Connor. Well, he says, tell me about him. So I told him about him and in a couple weeks I got a telegram that says your man is going into partnership with me. Well, I'm just telling that… That's the basis on which we worked and it continued pretty intimately. I was down at Southwest Harbor, Maine when he had his illness, but there wasn't any publicity as to what his illness was all about and I didn't know. And I went up… Or Mrs. Roosevelt called me up, the first time I was in New York, she'd got word from here somehow, and I went up and Roosevelt was sitting there with both feet up on a hassock. Well, he… Whatever else he was, he was one of the best athletes I ever saw in my life and it must have been a terrible blow to him to give it up, although I think it's the only thing that made him president. And he was sitting with his feet up on the hassock and I just thought that was odd, that was all. I still was very dumb about it and Mrs. Roosevelt says come in, we've got a new painting in here that I want you to see and I went in and she says, Franklin still can't bear to have anybody see him lifted around. Well, I did the thing that's rude as it can be, but it's instinctive. I looked over my shoulder then and here were a couple of Negroes picking him up and carrying him out which… And then I understood the whole thing. But that was the first I knew of what ailed him or anything about it. And we saw each other on all sorts of occasions and I used to always go up there whenever I was in New York and it came along to the time when he ran for the presidency and… This sounds very fatheaded indeed, but I didn't support him for the presidency and he wanted to know why and I says, because I think you're playing it as a game rather than anything else, and he was furious about it. But the campaign went on and gradually it developed as it did develop and he was elected and he asked me down and asked me into the Cabinet and I told him no, I'd got a job. And really the coolness between us began at that point. He couldn't imagine… He did play it as a game and he couldn't imagine anybody's being offered to play with him that would say no. That's at least my diagnosis. Well, he says I want somebody that isn't tied up with me at all, this was the Department of the Interior and he says you know quite a lot about that. Well, I says, I don't want to be in politics to begin with and secondly I don't want to be in politics with you. And he didn't like it. But we continued along pretty well as a matter of fact, and there wasn't any bitterness or anything of that sort except a marked coolness on the

thing. And I'm sorry I destroyed… I made a mistake the last year I was in the office. I went through and destroyed a lot of letters that I thought wouldn't do anybody any good to see, and one of them I wish I'd kept very much, because this was a handwritten letter from Mrs. Roosevelt giving me hell for not voting for Al Smith. Saying that he was without any doubt the greatest statesman in the country and within a year they weren't speaking to him. [Laughter] I always felt enough of a grievance about that so I wish I'd saved the letter. But anyway, I went abroad right at the height of the Mussolini mania and didn't think much of it. Came back and Ellery Sedgewick… At that time the *Atlantic Monthly* was taken by most everybody and he asked me to write him what I had seen. And I wrote him a letter and he wrote back and wanted to know if he could have the privilege of publishing it. Well, it was very critical of the New Deal and it may have been a mistake, I don't know, to publish it or not, but I wrote back, do anything you want to do with it, and so he took the letter and put it into manuscript form and it was published. Roosevelt never had anything to do with me after that. Sometimes I've felt very badly about it, I mean, I had a very pleasant relationship with him in the main. I took one thing that I didn't want at the time and I spent a lot of time explaining [inaudible] in regard to it. Roosevelt came to me and he says they want to make me president of the Wilson Foundation and he says I can't take it because I'm going to run for vice president. Then he expressed some enthusiasm for my qualities and asked me to take it. So I was president of the Wilson Foundation. I didn't vote for Wilson. [Laughter] But everybody knew it. I mean there wasn't any secrecy about the thing. But I tell you, if Roosevelt would ever, in my estimation, Roosevelt would never have been president if it hadn't been for his illness. He was… Strange things happen. I was playing golf with him one day. We were playing in a foursome and I've oftentimes wondered what would have happened. He was very impatient. Roosevelt was an aristocrat and it would come out again and again when he had no intention of showing it. I mean he felt that he was entitled to preferential treatment and in a golf game if we were held up by somebody in front, why he'd get as impatient as a kid, curse and swear about it. Well, we were behind a foursome that was awfully slow. I was sore too [Laughter], and one of the men in the foursome had driven into the rough and Roosevelt says the hell with it, I'm going to drive. And he could drive too, I mean, I think Roosevelt could have been high in professional ranks in golf as of that day. But just as he drove, this man came out of the shrubbery and I don't think the drive missed his head by more than six inches, went screaming by, it was von Bernstorff, the German

ambassador. This was before we were in the War, but I think we would have been in it the next day if that drive had hit him. But he was a good… He was good in all branches of sport and a good horseman and a very delightful companion. I was talking about him with Raymond Morley only two years ago. We'd gone through much the same evolution in our appraisal of… Morley was his speechwriter and all the rest of it. Does that add…?

Student: Yes, thank you very much.

[End of Interview]