INTERVIEW WITH FRANCES SWAYZE

Tuesday, April 25, 1978

Thompson: Tell me about when you first went to CPS?

Swayze: I first went in the fall of 1918. The flu hit and we were all out of school for a long period of time, so I quit school and went to work for Osaka Shosen Kaisa Steamship Company and worked for just a year, and came back and started in where I had left off and graduated in 1922 because I made up the year that I had lost in summer schools.

T: This was before we were located up on the present campus.

S.: That's right. Dr. Todd didn't want me to graduate—go to summer school and graduate in 1922—because he was so sure that the next class would graduate from the other campus. I don't think they did, though.

T: I think it was 1924.

S: Yes, it was because Tom graduated in 1923.

T: Tell me about the old campus.

S: Well, the old campus had one big building that was the administration building and the classrooms—a homely place. Then they had another building that had the chapel on the first floor and the home economics department and the library there. The building behind the chapel was the men's dormitory. There was no women's dormitory. The other building on the campus was the president's home.

T: Someone told me one of those buildings is still standing— it is an apartment house or something.
S: Over on State Street. I think that is right; I think that was the main building.

T: Do you remember the little building beside the church? Wasn't it a music conservatory.

S: No, that was across the street; oh, yes, by the other church--yes, that was the music conservatory. After it closed down, old Senator Davis lived there.

T: I was in there once. It was quite a place! He was much beloved.

S: Oh, he certainly was. He was the one who turned me on to politics. Because I took the political sciences courses from him and we went to the legislature each year and visited, and that's the thing that gave me the interest.

T: Someone told me that when he took the classes to the legislature, the speaker of the House always let him occupy the chair and he always recognized the classes. Do you remember that?

S: I don't remember that. We went on boats as there was no good transportation. We spent the day down there. We nearly always went on the day of the Governor's ball and then we stayed at night for that.

T: What other professors do you remember?

S: Hanawalt, because he was always to the point and anyway, it was the math class where I met Tom.

T: Tell me about Tom. He was a year or two behind you?
S: He was a year behind me. He was working for the Chamber of Commerce in Kennewick and Dr. Todd went over there on church business and spoke to an Epworth League group and talked him into coming to CPS. His folks were in Missouri--this was before my time but I have heard the story--and he said he would come providing he could move his family out where he could help to take care of them and so they said there was a little house behind the president's house that they could have, and that's where they lived. He had been in school the year that I was out of school, and when I returned in the middle of the school year, it was funny, because I went into the math class and I didn't know very many of the kids. Hanawalt called on me to put a problem on the board. And I did, and he couldn't understand how anybody that hadn't been in the class could go up and put a problem on the board. So that was strike one I had, you see.

T: There is a curious rumor that Hanawalt's hieroglyphics on the blackboard were hard to understand. Do you remember that?

S: No. I don't know.

T: He used to mark "Save" and keep his stuff on the board.

S: Yes, that is correct; I remember that.

T: About that time we had the Amphictyons and the Pilomatheans. Were you a member of one or the other.

S: No, I was a Kappa Sigma Theta.

T: Tell me about that?
S: Well, there was a fraternity—the Zetas, something like that—and then the Kappa Sigma Thetas and the two literary societies. Of course, the smart ones went into the literary societies, but I wasn't that smart.

T: Do you remember when the campus was moved from the old location to the new?

S: No, I can remember going out there and dancing to the music with Mrs. Hovious, before the campus was developed, on the spring festival, but I can't remember the actual moving.

T: Some people have told me that the students carried books, the color post, and those two holly trees that are in the front of the campus—hauling all this with a wagon and a rope, etc.

S: I was working so I wasn't there.

T: Did Tom take political science?

S: Yes, I think he did. I imagine that was his major.

T: Were you married right after school?

S: After he graduated. I had been out a year.

T: What was his work?

S: He was with Missouri State Life Insurance Company and he sold life insurance for a good many years.

T: Then worked into politics?

S: Oh yes. He ran for the legislature first and was beaten. He wasn't up on politics and the other two joined together and he was left alone. He didn't
ever run for the legislature again because he went into city controller, and
I don't know whether he was appointed first but he served as city controller
for eleven years.

T: After that, he went to Olympia?

S: We went to Olympia in 1941.

T: Was that with Langlie?

S: Yes, Langlie's first term. Tom had been Langlie's finance man in
Pierce County and he got the appointment then.

T: Was he appointed Director of Licenses?

S: Yes.

T: How long did he have that job?

S: Four years while Langlie was in. Then Langlie was defeated and
Walgren came in and the directors were out.

T: As I recall, Walgren was a Democrat. When were you in Olympia?

S: I was elected first in 1952; the session of 1953 was the first session
I served, and I served until 1965, which was the last session that I served.
At the end of that session, I resigned to go to work for the Department of
Motor Vehicles, it was then, and Tom, Jr., took my place.

T: You must be very proud of him, the way he served in the legislature
and as speaker of the house, and now judge. You must be very proud of
him.

S: I am. Yes. It was kind of atraumatic experience for him, I think, to take
the judgeship. Really, I think he had pictured himself in government, but he loves it.

T: He is so highly regarded and respected by everyone--his peers, everyone.

S: Yes.

T: You went to Olympia, then, in 1941.

S: Yes, we moved the family down and lived there from 1941 to 1945.

T: You have four children.

S: No, I have five.

T: Shirley and Gretchen . . Tom . .

S: Shirley and Gretchen, first, then Tom, then Sue and George.

T: All of them but Sue went to UPS.

S: No, Sue graduated from CPS. All but Shirley, the oldest one. She went to Colorado--she went with the Albertsons--and she was troubled with asthma, so Cy said to let her go to Colorado to school and that will help her. So she went to Greeley.

T: And it did help her?

S: Well, it didn't hurt. She graduated from Greeley!

T: You watched the University of Puget Sound progress through the years. Tell me about Dr. Todd.

S: Well, he was a fine, Christian gentleman; loyal to the school; worked hard and really built it to a degree. You know, of course, that he was
instrumental in them getting the new campus--the first development on the campus. I always felt he was more closely related to the church than to education.

T: Were you in any of the discussions of the development of the new campus? For instance, you probably remember that the cornerstone --the rock--and that they put it on the north side because they thought the campus was going to face to the north instead of to the east. Do you know anything about that?

S: I remember the square outside of Jones Hall that we always . . .

T: Sutton Quadrangle?

S: No--out back. What did we call that?

T: I don't know. I called it the . . .

S: The freshman class always . . .

T: Oh, the Color Post . . .

S: Yes. There was always a fight over the color post, and if we were going to keep that.

T: Well, we had a real problem because PLU cut it down and they'd deface it and finally they took a jeep and pulled it over. Then with the coming of the G.I.'s, we had so many that we couldn't march them through the Color Post and the senior class got so big we couldn't have the ceremony in Jones Hall.

S: The school outgrew it.
T: Were you on the Board of Trustees in 1941?

S: I guess I must have been because I traveled back and forth to the meetings from Olympia with Belle Reeves, who was on the Board then.

T: Do you remember any of the discussion about Dr. Todd's retirement?

S: I think that when it became his 29th year they felt that it was time for him to retire. I can't remember his health.

T: I think he was in good health. I have always wondered about it. Of course, he was in his middle or latter seventies, wasn't he?

S: Oh, I would have thought he was older than that.

T: Probably. I've never figured it out. Do you remember when I came up to candidate for the job?

S: Yes, because I can remember (laughter) Henry Cramer and his remarks.

T: Henry Cramer voted against me until the last because we didn't have a family.

S: (Laughter) That's right! "What do you know about kids!"

T: I never shall forget—when Martha was born, before a meeting of the Board of Trustees, you and Dick Wasson and Franklin Johnson and somebody and somebody else, over in the corner, working him over. I went over and said, "There must be something happening I don't know about." You people all laughed and said, "Yes, we are telling Henry... because Henry voted against you because you didn't have a family." (Laughter)

Do you remember when I came up that time that Franklin Johnson, Dick Wasson
and you got me in a corner and asked me a lot of questions?

S: Yes, but I wouldn't know the questions.

T: I do. Do you remember you asked me what was my philosophy of athletics might be?

S: Good. It sounds logical. Well, Dick was interested, too, because he had played football. I'm still fighting that battle.

T: I remember that, and of course, I had been a recruiter for Willamette. At Willamette, I had had a real problem because I was Dean of Freshmen and Vice President, and Speck Keene and Howard Maple, the coaches, would go out and promise kids so very much and then they would come and they couldn't deliver. About the second or third month, those boys would be in across the desk from me saying, "I was promised this and nothing happened." Then I'd have to go to Keene and Maple and ask what they had promised the kids. We would have to work it out. So I had been very much involved in recruiting at Willamette. Of course, I was very eager for a good athletic program. I always felt that athletics was one of the great "windows" of the University.

S: And it has been. And they are closing it.

T: I always thought that art was, and music was, too, but not in the same proportion that athletics was. You remember, of course, when we came. Do you remember the war years at the University?

S: Yes, I sure do. We were minus boys and I well remember when ROTC first came on the campus.
T: We first had the Army Specialized Training Unit. Do you remember? And I felt so sorry for those young fellows. They were all from the East and some of them would fly home over the weekend. It was really pathetic. Of course, the unit was supposed to be in electronics but ended up in the infantry and a major portion of them were killed in the Battle of the Bulge. Then we had ROTC and I flew to Washington a time or two to get that. We have been very proud of it. Who of the trustees do you remember?

S: Well, I remember Blaine, of course, and Norton. We always had the district superintendents on and the bishop; Dick and Henry and those boys, of course, I remember.

T: Wasson was certainly a very dedicated person, and Franklin Johnson was so wonderful. It was a tragic thing when he died so young. Blaine was an interesting person. I never really knew what he was going to do next, because he must have been 85 when he resigned.

S: I'm sure of that.

T: He'd call me up and ask me to come over to raise money and we'd go see Mr. Schwarbacker and a half a dozen people. Next time he'd call me, and we'd go again to see Mr. Schwarbacker, etc. He was sincere and very dedicated.

S: Franklin Johnson was secretary for years, wasn't he?

T: That's right; and then Norton was before that. One day, Norton said, "I think you could use me in a better way than being secretary." We have
had a number of them since then. Now, Mr. Stuckey is secretary to all the committees and the Board; not a trustee.

S: He's the paid executive.

T: That's right. Who are some of the unusual alums that you remember? Do you remember people like Bob Loftness or Charles Arnold?

S: I remember Charles Arnold, but I don't remember Loftness.

T: Did your children enjoy their days at UPS?

S: Yes.

T: They gave unusual leadership, most of them.

S: We were still in Olympia when Gretchen was getting ready for college. Then we moved back to Tacoma. She was sorry that we were moving back because she was going to get to live in the dormitory, away from home. We told her that she could live in the dormitory. She went over and took one look at it, the room that she would have to share with other people, and she decided she would come home to her own room.

T: It's amazing how often that happens.

S: So never again did she ask to live there. Shirley wasn't there; and Gretchen came next. Gretchen was the kind that could get by by smiling and getting close to the person; books were secondary. And she's a teacher now. (laughter) Tom was more of a student and he came out of UPS in political science and then went over to the U for his law. The boys were all Kappa Sigs and of course Gretchen was a Theta and then a Pi Phi, but Sue broke the chain--she was a
Tri-Delt and that's all right, too. She was, of course, particularly happy, at UPS because this was the time of courtship for her. She made good friends, but when she comes back to Tacoma, actually, it's her high school friends that she calls up and has lunch with rather than the college friends.

T: She is in Texas now.

S: Right.

T: Do you remember when the Kappa Sigs went on a scavenger hunt and picked up a little train over in Des Moines. I always will appreciate Tom because this deputy sheriff had all in a room and they were going to fingerprint them and charge them with a felony, and Tom said, I'm not going to do anything until Dr. T gets back from Rotary." The fellows just sat there and waited for me. So I took the deputy sheriff over in my office and kind of had some strong words with him and I told him that I would see that the boys made good whatever was the cost. When I first talked to the man, the night before, when he came to my house about midnight, the thing was worth $75. The next day it was worth $750. But I thought Tom used unusually good judgment for his age when he said, "I won't do anything until I get a chance to talk to Dr. T."

When you look at the University through the years, do you remember unusual times in its development?

S: Well, it seems to be that's there's been a very continuous growth, and a healthy growth, a well-balanced growth. More and more of the alumni have
made names for themselves, or else because I am older I recognize it, I don't know. The classes are bigger, of course, so there are many more graduates of UPS than when I was there. The classes were very small, but, of course, the basic thing is the cost of education.

T: Which is everywhere.

S: Yes.

T: Did you and Tom go on some of these famous parties that they used to have. I have heard Henry Ernst talk about them.

S: We used to go down to Westport to Stan Warburton's place for weekends. I can remember going over to Fox Island, too, to the Japanese place that was moved from the Fair over to Fox Island. That was a great place to have weekends and retreats. I guess we were like normal kids, I don't know, but the standards weren't the same then as they are now.

T: Do you remember the lady who wrote the Alma Mater?

S: Oh yes, Ellena Goudner.

T: What was her maiden name?

S: Ellena Hart.

T: Oh, yes.

S: She's at Wesley Gardens.

T: Yes. I talked with her the other day about writing the Alma Mater but she said she couldn't remember much about it.

S: I thought Dr. Banks wrote the Alma Mater.
T: There is another one that he wrote. The old one is the one she did. As a matter of fact, we find that there was one written in 1913, but we can't find it. Jim Milligan remembers the meeting of the Conference in 1913 when they were ready to close the school and he got up and said something like I don't have much money but it's my alma mater and I want it to go on and it must go on, and he carried the day! But there was an alma mater then and of course, there was one written by Mrs. Gouldner and the one by Dr. Banks.

S: Dr. Banks' is the one they use now, isn't it?

T: No, They use both of them but they use the one written by Mrs. Gouldner more. It seems to be the official one.

Do you remember anything about when they took the logger motif or logo?

Was it in use when you were there?

S: No. I don't remember about that. I think it came along later.

We had some good athletes when we were there, but they weren't necessarily . . . Rip Rabell and Dill Howell and those fellows.

T: I guess Eddie Annis was after them.

S: Well, yes, but not long after--a few years. But Tom used to recruit those old-time athletes.

T: Tom was really very good at that. He did a great service to me. He'd say, "Franklin, have you talked to so and so about him, etc." and he'd give you enough background so I could go and talk to the man intelligently and I suppose eight times out of ten I got money for the University because
Tom tipped me off to the good prospects.

S: But he, himself, couldn't collect money. He knew people and he could talk students into coming to the school, especially athletes. He was the manager of the football team for awhile. None of my family has been participants in athletics but we are a very athletic family as spectators.

T: I know of no one more loyal than your family through the years. Do you remember Shelmidine?

S: Yes, I do, because when Shelmidine first came he was lonely and a bachelor, of course, and he loved to come out to our house on Sunday night and sit in front of the fireplace with the family. I think he was a great man.

T: He really was and he was a great teacher. The students learned a great deal from him and a real strong influence on most of the students.

Who do you recall in recent times at the University?

S: You mean students or faculty?

T: Either one.

S: Well, Frank Peterson, of course; and believe it or not, Professor Coulter. I can always talk to Coulter and have the best time talking to him and I am sure not many people do that, but he's still teaching, isn't he?

T: That's right. I think he has five years more—something like that.

S: Well, of course, Frank Peterson isn't teaching.

T: No, he's assistant to the dean.
S: Much to his disgust.

T: I imagine there will be some adjustment on that, although I don't know.

S: He likes to teach. Then there was Slater.

T: Yes, and Alcorn.

S: I never had Alcorn. I had Jim Slater for science.

T: He must have been popular?

S: Popular? He made me mad!

T: How come?

S: Tom and I were in the same class but we didn't work together. When I got a poor grade on one, he said, "Too similar to Tom Swayze!" And Tom had nothing to do with it. But that fellow doesn't change one bit.

T: He amazes me.

S: I speak to him every Sunday at Church and say hello Jim and he looks just about the same as he did when he was teaching.

T: His wife was arthritic for many years. He came to me one day and said that they wanted to go to Florida, and he wanted to leave early because they thought the climate in Florida would be helpful. So I wrote to my friend who was president at Florida Southern, a Methodist school, and told him he was going to be there. He called up Jim and Jim went over and that night Jim was teaching courses in English and in biology.

S: He stayed a year, didn't he?

T: He stayed four years. It didn't work out the way they had hoped so they
came back. That year we gave him an honorary doctorate. As I understand it, he had done considerable work for his doctorate and his major professor died and he never got to finish it.

S: They still keep him on for doing certain things.

T: I don't think he is officially on; he is just Curator of Herpetology in the Museum, but then Karlstrom has not been very eager to keep him on.

I had to go up there one time and referee because Karlstrom who had all of Slater's jars of snakes out in the hall ... you know, professors have strange quirks and Karlstrom had his.

What do you recall about your political life and the University of Puget Sound?

S: I was always on the Education Committee down there and was always trying to get them to help private schools as well as public schools—that is, higher education—such as subsidizing tuition. We are still fighting; nationally too.

T: We got it through finally but the Supreme Court held that it was against the Constitution. In 1888, North Dakota, South Dakota and Washington all came in and that was the time of the great fight between the Knights of Columbus and the Masonic Lodges and that's one reason the Constitution is so very, very tight. What committees were you on in the Board of Trustees?

S: I don't remember.

T: Were you on the Instruction Committee, hiring faculty, and all?
You were probably on the Religious Life Committee.

S: I don't remember. I know I was the only woman most of the time when Belle Reeves got off.

T: Belle Reeves was on quite a few years.

S: Before me.

T: Then who was the one who was Superintendent of Instruction for so long? Wanamaker...

S: She wasn't on while I was on.

T: No, I guess she wasn't. She was on the Washington State Historical Society Board.

Was Arthur Langlie friendly toward private education?

S: Yes.

T: Were you there when he got his honorary degree?

S: Yes.

T: As you look back now, what do you think the strengths of the University were and what might be its weaknesses?

S: Oh, I think the strength is that it has continued to grow and develop. I was glad to see the law school. It's done very well and the boys who have come out of there seem to easily pass the bar exam and it is tough, too. The reason that I know is from David Hyman. I don't know if you know him or not, but he lived with Gretchen for a year or two when he first came. He came for law, but he didn't make it.
T: It's tough to get in.

S: He got in but he was washed out with 1/3 of the class at the end of his first year.

T: We talked about the law school for a long time. We took a survey and found that from Vancouver to Vancouver was the area with the largest need for legal education. Reaching 65 slipped up on me awfully fast, and I told Dick Smith about three years before, when I was 62, that if we didn't get it started before I retired it would never be started. So Dick Smith, Lloyd Stuckey and Max Reeves worked to get it going and to get it off to a good start. It's had its problems because I don't think it is looked upon with too great favor at the moment as a part of the University.

3: Oh, don't you? I didn't have that feeling. I thought they were kind of fond of it.

T: I think they are proud of it but they look on it as a adjunct. I'm not sure.

S: They keep talking about housing it on campus.

T: When we structured that, we had it scheduled so that we could raise a million dollars in the first three years, we could accumulate a million dollars in the money it would bring in and then we would go to the bank and borrow a million, and we could build a three million dollar building at the end of the third year. Then we would let it amortize itself over eight or ten years. But the present administration decided $200,000 a year
ought to be paid for administrative expense and this has caused it to back off away and I don't know whether it will be located on the campus or not. We bought most of the area between the field house and Lawrence with the idea that it could be located there and we could use the field house parking lot for law and also for the functions. I don't know what's going to happen now. But the law school has certainly had a phenomenal development and it is a wonderful addition.

S: One reason is because it has night classes.

T: We were very much surprised when we first opened it that we had 200 people commuting daily from Seattle for the afternoon and evening classes and now it has gone down to about 100, but the day enrollment has come up so still have about 900.

Thank you, Frances. This has been interesting. When we get the tape transcribed, we'll have you take a look at it for editing and additions and deletions.