Iowa Annie Wittenmyer Home  
Oral History Project

Interviewer: This is Sam Whitehead with the Davenport Public Library oral history program. Today is August 23, 1994 and I'm interviewing James Holmes, who was a superintendant at the Home from 1952-1974. All right, Mr. Holmes, when exactly did you work at the Home?

Mr. Holmes: Well, from 1952 until it closed in 1974.

Interviewer: And what was your position?

Mr. Holmes: I was a social worker up till 1960, then I was superintendant from 1960 until 1974.

Interviewer: How did you eventually get the superintendant position? Did the original superintendant retire or leave or . . .

Mr. Holmes: I was assistant superintendant and the original superintendant moved to a different place and I became superintendant.

Interviewer: You mentioned living at the Home, where . . . you lived on the grounds then when you worked there?

Mr. Holmes: Lived on the grounds, yes.

Interviewer: Where did they have housing for employees?

Mr. Holmes: Well, when I was a social worker, there was one of the buildings off to the side there, but when I became superintendant, the top floor of the big building in front . . .

Interviewer: The big administration building?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, that was the superintendant's housing.

Interviewer: Oh, O.K., O.K. Um, here's a big question. What did your duties and responsibilities include, you can talk about as social worker, and then as superintendant if you want.

Mr. Holmes: Well, as a social worker, there were a lot of children out there who didn't need to be there and could be placed in foster care. The fact is, there were many applicants for adoption that weren't being used, and the children were there so it needed somebody to go to work on that. That's probably, primarily, what I did the first three or four years I was there. Get children out into adoptive homes and foster homes. And we reduced the population from close to four hundred down to a little less than two hundred in about three years time. And, uh, after the population began being reduced, I switched and I began to train house parents because they had no training before and it was pretty slipshod in some of the methods they were using. Until 1960, when I was superintendant and I was in charge of the whole program. Developing programs, changing policies and so on.

Interviewer: O.K., uh, I'll back up a little bit. As a social worker, I was wondering, how, how did you go about, uh, did you inspect families or investigate families? How did that work where you had to make sure they were O.K.?

Mr. Holmes: The Board of Control, who was in charge of the program at that time, had, I think, six or seven different agents in the communities, in the different parts of the state. And they did
the inspection of homes, and then provided us with the applications for foster care and adoptive care and then they also supervised the children after they were out on placement. So, we only had control of the children directly in the Home.

Interviewer: Were there more families that wanted to adopt than there were families that wanted just to be foster families? Or was it about even? Or was it the opposite of that? Can you remember?

Mr. Holmes: Uh, I don't know if I can put any percentages on them, but uh, in the beginning there were a lot of people who wanted to adopt and uh, because there, it was difficult to find adoptive children at that time, we were able to place children up to ten, eleven, and twelve years of age. It wasn't as easy, but that was one of the problems. So, very few foster homes were available at that time. And there were no group homes. They didn't develop until oh, around the middle of 1960. Interesting fact is that there used to be a big barn out there, and we had a dairy farm. It's torn down now, but the reason they had that was so that they could train the boys to go out and be farm hands in placements. Because we could find homes for them on farms. Well, in about that time, around 1960, we couldn't find homes for them because people who owned their own farms couldn't find enough work for their own children because of mechanization and so on. So that was one of the big reasons we sold the farm out there. The other placements for foster care were primarily with middle income, higher income families for girls as maids. And that was about the only foster placement you had other than that, it was all adoption.

Interviewer: Um, then moving on a little bit to the uh, when you trained house parents. What kind of, you said it was kind of slipshod, did they really have no experience in this at all when they were hired?

Mr. Holmes: Well, no, most of them were women at that time, so they had families. But there is a difference between taking care of a family and fifteen to twenty teenage kids all in one group. And a lot of them were very nice people, but they needed a lot of help, they needed a lot of supervision and this type of thing. They didn't particularly like it when they started getting training because I think they thought that they were fairly adequate in what they were doing.

Interviewer: Is, uh, was there an average age of what a house mother was or a house parent was?

Mr. Holmes: They were, most of them were about fifty.

Interviewer: Oh, really. I had, uh, in some of the interviews they talked about, maybe it was for the younger childrens’ cottages . . .

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, I was talking about the earlier, up till, about the middle of 1960 because then the program began to change in relationship to house parents and everything.

Interviewer: O.K. Yeah, I was just going to say that some of the people talked about college students . . .

Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah, we had a lot of Palmer school students. They and their wives worked there as a couple and they had the cottage. Now the wife was there during the daytime of course, and the man augmented because the kids were in school anyway most of the time. So it worked out quite well, in fact, as they were usually pretty good house parents. And they could tolerate a lot more, problems of the younger people and so on.

Interviewer: Right. Were they easier, I guess, to train?
Mr. Holmes: Oh yes, very much so. Yeah, alot of them had college educations and were more interested in learning. And their lives weren't quote "over with" like some of the older ones. I mean, not that they were "over with" but--. (Laughs)

Interviewer: I understand. Um, how originally, I'm kind of jumping all over the place on you . . .

Mr. Holmes: No, that's O.K.

Interviewer: How originally did you get your first job at the Home as a social worker? Did you apply for a job?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, between my first and second year on my master's degree program, I went and worked there for the summer. And I liked the job real well, and then I went back and took a third semester at the University of Iowa, ran out of money, and so then I went to work there. In January I think it was.

Interviewer: And at that, obviously you were well qualified, I saw you had your degree in sociology already.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, and I had a year towards my master's degree.

Interviewer: Right. How many other social workers did they have there?

Mr. Holmes: Me.

Interviewer: Just you, you were it?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, the superintendant at that time also had had training in social work.

Interviewer: But he was having to do all the administrative duties . . .

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, and I was doing all the placement to begin with.

Interviewer: And when you worked there for the summer, is that what you were doing too?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, I was doing placement, yeah.

Interviewer: You were doing placement then too, O.K.

Mr. Holmes: Interesting, I think the first two or three years I was there I did approximately a hundred adoptive placements a year. And there were a lot of them being done.

Interviewer: Wow. So basically there was waiting for someone to come in and do it. There was the supply and the demand there.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, they were both there and nobody was doing the work.

Interviewer: How long do you think that had been going on for?

Mr. Holmes: Prior to Mr. Lyle coming there, that was the superintendant I was talking about, ahead of me, there was pretty much political appointments. The children stayed there for a long time. Fact is, if you talk to some of the older people that were out there, their family was pretty much in the Annie Wittenmyer Home. They were very closely related socially and so on and they held together. They went out there and they stayed for years. If you went out there it was a good
possibility you could stay there five, ten, fifteen years—until you were twenty-one. So they developed a great comaraderie and the fact is, this Fourth of July picnic is primarily people that were there before the 1950's. Older people and they think wonderful things about the place and so on.

Interviewer: We've talked to a few of them. In fact, I went to the reunion.

Mr. Holmes: Did you? I wasn't here or I would have gone, yeah.

Interviewer: Almost all of them have really great memories of the place. And they've all mentioned it was their family. Back then, I guess, if they would have had someone like you, a social worker, they could have been placed out.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, they could have been, except that custody care and group home care just wasn’t developed in the state. There was no place for them to go. Many of the counties didn’t want them back either. Several of them had families that they could have gone back to, but there was some negative feeling about them going back to their own homes and so on.

Interviewer: That was something that the state thought it would be bad to send them back to their own homes?

Mr. Holmes: No, it was communities. In other words, if you were, quotes, a bad family in a community, trying to get back into that community wasn’t particularly easy. And, you know, you talk about problems today—we had problems then but not in the same type. In other words, if you were poor and your children went to school raggedy and so on, you were discriminated against. And consequently those people weren’t too liked in the community and they’d just as soon not have them back.

Interviewer: A lot of times would it be the community itself that would get the ball rolling to send the child out of a home and into the Annie Wittenmyer Home?

Mr. Holmes: Yes. There were two ways you could get a child into the Home. One is by court order. And the other was by—the parents could release the child and give up custody. Usually that was with smaller children, particularly unwed mother's children, that was usually release. Otherwise they had to go through court and the court had to declare them dependant and neglected. A lot the same as it is today, was dependant and neglected children, only didn't have the same problems that you have today.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: It's interesting that Illinois is thinking about returning to some of the children's homes. Like we were talking about that this early time, because they can't find adequate foster or group homes. Practically all the orphan's home type of settings, and there were a lot of them all over the country, were closed down in the 50's and 60's because they started doing group homes and so on. Well, now they're finding out that that isn't the best solution either. So I don't know what's going to happen to them but they need a lot more placements for kids and unfortunately a lot of them have a lot of problems and it's going to be very hard to find foster care for them, group homes. So I'm just glad I'm not into it anymore. (Laughs).

Interviewer: Recently there was an article in the Wall Street Journal about bringing orphanages back because, it said, the way things are set up now it's just not working. Would you agree with that?

Mr. Holmes: That's correct. Oh yeah, I would agree with that. In fact, one of the things we tried
to do out there is only keep them until we thought they could get back in the community. The institution was always a sort of a transition type from a bad family situation to, quotes, some other type of more normal type of living situation. So I think that they kids out there, although they lived in a group type of setting and not with their families, they had a lot of things that they should have been getting at home and weren't.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: One of the things about a group setting, and I'm talking about later on now, is that you can control everything. For instance, you have a child now that gets into trouble in the community, the school has one particular aspect of programming they want to make, which is fine, but when the child goes home it's thrown out the window. There's no continuity of programs to service the child. While in an institutional setting, you've got their health, you've got their school, you've got their living situation, you've got their food, friends, recreation--you've got the whole thing. And that's one of the things you can get with that type of institutional setting.

Interviewer: And everybody knows what the other one is doing. One of the women we talked to, Bette Mills, who mentioned--a lot of people mentioned your name very fondly, by the way, who worked there during your time.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, she worked at the pre-school, yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-hum. She was asked, "How did the housemothers and the teachers work together?" And they did because, again, they knew what the other one was doing. So they continued--the exact thing you just said--the continuity.

Mr. Holmes: Something that's interesting, when we first began to do a lot of program placement--see we really haven't talked about what the program is now and has been for the last twenty years or so. And we tried to start training houseparents. A lot of them didn't like it because you were placing so many kids. Because what we were doing was placing, quotes, the better kids, the ones that could fit into the community. And so all that were getting left is some of the problem kids with more problems. And it became a more difficult job for them because of that.

Interviewer: When exactly did--I know earlier the home didn't allow, how can I say this, children with emotional problems or physical problems. I don't think they allowed 'til--was it in the 60's they allowed?

Mr. Holmes: They allowed children in there with retardation, although they weren't supposed to. They allowed children in there with delinquent patterns, but they weren't supposed to. According to the code you weren't supposed to get anything but, quotes, normal children. But, when do you consider a child normal? When you don't, when he has some delinquent acts, do you really want to send him right away to a different type of setting, a penal type of setting? So, they were getting a lot of them. One of the things that you might want to look up, a Dr. Skeels (?) did an examination out there, testing, I helped him with it. At one time he was they only psychologist for all the state institutions and he'd go around to the different institutions. And he went to the Wittenmyer Home and he saw some kids there that tested mentally retarded. So he recommended that they be sent to Glenwood, which is the state institution for mentally retarded. So they went there and I think they were twenty-one or something like this, I don't remember exactly. Then when he went out a couple years later, he went out to Glenwood and he saw some kids out there that looked to be awful normal, he couldn't quite figure out why they were there. So he checked and it was the same kids he had sent there from the Annie Wittenmyer Home. Now the big difference was that out at Glenwood they were given older, retarded people to work with them on a one-to-one basis. Most of those kids came up and were placed in adoptive homes from Glenwood. It's a very interesting study.
Interviewer: Wow. So, were they ever sent back to the Annie Wittenmyer Home?

Mr. Holmes: No, they were placed right from there, yeah.

Interviewer: That is interesting.

Mr. Holmes: He's written some books and he worked for the Institute of Mental Health at Washington at the time. Actually, what he was proving was that IQ's were not constant and he got a lot of criticism from the psychological area at that particular time but--

Interviewer: But he had the evidence to back it up. Okay, let's kind of get into--

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, I'm rattling on here--

Interviewer: No, that's what I want you to do. A little bit on daily life, I guess, when you were there even. Um, if you can, tell me what a typical day was like at the home.

Mr. Holmes: Oh, it changed so much from day to day that it's hard to say. Again, in the first few years I was there, I was seeing foster parents or adoptive parents.

Interviewer: They were coming in saying, "We want a child."

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, then we'd talk to them and I'd decide whether or not we were going to let the child go with them and so on. And before that I'd have to go out and get some rapport with the child and this type of thing. So that was primarily for the first five or six years I was there. Then we did get another social worker in and then I began the training of cottage parents. Every week we had a group session and brought in people and it was a sort of a regular educational type of thing. Then I went out and counseled with them and helped them with different problems in the cottages the rest of the time. Then when I became superintendent--what we were starting to do then was to develop a program for more difficult children. Because if you get all the good ones out what you have left is not such good ones. I don't mean that in the bad or good sense. I mean the easier ones that did all right we placed out pretty much. Then after I became superintendent, I had gone to a lot of meetings, doing a lot of reading and recruiting personnel to develop programs. I began to be an administrator. I knew that I couldn't know everything about education, I couldn't know everything about social work, I couldn't know everything about health and all the different services. So I began to hire very capable young people with a lot of zip and go and a lot of determination who hadn't had an opportunity yet to show what they could do. And we worked together on that and developed a program for more difficult children. Now when the place was turned over to the Family Children's Service we were doing really two programs there. One was a program where children were going to stay there maybe approximately one year. And they needed a lot of socialization, they needed a lot of help in education and to get them to go back into the community. The other program was a ninety-day program where we took children in from temporary court commitments. At the end of thirty days the courts had to give us information about this child, in other words a social history. Then at the end of sixty days we would make a recommendation back to the court as to what to do with these kids. Maybe they'd stay there, maybe they should go someplace, maybe go home. And at the end of ninety days they had to get the child out of the placement if this is what we recommended. So there were two big programs going on and a lot of that first program is being carried on out there now except that they have more and more difficult kids so that they're changing to a certain degree to handle that type. For instance, they have some closed cottages out there now. Well, we never had that. We had a lot of runaways.

Interviewer: That would have been in the '60's?
Mr. Homes: That would have been in the '70's--yeah, well we had runaways all the time. You know, there was no bars or anything holding anybody in. I'll tell you a little story. In fact, that was this lady's husband that you talked about--Bette's husband. He was recreational director at the time out there. They lived in one of the cottages. Some of the people at that time lived on grounds. Later on they didn't. They lived in a cottage close to a girl's cottage. We'd heard the rumor that some of the girls were going to go down the fire escape. I don't know if you've seen them out there.

Interviewer: Big chutes?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, big chutes. And run away that night. So Frank and I, we got a big old washtub, filled it full of water and put it down at the bottom. (Laughs) The girls come down and everything, said a few choice words--. But actually I should write a book about some of the incidents out there. There's another time that I got called from Chicago. There was an Indian boy out there. And he should never have been in an institutional setting. He loved the woods and he loved the outside and he was a typical Indian. He was running away all the time. We'd find him out in some woods somewheres doing real well, but we couldn't let him stay there. Well this call I got, he had been down--there's utility runways underneath that whole thing. And he'd gotten down in there someway or another and taken firewood and he had four different little fires down there. He was down there and singing Indian chants and everything when we finally found him. If we hadn't found him early he probably would have burned the whole place down. I think maybe that was what he was praying for, I don't know. There's all kinds of incidents out there.

Interviewer: You mentioned I guess that when you were doing your social work and you were placing children, were there many time that the children didn't want to go? They would rather stay at the home or would they not have told you?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, they would have told me and some of them did. Usually this would be from a family. In other words if there were three or four kids in the family they didn't want to break up the family and it was awful difficult always to find a home for several children in one family. So that was what the primary thing was. But other than that, you're talking, especially adoption, most all of them wanted to go into adoptive homes.

Interviewer: They did?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, but the foster children, they weren't sure whether--

Interviewer: Were they not sure about the foster family because they thought--

Mr. Holmes: They didn't know 'em. They didn't know what was going on. Some of them thought, "Maybe it isn't going to be any different than it was before I came here." No, you could put them out and you'd have to tell them they could always come back if they'd try it out, you know. With adoption we weren't quite that lenient.

Interviewer: Right, right. Well, what kind of--talk about your work--boy, it sounds like you were working constantly. Did you have any time to yourself/ Did you have any vacations or days off or anything like that?

Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah. Let me see. You accrued vacation time. When I left there I had thirty days accumulation credit, which I'd had all along. But what I'd do is usually take an extended weekend or something like that, take an extra day off here or there or something like that. While the last few years we had a lot of good help out there, it was possible for me to get away then and I'd take a week or two vacation. But up until about the middle of the '60's and beginning of the '
70's, really about the beginning of the '70's, there really wasn't that much help out there and I didn't like to get out of there. So I stayed there quite a bit of the time and I was working sixty, seventy hours a week really. We had to live on grounds and my family lived on grounds too. My daughter hated it.

Interviewer: Living on the grounds.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, because first day she went to school at Garfield School they knew that she came from over to the Home so they all thought she was one of the orphans from the home, so they started calling her that and that didn't set very well. Later on when she went to high school (laughs), these are some incidents, some personal things, she was in her homeroom. The first day of school they had to go around the room and tell who they were and where they were from and so on. Well, we had a girl out there who was rather promiscuous. So they went around to her and asked her what her name was. "My name is so and so and my parents are James and Margaret Holmes." (Laughs) Peggy almost died. So when they came to her, she said her name, she said, "I'd really rather not tell you who my parents are." Not that she was really ashamed of us but she wasn't about to tell--

Interviewer: That she was her sister! (laughs) Oh boy!

Mr. Holmes: I had another little incident down there. This was again was at highschool--we went down to Central High School. When they had open house several of us would go down and represent the kids whose parents were--. I had this one girl one year who was--she was the nicest girl. She was black. So I went down to represent her. I went in and I said "I'm representing so and so forth," she says, "Oh, yes, I don't place her just--". I said, "Well, I don't know where she sits or anything." She says, "Oh--oh! You mean the black girl." (laughs) I didn't ever tell her anything more than that. She probably wonders, she probably thinks the girl had a white father and a black mother, I guess, yet today.

Interviewer: Right. Did the--I guess that was what I was going to ask before you mentioned that. So the teachers didn't really know what children were from Annie Wittenmyer Home?

Mr. Holmes: Not really, except that they could have known. Nobody tried to hide it, one way or the other.

Interviewer: But it wasn't something kids had to say.

Mr. Holmes: No, no. However, kids, up until, I don't know, it was before my time, had to wear uniforms downtown at school.

Interviewer: One of the people we interviewed told us that. That was one of the things they hated about it, especially at that age when you want to blend in with everyone else. And they stuck out.

Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah, I'm sure. One of the first--oh, I think when I worked out there that summer, they had a dance. Well, the girls and boys weren't allowed to see each other and they were on both sides and other than at school they didn't even hardly dare to talk to each other. So they had this dance and Mr. Lyle thought that would be a nice way to get the kids together. Well, it was. They had a little orchestra there and they had a nice dance. The boys sat on one side and the girls sat on another and nobody danced. (laughs) Well, some girls eventually got out there and danced with each other, but the boys wouldn't go up and--

Interviewer: Now, did that policy gradually change?
Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah, yeah. They were allowed to date. In fact, there was one of the girls you might talk to from out at the home. She was the first girl to be able to date with anybody off grounds. I can't even think of her name. She's now with the sheriff's office and her husband is with the police department. They both have good, responsible jobs. The two of them were the first ones that ever dated from out there and this was way back in---I bet they've been married twenty years now. She'd know what the situation was, yeah.

Interviewer: Hmm. One of the--this would have been before your time too, but one of the people we talked to was there in the late 30's I think, talked about they would meet in that little tunnel and that's where they'd--neck, I guess, was the term they used.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, you weren't supposed to see each other.

Interviewer: I can see how you'd get in really big trouble if you got caught.

Mr. Holmes: No, if, for instance, you were walking across the grounds to go to the gym, the boys couldn't talk to the girls on the way over there.

Interviewer: They just wanted to make sure that nothing happened.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, yeah. that's--those people I talked to were at the 4th of July celebration, but there just wasn't much opportunity to rellate as boys and girls.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: Okay, I keep rambling on here.

Interviewer: You're doing just what I want you to Mr. Holmes. (Laughs) Talking about school there, was the curriculum in the school at the home the same as in the public schools in Davenport or around the area?

Mr. Holmes: Okay, yes and no. Yes it was the same until it became clinically oriented. Then a lot of the children coming in were having behavior problems, a lot of it because they were not up to grade placement. In the 70's we started in taking children who were, most of them were two to three years behind in grade placement. They had average intelligence but they weren't doing anything in school. And then they were acting up, became behavior problems in school and then were kicked out of school. Well then, what did you do with them?

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: So we had an ungraded class. And they were able to advance on whatever level they could. And most of them would come up at least one grade a year until a lot of them were functioning on their normal level by the time they got out of there. So that was causing a lot of the behavior problems. And then one of the other things we did then, in order to get them back in the community, we had one person who was an educator assigned to work with the communities so that when the kid went out we'd give them all the information on how to handle this kid. He'd go out to the teachers in the community and say, "This worked with this particular kid."

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: I don't know. See, we were getting children from all over the state. And it was very difficult for us to work with somebody out in Sioux City and so on. That was about the only thing we made an outreach to. We weren't doing--again I forget which date--but we--the laws of the state had never changed from the time that I was, well, from way back until I left there. However,
we were supposed to be able to take children babies on up. Well, I don't know how we got away with it but we quit taking children up to twelve years of age in the late 60's. And that cut out of our adoption program. However, we were legally responsible for children under twelve but we found them foster homes within the community. And if we had adoption we'd place them from foster care into adoptive--

Interviewer: So they were never at the home.

Mr. Holmes: Never at the home. What we were doing is we were dropping our population number, fewer kids, getting them out faster, getting a professional type program in there. And we were getting the same amount of money. For about six years we didn't ask for any more raises of money. However, the per diem rate was going up like mad because we were getting professionals in and building a program. So we were able to do that. The legislators didn't ask us, they saw they didn't ask for any more so they didn't suspicion what was going on I guess.

Interviewer: Right, hmm. Along those lines, why eventually--I was going to ask you this later, but why was the home closed?

Mr. Holmes: Some of my remarks I can't make. There are some things that I can't prove, but there were some deals being made.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: One of the reasons, and which was a legitimate reason I guess, was that if the state had the institution, they and the county had to pay for the whole cost of care. The county was paying half and the state paid the other half.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: In order--if it became a private organization--they could bill the state and the county. Actually, they only billed the state, but the state was being reimbursed. I think when they began it was sixty percent. So it was a money proposition, you know, whether it comes out of the federal funds or the state funds or the county funds. But that was one of the big reasons. At that time too there was a big push to shut down institutions. In fact institutions were shutting down all over the country. They talked about shutting down Clarinda, they talked about shutting down our place and they talked about--I don't know what other place. But it wasn't just Iowa. Now these are some of the places they're talking about opening up again.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: But that was one of the big things. We were just pushed to close the institutions because "institutions weren't good for children." And a lot of institutions weren't. I don't think that our harmed anybody. Sure, we harmed some but as a general rule they got something out of it really. So, that was the big reason. And I think there was some maneuvering of legislators some way or another. This is--

Interviewer: Your opinion. (Laughs) That's what we're looking for! When they did close down, do you remember how many children were there?

Mr. Holmes: Well, we knew ahead of time that we were going to close. So we cut off admissions and we were placing a lot of children. I think, I don't know for sure, there might have been about thirty kids left there. And see then Family and Children's just took right over. I mean, we--

Interviewer: So they went right into the next.
Mr. Holmes: As far as the children were concerned, they probably didn't know the difference. They knew there was some sort of transition, but they were taken care of.

Interviewer: Right. I'll go back again and you probably won't be able to answer this, but a lot of people who are former residents or family members of former residents will come in and say they've tried to find information and they can't find it anywhere or the people in Des Moines won't give them any information. Do you know why, it obviously has to do with privacy, but why are they so stringent on letting that information out?

Mr. Holmes: Well, a lot of these are adoptive parents and there's a law saying you can't give out any information about adoptions, so that's the big reason. The other reason is all this information went to Des Moines. I don't know whether it's still there or not. It left the institution, that's all I know.

Interviewer: It left your control.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, that was even after I left because there were still three, four different people who stayed on who worked for the state after I left, doin the transition of equipment and supplies and all this kind of stuff. But it all went to Des Moines. I think it was stripped there and--because we had probably, I'd say, a hundred file cabinets. See, it went clear back to the first day. In fact, it's too bad they didn't keep a couple of the files. In here it will tell you about Billy Sunday who lived out there and there was a record on him. Wayne King lived out there and there was a record on him. In fact, as I read those several times, I'd take them out. But they all went to Des Moines. There were also some--I know I can't even remember his name, there was a full colonel came out there one day. He'd lived out there and he wanted to know something about them. In talking about people wanting to know information, up until, I don't know, it must have been the early 70's, you could give out information if the children were older. What I was doing until that time, until the law changed, if someone came in, I would look up the information and I might give them some information about their family. Or I might not, because it's dangerous. I'll tell you one instance. We had a kid from the home who was still living at the home who knew he was from an unwed mother. He found her. He was sixteen, seventeen and she was living over in Rock Island. And he went to the door, he ran away from home, and he went to the door and knocked on the door. She came to the door and he says, "I'm your son" and she slammed the door in his face. Unfortunately he was a diabetic on top of it and he had a seizure right there. The police picked him up. But things like that, see, sometimes the real parent doesn't want anybody to know about it because they've changed some of their things. Again, you're talking about a different time too. Today illegitimacy really isn't a big thing. Back then it was. You just didn't have children out of wedlock then. There was a lot of it going on, but--

Interviewer: But it wasn't public.

Mr. Holmes: And so you had to protect the privacy of the real parent. Other times, for instance, children wanting to find out their own family and it maybe wasn't adopted, just foster older children. Uh--their family was such disruptible families that it might be just as well if they not ever find them. Now if I gave out information, what I would do is tell them to go to the social service department of the county where the parents were living and discuss that with them. And it might be that they wouldn't even want to look the parents up. I've know some kids to go back and found their parents and their parents became leaches on them too. You'd have to use a lot of discretion in doing that. I think too, that what happens in Des Moines, they don't have a big staff there and they couldn't keep track of all this information and so on. At one time, when the place closed up the home, I offered to do it on a volunteer basis, to keep track of all the people who came in, at the agency out there, to look for parents, because they still get them coming out there, and make a cross-reference card. And just keep their name and address because if one of
the sibling came in, you could say, "Well, okay, they've been looking for you too." But they
decided not to do that, so that's the way it is right now.

Interviewer: That's too bad.

Mr. Holmes: But these people that do come in, there are agencies all over the United States to
help you find children. There's one in Des Moines, there's one across the river. I don't know that
much about them, but I know that they have ways and means of being able to get into records
and so on.

Interviewer: That was going to be my next question--to ask you how people could get
information.

Mr. Holmes: Okay, uh--it can go back to the county that it came from and they can't give you
adoptive records, but they can get some information about your family from there. And they also,
another clue, okay. We never placed children knowingly within the same area that they came
from. So they can eliminate a hundred miles around or something like that. And all of them were
placed within the state of Iowa. So that kind of gives them a little less territory.

Interviewer: Oh, definitely. One woman I remember saying one of her sisters, three or four
siblings were all there together, they found out about one who was the youngest. And she said
that she somehow got information that a private plane came with the parents to pick this girl up.
So she assumes that they left the state.

Mr. Holmes: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: So that right there tells you that it had to be in Iowa.

Mr. Holmes: I can tell you it was because there weren't many planes flying out there. I don't
remember the name of the child or anything, but I remember the incident because of the airplane.

Interviewer: Wow. Is there any way you could you tell me that or not?

Mr. Holmes: No.

Interviewer: That's fine. But that's very important, just down to one state.

Mr. Holmes: There might have been some exceptions, I don't know. Occasionally we would
work with Catholic Charities when we had a Catholic child and we didn't have too many
applications. And we would allow the Catholic Charities to place a child from our home. If they
were Catholic, they might have, because the diocese here runs over into Illinois and I don't know
where all, but as a usual rule, they stayed within Iowa.

Interviewer: Okay. Some people don't know at all where they came from. Is that something they
can find out, at least what county they came from?

Mr. Holmes: If they weren't adopted.

Interviewer: If they weren't adopted.

Mr. Holmes: If they were adopted, that's--

Interviewer: They can't find out anything.
Mr. Holmes: No, really. You know, if they weren't adopted, they were older children and they should have been able to remember something about where they were from. And they could go back to the county—if they could remember they were from Boone or wherever, they could go back there and look up their family name, you see, 'cuz they would have that.

Interviewer: Right. Because they would have been older.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, because the older children should remember something about it and they should still have their own last name, so they could get information.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: I doubt if there are too many like that. Could be. Another thing I found that when I would talk and give out information about foster care and so on that you'd get two or three different type of people and one was the person who came in and was just curious. They really didn't care if they found anybody, they just wanted to know something about their family and this type of stuff. And that was fine and I was able to give that. You'd get some who were very belligerent and showed a lot of tempers and so on and so forth 'cuz they weren't getting information. And a lot of them had emotional problems. And I think that what they were looking for was somebody to blame all of their emotional problems on. I wouldn't--I'd be very careful in giving them--seldom would I give them any information. But basically they came within those two patterns.

Interviewer: That was something you could just basically tell when they came in?

Mr. Holmes: Well, you'd sit down and you'd talk to them and--that's one of those clues in interviewing, in social worker's interviewing.

Interviewer: Give me a little bit on relationships for you at the home. Did you get along well with the people that worked for you, the other co-workers there? There was probably some you liked and some you didn't like.

Mr. Holmes: Oh, uh, I think I got along--maybe they didn't think so. (Laughs) No, because I tell you what we used. I used two business approaches. One of them was--oh boy, I can't even think. At seventy-nine I'm having difficulty remembering my own---. (Laughs) Uh, management by objectives. In other words they were rated relative to this--are you familiar with management by objectives?

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Mr. Holmes: Okay. And the other thing was participative management. I had told you before that I tried to get young, eager, intelligent, go-go people in there. And we would set down at a staff meeting every week and I gave them the opportunity to work on programs that they thought were capable of doing a better job within their own confines. And the only restriction I placed was that they had to stay within the budget, they had to not do anything that the community would be critical of and, three, they couldn't cross under lines of another department without their cooperation. Because of that, they were pretty much independent, but they worked with each other. So I don't think I had difficulty with the employees, I hope not. And we got along real well and I'm a people person and I joked around a lot, but I could get serious too, if I had to. Now as far as the children on the grounds are concerned, working with them, there was only one child out there that I ever disliked. And that kid could get on my nerves so, you couldn't believe. But he was better off then the other kids because I knew this and I treated him better than some of the other kids, even though he took advantage of it. I only spanked one kid--we didn't use physical punishment. I spanked one kid out there. Not to say that physical punishment wasn't used until I
became superintendent out there because it was. But this one kid, he got into trouble, and I was walking across the grounds and he was walking over by the school. Are you familiar with the grounds?

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Mr. Holmes: Okay, which is what, a hundred yards in between there? He yelled at me, he said, "You can't spank me! You can't do anything to me!" I had no idea I was going to. (Laughs) He kept that up and he went in to school and he kept on telling it in the classroom so the principal called me and said, "Hey, we've got a problem." So I went over there and I got the kid and I hit him one swat across the--it probably hurt my hand more than it hurt him. But it wasn't because it was a punishment, it was just that he was saying I couldn't do it, so then--

Interviewer: You had to show that you--

Mr Holmes: I was in charge here, not you. But--

Interviewer: Was it just out of the blue like that? Had he done anything and somebody said, "We're going to have to punish you for that."

Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah, I'm sure somebody had probably told him he was going to have to--not me, I didn't tell him that, but I'm sure that--. I knew what he had done and I was aware of what he had done and, I don't remember, he was going to be restricted or something like that.

Interviewer: What kind of punishment did you use then?

Mr. Holmes: Isolation, mostly. Each one of the cottages, and I suppose they still have it out there, and the school had a quiet room. That's isolation. You didn't talk about it very much because they didn't use that type of punishment, quotes. But if the kid got out of control you immediately took him to the quiet room. And whoever was responsible for him at the time had to stay outside the door and look in and see that everything was all right. As soon as the kid got quieted down and was able to go back--maybe it took an hour and maybe it took fifteen minutes, maybe all day, then he went back out. And that wasn't considered to be the punishment, it was just saying, "Hey, you know." If he did something other than just act up, then you'd have to be giving him some sort of restriction, but otherwise that was the punishment. Now the other thing we used was behavior modification. Again, we're talking about the later days.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: Are you familiar with behavior modification? All right, behavior modification, all it amounts to--. Fact is, when we started, it was sort of like a big brother type of thing and people were not thinking that was a very good idea either. What it amounts to is, instead of doing negative things, you do positive things. As an example, say a kid came into the institution because he was swearing all the time in school and so on and so forth. We'd say, "Well look, you've got a problem with swearing. So let's work on that problem. You don't have to worry about anything else." So if you didn't swear for the next fifteen minutes you'd get a certain number of points or M & M's or whatever and then you'd keep on extending that until they'd--in other words, he was getting good things for not doing it rather than being slapped on the butt for doin' it.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: That fact is probably the same type of program they have out there now. In fact, I know it is, 'cuz what you do is you go in very restricted and as you progress, then you're given
eventually opportunities to visit at home and this type of stuff.

Interviewer: More freedom.

Mr. Holmes: Very little physical punishment. I didn't ever believe in it. I don't think it works. For instance, parents today might have to swat the butt for a little bit. I mean you have to be very careful of this.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: I don't think it's a very good idea myself. Isolation. You see, what you want to do, if the kid is acting up, he's usually acting up for the rest of the group. So you take him out of that group, put him by himself, it's no fun. That's kind of some of the basics of what the treatment program was. And again, when you had your school where you could begin to see some progress, you know, you were feeling good about yourself.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: And here a lot of good kids--well, they had all kinds of recreation, you see, and all of these things. If you wanted to be mean to somebody you'd say, "You can't go to the basketball game tonight" or "You can't go over and play baseball" or "You can't go skating" or "You can't go to the canteen." One of the big things out there was the canteen.

Interviewer: I've read a little bit about the canteen.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, and actually what it was was, oh, we had refreshments down there underneath and we had a roller skating rink.

Interviewer: Now where was this at?

Mr. Holmes: Under the basement of the Nighswander Theater over there, the Chapel.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Mr. Holmes: I don't know where it is today, but they had a little roller skating rink. It was not too bad a size. And down at the end they had a canteen where they could buy pop and candy and this kind of stuff. They get money from two different ways. One of them is, everybody had a small allowance. If they had social security money, they could use their social security money. Fact is, that had to use their social security money for incidentals and their own clothing. But the other kids, a lot of them, we had a work program out there. We cut that off about two years before I left there, but what they did was you were assigned to the maintenance department or the dietary department or the hospital or the cottages and where you worked under the supervision of one of the employees. You got paid for that.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: And we paid them minimum wage, which was about three and a half bucks, I think, at that time. They thought that was wonderful, but every two weeks they got paid and they had to come in and go through the line and they got their money. And right next to it was the dietary department where we took out for their food. (Laughs) They always had some left, but the idea was, you know, there's no free ride.

Interviewer: Sure. Right.
Mr. Holmes: You make all this money and hey, you get down to the end and there isn't as much as it looks like.

Interviewer: Just like the real world.

Mr. Holmes: Yup, yup. And they enjoyed that. They bid on jobs. Maybe we didn't think they could handle that particular type of job, but it was a really good working experience.

Interviewer: So you could kind of pick, well, as long as the administrators thought the person was capable, you could do almost any job you wanted to. I mean you got to pick whatever job you wanted to do.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, but there's some kids, well, for instance, the girls unfortunately couldn't work in the maintenance department. They probably could today, but--(laughs). And so they had the laundry and the dietary department pretty much and the boys had maintenance, lawn work and this type of thing.

Interviewer: And this was after the farm had closed down.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah.

Interviewer: What year was it the farm was closed down? Was that early sixties?

Mr. Holmes: Sixty--early sixties. Sixty-three, sixty-four, something like that.

Interviewer: And it was sold. Sold to the state?

Mr. Holmes: No.

Interviewer: The state owned it already I guess.

Mr. Holmes: The state owned it already. It was sold for, uh, a developer. I don't remember who it was. And the money from the farm out there built the first new cottage out there. Uh, it's the one sort of back. And, uh, then we sold the pig farm, which was out on Eastern Avenue. Eighty acres--I guess it was a hundred and twenty acres. After that, that money was put into a fund to build that second new cottage out there. So that it didn't cost anything, oh it cost some, but not much money for capital improvements.

Interviewer: Had a lot of the livestock and crops for the farm been used to feed the--

Mr. Holmes: Oh yeah. They did terrific canning there. Glass cans, you know.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: They had a garden up where that housing is on Eastern Avenue there, off the creek there.

Interviewer: Okay, right.

Mr. Holmes: They raised their own vegetables and canned their own vegetables.

Interviewer: So that all continued, even after the farm was sold?

Mr. Holmes: No.
Interviewer: That all ended too.

Mr. Holmes: No, no. That all ended. Fact is, it even ended before because, again, we were getting a different type of kid and--

Interviewer: And the population was getting smaller.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, and it was harder to handle those types of kids, so--. See, we were using it as a training and as a training and even if it lost money, which it did, that's one thing. But when you don't have training and losing money, well, you better get rid of it.

Interviewer: That's right. That's interesting. I don't know why I hadn't thought of it, that basically why it was there was for training. The farm wasn't there just to bring food in for the kids. It was for training.

Mr. Holmes: Oh no, fact is, we had to sell them, a lot of the milk was sold off. They had one of the biggest dairy farms in the state and one of the best. Fact is, for years they had the top butter, I don't know what, something. One cow out there was nationally known. It was bred for all their different better fat contents and so on. It was well known.

Interviewer: Oh, wow.

Mr. Holmes: And that barn was a model barn too. A lot of it was copied afterwards, for big farms.

Interviewer: Going off in another direction again, um, one of your daughters you adopted from the home, right?

Mr. Holmes: Yup, uh-huh.

Interviewer: How did that come to be?

Mr. Holmes: Well, this gal had been--she had three sisters. She lived in a home out in the western part of the state. I mean I'm not going to give you some of the details.

Interviewer: Sure. That's fine, that's fine.

Mr. Holmes: And her mother, her father was an alcoholic. He'd come home and get her mother pregnant and they'd, I don't know, they'd break up and she went to two different foster homes and went to an institution in his community twice. Then her mother had an illegal abortion and she died and then they went to live with a relative and there were four girls and four boys in the family and that lasted about six months. So she was sent out to the Annie Wittenmyer Home. I placed her in an adoptive home, a real nice adoptive home. But that didn't work out because she was a teenager by then. You know you didn't find very many. But they took her on a trip. Like most teenagers they weren't interested in looking at scenery and they didn't think that they wanted to keep her. So anyway then she had had four or five, five placements and two institutions before she came to the home. She was really a nice gal and all her sisters were too. The sisters got placed out and adopted and she was still there. And, I don't know, she just needed something other than an institutional setting and she was of an age that we really couldn't find anything else for her. And we both took a liking to her. We had other foster children too. One of them, the last I knew, was at the ????? Institute in Council Bluffs, (laughs)________

Interviewer: (Laughs) You didn't leave any names.
Mr. Holmes: No, but I mean we've had several foster children before.

Interviewer: But she was the only one that you adopted.

Mr. Holmes: And fact is, she didn't want to be adopted. And she lived with us for--well, she came to live with us when she was a junior in highschool. When she graduated from highschool she had an opportunity to go to college, in fact, the people who had her in their adoptive home, they had money so they were going to send her to college. But she was in love so she got married. We didn't think much of it, but what can you do? And that lasted about six months. And he brought her back to us and said, "Here, you take her, I don't want her anymore." And so we proceeded--that night I took her right back. I didn't want to, but I took her back and said, "Hey, you're married to her, it's your problem. Well, it didn't last long, he went in the service as a means of getting away. She had a child from that marriage and he never even saw the child. And then she got married again and the second marriage, he went out to walk the dog one night and he keeled over dead. Now she married the third--but she could not relate to anybody. The reason we didn't adopt her was because she didn't want to be adopted. She didn't want that close of a relationship. Um, but she came to us about three, four years ago and wanted to be adopted. So we adopted her when she was some thirty years old.

Interviewer: Wow. Wow, that's a great story. I didn't know that part.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah. So, anyway.

Interviewer: Hmm. That kind of confuses my next question, but I was going to ask is how did the state, I guess, look upon employees of the home adopting children. Was there a rule against that at the time or no?

Mr. Holmes: Wasn't any rule, except you had to be very careful that you wouldn't show partiality. And I think that the girls we picked out, we never had any boys because there wasn't anything for them to do out there. But they were exceptional kids and we didn't pick them out because of that but I think everybody on the grounds knew that they just didn't belong in an institutional setting. And so they were happy for them. Now this gal I was just talking about, it was her birthday right after we took her and so she began to pout the day of her birthday. Apparently down in the cottage she had had a big party. We didn't tell her, but we had all the kids from the cottage come up and surprise her. Several of them would have loved to come and live with us, fact is, they told me that. But I don't know, I don't think it's probably a good idea, but I thought it was a good idea personally. (Laughs)

Interviewer: That was something I guess I was wondering, what would other residents or kids there feel---

Mr.Holmes: Yeah, it wasn't good, I don't think. Well, I don't think they really cared that much and I think that they saw it as a means of somebody else getting something they liked to have, really. Uh, this one boy happened to like her though and he was telling all the kids that I was taking her up there so I could abuse her. (Laughs) Fact of the matter is, I don't think I have ever hugged that girl or kissed her, even to this day, because I don't want anybody to think--(laughs).

Interviewer: That's true. That would be even another reason why it might not always be a good idea because you don't know what people are thinking.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, people have ulterior motives you know, so--

Interviewer: Hm.
Mr. Holmes: We had some nice kids out there too. And some that weren't so nice, but--. Once in awhile you read about some of them in the paper that went from here to there to back into trouble. There are probably more in this area than in any other area. We got a lot of children from this area and because they had lived here and many of them went to highschool here and, this again was older, stayed here. So I would imagine, I bet you could probably find fifty, sixty kids in this area who lived out at the home at one time.

Interviewer: Hm. Um, couple other quick things here. I've got some odd questions for you. Big things like uh, what did you like best about working at the home?

Mr. Holmes: Well, I like people and I like administration. And, uh--I'm a changer too. I like to make changes. So I was constantly doing things differently.

Interviewer: Trying to improve on things.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, yeah. It was a good opportunity to do all that. We had a good staff out there. It was enjoyable. Uh, I don't know, I started out in college in pharmacy. And I finally decided that gee, I didn't want to stay in behind a test tube all day, I'd rather have people, so that frees my choice to this type of thing.

Interviewer: Well, what did you like least about working at the home? Is there anything you liked least about it?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah. Probably working with counties that didn't have any respect for kids and would try to get rid of them. And they weren't sending children to us because of what was going to be best for the children, but what was best for the community they were in. And that was always sort of a difficult thing for me to handle. One of the ways we had to overcome something like that, again we go back, orginally that was the Soldiers and Sailors Orphan Home.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Mr. Holmes: And veterans or anyone who had been in the service, the counties could send the children at no cost to the county.

Interviewer: The state paid for all that.

Mr. Holmes: The state paid for all of it. So consequently we were getting a lot of real nice veteran's kids. It was reverse discrimination, that's what it was. So when we finally got the legislators to change that, and there was a lot of opposition because counties didn't want that, they were more selective at the kids that were sent to the home. Also we were pointing out to the communities to look at costs, probably around thirty dollars a day, twenty-five. Today it's probably three times that. Now if you could bring them in back to your home community in foster care or doing supervision of the family, it's going to cost you a lot less. And we were able to get that across, too. But it wasn't because what's best for the kids. And not entirely. There were a lot of good communities that we really worked with, but a lot of them, especially smaller communities, didn't have the resources.

Interviewer: Sure.

Mr. Holmes: So we were able to point this out--you can make money if you do a better job.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: That helped us with some of the things too. We went out and lectured and talked
and so on and so forth, a great deal, trying to show the benefits of children staying within their
own community and so on. Uh, another thing here, I told you a little about we were doing this
ninety day evaluation thing? We found out that you take the child away from the community
when they were in real tough trouble and the families. You remove them from the community, by
the end of ninety days, the community was much more accepting of them. They forgot all about
the problems that precipitated this.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: And so they went back to their own communities without as much difficulty as if they
stayed there in the first place. But there are things like that. I could go on for months I guess.
(Laughs)

Interviewer: I guess we kind of talked about this before. It's another really broad one. What do
you feel was the main purpose of the Annie Wittenmyer Home? When you were there, what were
you striving to build? You've talked about this the whole time I know.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, yeah. Well, the purpose, I can read you that. (Laughts)

Interviewer: Okay.

Mr. Holmes: It's right here on the first page. By the way, I wrote this myself.

Interviewer: You did write that.

Mr Holmes: Uh--I think it's on the back. Wittenmyer Creed. The basic aim of the Iowa Annie
Wittenmyer Home is to educate academically, emotionally, socially and physically the children
committed so that eventually they can be self-supporting, socially acceptable citizens. Although
the future of the children must rest within the community, the primary purpose of the institution
must rest within training in the group setting. In other words, get them out.

Interviewer: And get them ready to--

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, to live a normal life. That was the idea. I think one of the problems of some
of these older people you've talked to, I think the idea there was, these are not too bad of kids to
take care of, let's keep them here, let's not try to get them back in the community. That's cynical,
but I think there was some of that thought there, that this is the best place for them and we don't
want to try to get them out.

Interviewer: Right.

Mr. Holmes: So they built up population. I guess at one time there was seven hundred kids
there.

Interviewer: Hm. It seemed like they--wouldn't it fluctuate a lot, you know, real short time spans,
but people I talked to said that when they were there were six hundred or something there, just
packed into those cottages.

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, yeah, they were. I think there were four hundred when I went there, but two
hundred of them didn't belong there.

Interviewer: Right. So basically the population went down because the whole concept was
working. You were doing a good job. You were getting people prepared and getting them out.
Mr. Holmes: Yeah. And we had some come back too.

Interviewer: Sure. One last question. We kind of talked about this too, but do you think that an institution like the Annie Wittenmyer Home could be successful today?

Mr. Holmes: Yeah, I think it can be. Fact of the matter is, a lot of the children who are in difficulty today could be handled in an institution where there's a lot of continuity and also a lot of opportunity for the kids to live a, quotes, --maybe not a normal life, but closer to a normal life than they're living with some of their parents today. They wouldn't be susceptible, subjected to mistreatment, alcohol, drugs, this type of stuff. And uh, could feel a lot more confidence in their capabilities and not looked on as, quotes, somebody across the street. I think it could work. Again, you'd have to have a good staff and it costs money, but in the long run, it's probably a lot cheaper than doing--hitting this type of stuff. Along this line, I really think that one of the answers to some of the juvenile problems today is boot camp type of thing. Again, you're talking about controlled institutional setting. And us you're talking about uh,--children don't mind discipline if it's honest and fair and they know where it's coming from. So I don't--I think if you would use a lot of punishment and a lot of cruelty, you know, that's not good. That wouldn't go very well in the community and the kids would rebel and so on. My answer to that one.

Interviewer: Well, I think that's about it unless you can think of anything else.

Mr. Holmes: No, no.

Interviewer: I appreciate your taking the time to talk to us.

Mr. Holmes: I talk probably more about up to the 70's, but that's all right.