

**T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection**

**ABSTRACT**

**INTERVIEWEE NAME:** Roger Houston Ogden

**COLLECTION:** 4700.0519

**IDENTIFICATION:** Louisiana State University graduate (1968) and Student Government Association President (1967-1968); LSU Board of Supervisors; real estate developer; art collector

**INTERVIEWER:** Pamela Dean

**SERIES:** University History - Student Government Association Past Presidents

**INTERVIEW DATES:** Session I - April 14, 1994  
Session II - May 6, 1994  
Session III - June 28, 1994

**FOCUS DATES:** 1950s - 1994

**ABSTRACT:**

**Session I**

**Tape 741, Side A**

Introduction; parents' backgrounds; his father was from New England; parents met at University of Colorado; father was in the Army Air Corps and flew fifty missions out of North Africa in WWII; he was highly decorated; story about his father flying a night mission and being shot at by Germans, somehow making it back to base in the damaged plane; he was born in Denver, CO, after his father returned from the war; his father became interested in geology, prompting a move to Shreveport, Louisiana; father became well-known in the oil and gas business; father approached by Charlton Lyons, known to Ogden as "Papa Lyons", to take the Lyons and Logan company to Lafayette, Louisiana, in 1954; Louisiana became home; father started his own business as an independent oil operator in 1960, same time that Ogden started high school; father drilled thirteen dry wells before finding a major producer; none of the public or parochial high schools in Lafayette were integrated at that time; highly educated teachers at Lafayette High, he names some of his favorites; he learned to enjoy literature; his most influential teacher was Sabra Watkins who taught him about the visual arts, including opera; he recalls a class project where he made a rendering of a blue willow plate; his class of thirty from Hamilton Lab School were the odd men out at Lafayette High, he made an effort to get to know people and was helped through a friend who played basketball; sports he played in high school; difference in academics and student social lives in schools he attended; Lafayette High class was amazing, many prominent graduates like Congressman James Hayes, attorneys, dentists, athletes, etc.; his future wife, Ann Wait, moved to Lafayette from Texas; Ogden recalls seeing Ann at the bus stop for the first time; Ann had seen him a few days prior driving in his dad's Thunderbird; sneaking out with Ann when he was dating other girls; high school years were wonderful; accomplishments in swimming and competition from classmates;

### **Tape 741, Side B**

Cajun French influence and Texas oil money made Lafayette interesting and fun; his first job at an optometrist's office, phone calls from French speakers; he took Latin in high school to prepare for law school; he and his peers grew up fast, underage drinking at various clubs and bars; a classmate killed in a drunk driving accident; state band competitions; he got a car from a family friend in 1963, recalls a scary incident when the gas pedal stuck; the 60s were a different time; his goal was to be governor of Louisiana; experience at Boys State before his senior year, his good friend Tommy ran for governor of Boys State but lost; Dr. Arthur Choppin was the father of Boys State; some of his Boys State friends attended LSU later; his primary reasons for attending LSU were so he could be governor one day and to follow Tigers football; highlights of 1958 and '59 LSU football seasons; brief encounter and photograph with Billy Cannon; he had visited LSU's campus often before he was a student there; he was selected as a page for the 1964 Republican National Convention; Barry Goldwater was seen as an extremist; his parents' thoughts on where he should go to college; he finished high school with a 3.7 grade point average; he knew he was going to LSU; his parents knew about the underage drinking but he wasn't a bad kid, he had a great relationship with them; his parents sometimes thought he was too ambitious; he studied hard and played hard; [portion restricted]; he earned his parents' trust by being a good student; those times were "simple and easy" there was optimism; these days, young people have a harder road; the current generation may not do as well as their parents; he and his friend Tommy Wyman would debate about politics; his parents' politics and the politics in Louisiana compared to his views; John F. Kennedy's assassination affected him, his parents did not have much regard for the Kennedys; debates with Tommy about how to accomplish desegregation; Ogden felt it was not always best to "bully through" with immediate changes, it could cause more resentment; memories of watching the evening news and his dad cursing at Walter Cronkite; his father was not pro-civil rights; he and his father believed differently about people abilities and opportunities;

### **Tape 742, Side A**

He wasn't directly involved in civil rights protests, there was nowhere to march; some activists only came around when the cameras were there and then left, that made life worse for the people who lived there permanently; his father argued that racism in the North would show itself in time and he was right, an example was the Roxbury Boston riots; he doesn't know if desegregation could have happened any other way, sometimes a radical position is needed; white supremacists from Indiana that he saw on a talk show; the KKK had a racial and religious motive; today he sees more people falling in with the extremists on both sides of the racial issue; same arguments from the 1950s used against desegregation now apply to keeping historically African American schools from integrating into the university system; he wonders if we've really gotten anywhere with civil rights; he thinks an integrated society is the best society; he agrees that the problems in higher education for African Americans stem from a problem of inequality at the lower levels of education; education is the answer to equality; discussion of problems in Baton Rouge and other cities' public schools; education for African Americans has not been improved since the 1960s; his question is how do we achieve an integrated society; how he spent his summers before LSU and while attending; he had the job in the optometrist's office to make money to paint and fix his car; he got to LSU in the fall of 1964; recalls preparing to drive to campus with his best friend John Wiley, both of them driving Chevys; Ogden stopped his car to go back and hug his dad and mom and tell his dad he loved him; he and John both took "pot luck" for a roommate assignment

so they would meet other people; dorms for men on campus; story about waiting for his roommate, Alton Honeycutt, to arrive; he liked Al very much, they were the classic odd couple; Ogden started meeting as many people as he could because he wanted to run for president of Junior Division; he had many friends who went to LSU, including his future wife, Ann; breakdown of the colleges his high school classmates attended, about one third did not go to college; he wanted to join a fraternity because it was the thing to do; he and his friends from high school were popular and they all wanted to participate in rush; he names the major fraternities and ranks them in terms of popularity and prestige; he wanted to be in one of the top-tier fraternities and had attended rush parties in the summer prior to starting at LSU; his parents had been in Greek organizations and pushed him to join also; Sigma Chi was one of his top choices, a great group of guys; he discusses the other major fraternities and their members, what the men were like and where they came from;

### **Tape 742, Side B**

The three best fraternities were Kappa Sigma, Sigma Chi and SAE; he continues talking about the characteristics of each fraternity; his close friends went with Sigma Chi and he was going to also, but he changed his mind last minute; decided on Kappa Sigma because he was intrigued by them; his decision surprised everyone; describes picking up his bids at the Student Union and walking to the Kappa Sigma house; two large fraternity brothers were excited and threw him on top of a car yelling, "Look who we got!"; after that warm welcome, he was treated like dirt during hazing; his pledge class was outstanding, he recalls some of the members; first night as a pledge, being taken to the Carousel bar in Port Allen and getting black-out drunk; the next day, hazing started and he was taken aback; first meeting with pledge class, they decided on Joe Ward as pledge class president and Ogden as Junior Division presidential candidate; cramming to learn 250 names of the fraternity brothers and thinking that the process was so stupid, he still finds it odd; there were about thirty candidates for Junior Division president; the election took place within the first few weeks of school when he was still getting used to classes and dorm life and while enduring hazing; he was in a run-off with the SAE candidate, Rick Sandover, from Baton Rouge; Ogden had a lot of support from his female friends in sororities; he won the election but it made him a target for more intense hazing, like cleaning toilets with his bare hands; hazing spanned the whole semester and he really disagreed with it; philosophy that enduring hard times together makes you closer to your brothers, similar to the military; ROTC was mandatory at this time so all freshman men had their heads shaved and wore beanies; he was appointed Freshman King and got to choose Freshman Queen; Ann expected him to choose her but he chose a girl he liked from Shreveport, Minette Holly; Minette was dating a football player and wanted nothing to do with Ogden; he recalls the king and queen ceremony involving ROTC; he felt like a big deal during the ceremony but was brought down to earth immediately afterwards, being hazed at Kappa Sigma; elected to Phi Eta Sigma; hell week in March was "unbelievably ridiculous", followed by initiation, which was secret but was a beautiful and creative ceremony; dramatic positive change after initiation; he was rush chairman the next two years which meant identifying rushees and planning summer parties throughout the state and on campus; Kappa Sigma was very diverse; there was an element in the fraternity that he never got along with, older guys who resented the younger brothers or were jealous; he decided not to run for president of the fraternity because of this element; ninety-percent of the fraternity were great guys, many are still close friends, like Paul Minor, John Wiley, and Ogden's future business partners James Maurin and Chip Songy; he has mixed emotions about the fraternity experience; sophomore year,

decided to major in Business Administration; at this point, he needed a break from student government; he was campaign chairman for his friend Joe Ward's student body president campaign; discussion of topics for next interview session; begins story about anti-Vietnam War protestors on campus; tape cuts off.

## **Session II**

### **Tape 743, Side A**

Picking up with his sophomore year at LSU; freshman year was fun but exhausting; first course with business professor John Davidson, his favorite teacher at LSU; Davidson's work ethic, background, style of dress; deciding on Business Administration major, course concentrations; his first General Business course had three or five hundred students, the professor utilized telecommunications; LSU's switch from president to chancellor system, Martin Woodin, Grover Murray, Bernard Sliger and Cecil Taylor's roles; he majored in business partially to avoid the language course requirement; was fraternity rush chairman in his sophomore and junior years; sophomore year was his first year living in the fraternity house with his roommate, Paul Minor; experience living there was new and fun; fraternity house mother retired during his sophomore year and was replaced with another woman; process to appoint new house mother, final decision made by Dean of Men Arden French and Assistant Dean of Men Jim Brasher; older fraternity members wanted him to run for fraternity president, he did so but lost; factions in the fraternity that were for and against hazing, some members were more mature than others; Dean Sliger's positions at LSU and elsewhere; junior year as rush chairman, decision to reduce the size of the pledge class; sophomore year, he helped Joe Ward get elected student body president; student body presidents during his first three years at LSU, two were Kappa Sigma members; Ogden's future business partner Jim Maurin pledged Kappa Sigma; other men in that pledge class who had aspirations for student government; in 1966 and '67, LSU began to see anti-war protests from a small group of students and faculty; at that time, he believed the war was necessary; prominent politicians' views on the war, containment versus interfering in a civil war; he feels that most student protesters were losers, only interested in getting their names in the paper or rebelling in some way; today, he thinks his beliefs about the war were wrong; the U.S. was unprepared for Vietnam;

### **Tape 743, Side B**

Majority of anti-war protestors at LSU didn't have a clue; junior year he served on the Interfraternity Council with Dave Hall; Civil War History course with T. Harry Williams; the class was large, Williams was working on his Huey Long book at the time; geology course with Fred Kniffen; abnormal psychology course with Edwin Timmons; he still recalls Timmons' analogy that the human psyche is like an onion, the greatest life experiences come when the layers are pulled back; elected to Omicron Delta Kappa, voted Outstanding Junior, awarded Washington D.C. alumni fellowship which allowed him to intern under Senator Russell Long; he was still rush chairman and had help from a friend, Richard Campbell, in planning the summer parties; junior year, he served in Student Assembly and ran for student body president; his supporters helped him run a huge campaign against seven other candidates; Elaine Abell had already been student body president; Ogden ran against Mike Fontham who he knew somewhat from Lafayette; he and Mike had respect for each other but disagreed on most topics; another candidate, Dennis LaRavia was in the Baptist Student Union and ROTC; Ogden stopped ROTC after sophomore year, he felt it was "rinky-dink"; it seemed unlikely he would win because

several recent past presidents were Kappa Sigma members; against Ogden's wishes, several Kappa Sigma members campaigned using "Kappa Sig Machine" as a slogan; his campaign chairman, Susan; his platform was eliminating compulsory ROTC and repealing the ban on liquor sales within one mile of campus; record voter turnout for the election; ended up with a run-off between Ogden and LaRavia; Ogden won in the runoff, but there were fewer voters and a very narrow margin; he thinks he won because of support from women students; recalls the night he waited for the final vote counting, a fraternity brother gave him the thumbs up signal just before the announcement; he was excited to win, but exhausted; he describes campaign techniques, visiting each sorority and fraternity house, cafeterias, dorms, speaking in Free Speech Alley, debates in the Union, posters and buttons; limits on spending, most money spent on printing flyers; his campaign slogans for Junior Division and SGA president campaigns; he was the most qualified person after his previous student government service; as SGA president, role in appointing *Reveille* editor; Ogden nominated his opponent, Mike Fontham; Fontham tore him apart in the paper for the rest of the year, their philosophies were different; women voters likely supported him because he wanted to negotiate the rules for women on campus;

#### **Tape 744, Side A**

Drove to Washington D.C. in the summer of 1967 to start his internship with Senator Long; he had a few contacts in D.C.; found a place to live and roommates by posting on bulletin boards in the Senate and House; two roommates from Tennessee and one from Montana, their connections and the senators they interned for; Senator Long was assistant majority leader under Senator Mike Mansfield, Lyndon Johnson was president, Senator Tom Dodd was up for censure-ship, other events of that summer; Bob Mann was Senator Long's administrative assistant, John McConnell was whip assistant and became Ogden's lifelong friend; also became friends with Long's press secretary, Charlie McBride, who sponsored the fellowship program; Long was chairman of the Senate Finance Committee; McBride introduced Ogden to Long as the LSU student body president-elect and "that was it, [Ogden] went from a cubbyhole in the corner to an office over in the Capitol"; conferencing with Long about how to rekindle his relationship with Louisiana and its students; Ogden started to work on a proposal that would involve speaking engagements and re-election campaigns at colleges; Long never followed Ogden's whole plan but did do more speeches; after the proposal, spent the rest of the summer as Long's assistant; he joined Long in preparing for a hearing on a new Social Security bill; contents of the bill were in large volumes; hideaway office where Long went to study; Long asked Ogden to accompany him to the hearings; he recalls Long referring to a specific entry in one large volume, Long must have had a photographic memory; Long had a speech impediment in his youth, many people with high intelligence have similar problems; explains how Long overcame his stuttering, practicing in a mirror for tens of hours a day; Long had an extraordinary mind, could communicate to people from all walks of life; Long wasn't concerned with appearances, money, or material belongings; "he would mentally spar with people and win without them knowing he won", Ogden witnessed this in private conversations; story of Long taking a phone call from President Johnson while Ogden sat quietly in Long's office, the conversation was unbelievable, laced with profanity; Long continues the phone call in his office bathroom and loudly flushes, causing President Johnson to roar with laughter; Ogden thinks the audible flushing was part of Long's strategy to disarm Johnson and get his own way; Long and Johnson were "two peas in a pod" except Long had almost no ego; Long was successful because his intelligence was underestimated; Long had great regard for Senator Mike Mansfield; Mansfield was sent to China or Japan and Long served

as acting majority leader; story of Long surprising Ogden by letting him assist in opening the Senate one morning; getting Ogden past a guard, instructing him on what to do and say, Long introduced him and Ogden stepped up to call on the chaplain and bang the gavel;

### **Tape 744, Side B**

Senator Long was very affected by his father's censure by the Senate; when Senator Dodd was brought up for censure-ship. Long felt obligated to defend him; Dodd couldn't turn Long down; Long was drinking at this time but was still brilliant; height of his drinking during Dodd's hearings; Ogden hurt watching Long's intoxicated defense of Dodd, it had more to do with Long's father's censure than Dodd's; Ogden thinks Long succeeded in taking the heat off Dodd and placing it on himself; Long's wife was not around, the marriage was rocky; Ogden knew Long was seeing someone, Carolyn Bason, who worked for a Carolina senator; Carolyn helped Long to turn his life around; Ogden and Long's staff were rooting for Carolyn so that Long could have a happy private life; Long beat by Ted Kennedy for assistant majority leader position; Thurgood Marshall appointed to Supreme Court; Fulbright Hearings on Vietnam; he got to know Vice President Hubert Humphrey very well, Humphrey was integral to Johnson's Great Society legislation; Ogden first met Humphrey on an elevator, he invited Ogden to his office; Humphrey was an LSU graduate, he won Ogden over, though he disagreed with Humphrey's politics at the time; Humphrey was great at remembering people's names, he was a real humanitarian; other recollections of his summer in D.C.; Long made a great contribution as a senator, has enjoyed much success as a lobbyist and in other endeavors in the private sector; interview interrupted by someone who locked his keys in his car; Ogden's senior year, rush was terrific; he had three little brothers in the fraternity over the years; he always had respect for Mike Fontham, who is an attorney in New Orleans today, Ogden sees him often and they are friends; back in 1967, Mike was more interested in Vietnam and Ogden more in student issues; Fontham agreed with Ogden on the elimination of compulsory ROTC; Ogden thinks he and Fontham misjudged each other back then; Fontham is a fighter for equal rights, very involved in community work; Ogden had two vice-presidents, Joe Rausch and Carole Bettoney; they worked on the ROTC issue first, then the one-mile alcohol ban, they won both overwhelmingly with little opposition; he discusses his interactions with and opinions of Chancellor Taylor, Dean Sliger, Dean Reddoch, Dean French, and Dean Jameson; ROTC issue went through chain of command, they had the vote of the students to end compulsory ROTC; he guesses that Chancellor Taylor supported this to the Board of Supervisors; argument that the university was no longer a military school;

### **Tape 745, Side A**

Ogden was never the military type although his roommate, Paul Minor, was Cadet Colonel of ROTC; embarrassing photo in the *Reveille* of Ogden marching the wrong way on the first day of drill practice freshman year; Ogden presented his argument for ending compulsory ROTC to the LSU Board of Supervisors, Chancellor Taylor was supportive or neutral; Dean French was fair, behind the student causes; course of events with repealing one-mile alcohol sales ban around campus, his thoughts on administrators that supported the ban or did not; appealing to board members that this was a student safety issue, more students had cars and were driving drunk off campus; senior year was exhausting, he was in the hospital with pneumonia when LSU played Wyoming in the Sugar Bowl; he's not sure about the speaker ban, a way to prevent subversive speakers from visiting campus; interviewer Dean names some students and faculty involved with the speaker ban; Student Liberal Federation; Ogden thinks speaker legislation was passed

because those who voted against it would have been accused of supporting communism; it must have been a difficult decision for the board of supervisors; anti-Vietnam protestors numbered around 200 students, most were just copying what they saw on other college campuses nationally; faculty opposed to the war understood the intellectual roots of the issue, could have put their jobs at risk; Fontham was a jerk back then, should have focused his energy elsewhere; student body presidents after Ogden, Bentley Alexander and Arthur Ensminger, they were fixtures in Free Speech Alley; incident where Dean French called Ogden to campus about an anti-war demonstration with a counter protest; French stood back and asked Ogden to attempt to calm the students without having to involve campus security; one of the anti-anti war demonstrators called Ogden's attention, he was wearing a swastika armband, his name was David Duke; Ogden appealed to the anti-war demonstrators not to let Duke's group incite them to violence, appealed to Duke's group that although they had every right to speak, they should not aim to provoke an incident; Ogden's friend, Mike Zimmerman, also appealed to the anti-war protestors to ignore the taunts from Duke's group; Ogden recalls being frightened by David Duke; Paul Minor's father was Wilson Minor, a prize-winning journalist who opposed segregation; Minor would have a good perspective on compulsory ROTC and the war; Ogden guesses he was philosophically against the war although very involved in ROTC at LSU; he can recall conflicts with Dean of Women Margaret Jameson; previous Dean of Women, Jean Gordon, was a straight-shooter but Jameson operated behind your back; specific incident involved request for liberalization of dorm rules for women;

#### **Tape 745, Side B**

He wishes he could recall more clearly, he thinks conflict arose during his tenure as student body president; Jameson was not happy with his election; he could have fought for students' rights in Free Speech Alley but felt it was more productive to work with university administrators out of the public eye; fellow student body president, Joe Ward, agreed with Ogden's tactics; Dean Jameson was dishonest and she hated Ogden, he did not respect her; Ogden feels Dean French supported him but he had to tow the company line and back Jameson; example of Jameson privately telling Ogden he was "no good", then warmly congratulating him in public; she was the worst thing about LSU during his time there; she was power-hungry and manipulated her colleagues; a member of Jameson's staff later told Ogden that he was right to dislike her; she was a tyrant to her employees; Jameson was two-faced with everyone she dealt with, including Dean French; interviewer Dean says that Jameson gets "mixed reviews" from other who've discussed her; Ogden thinks Cecil Taylor may have been fooled by Jameson; Taylor was the warmest person and Jameson's complete opposite; Ogden is sure that Deans Brasher and French also disliked Jameson; Chancellor Murrill and Vice-Chancellor Sliger were wonderful academicians; Jameson was bright, though, and could turn on a smile when needed; Dean Reddoch was very rigid and competent, Ogden had great respect for him; Reddoch often came off as noncommittal; students wanted Reddoch to be more of an advocate for them; Reddoch didn't let people close because he was the guy who had to tell people "no"; Reddoch may have been the one to bring Jameson in; Ogden can see how Jameson's strict style likely appealed to Reddoch; Jameson would probably say that everything she did was in the name of women students, Ogden thinks that's BS; campus was not predominantly male when Jameson arrived, Ogden thinks it was close to 50/50; Jameson likely had trails to blaze, Ogden guesses that her political battles behind the scenes are what "had her irritated all the time"; she was her own worst enemy is using her tactics against people who might have supported her; she likely set

back the cause of women on campus and in campus administration; Ogden thinks Jameson had a difficult time with men, was probably the worst person to put in a position of being the first woman; someone like Lindy Boggs would have won everyone over; Jameson was busy having a chip on her shoulder, likely turned people's minds against having a woman in that role; male deans likely would have done more for women students than Jameson; all of this is Ogden's personal opinion; Jameson surely had to overcome real prejudices, she just didn't do a good job of it; incident where Jameson was focused on discussing a women's student group and Ogden explained that he was representing all students, male and female; Jameson railed at Ogden that he and other male students wanted the female students to have more relaxed rules; Ogden confronted her to repeat that claim in front of female students and she backtracked, didn't have the honesty to repeat what she'd said before; Carole Bettoney would back Ogden up on this; some female students fell for Jameson's act; she played favorites with some and awarded special perks; Ogden's interest in art began during his junior year when he saw a painting by Alexander John Drysdale in the Taylor-Clark Gallery; convinced his dad to buy it for his mom for Christmas, arranged for his dad to sneak away and purchase it during a visit to LSU; this began Ogden's role as art scout, buying paintings, photos, etc. for his mother, with monetary help from his father; purchased about fifteen works before his father passed away suddenly in 1969; started law school at Tulane University and continued buying art for his mother; had to take a break for several years due to low funds, then resumed collecting in the mid-1970s; works purchased for his mom are the basis of a collection that has grown to almost 1,000 works of southern art, exhibition held at LSU; discussing plans for next interview; conclusion.

### **Session III**

#### **Tape 746, Side A**

Introduction; graduation ceremony and celebration in 1968; he was awarded the Rotary International Fellowship to study for a year in London; selective service board in Lafayette revoked their permission to allow him to go overseas; threw a wrench into his plans for law school because he had applied for entry the following year; draft board notified him of their decision just before graduation; draft board members had sons serving in Southeast Asia, may have resented Ogden's opportunity; he wasn't trying to avoid the draft, had planned to do ROTC at law school; went to D.C. with his parents and stayed with General Gerald Hardy; Hardy and Russell Long tried to intervene on his behalf about the draft board's decision; had Ogden meet with General Lewis Hershey, Director of Selective Service; Hershey agreed that it was a poor decision, called the Lafayette draft board and asked them to reconsider, said that Ogden would fulfill his service commitment after the London fellowship; waited weeks for the draft board's decision, they confirmed their original ruling; people advised him to go to London anyway but he wouldn't dare violate the law; started working on figuring out how to do law school and ROTC but the timing was wrong with schools' schedules and his delayed law school acceptances; Tulane was the only choice that would let him in mid-year and had a reserve unit; he felt law school was the logical background for public service and politics, planned to get a law degree, fulfill his military requirement, and start practicing as a district attorney; still dreamed of one day being governor; feels that not going to London was meant to be, allowed him to live in New Orleans and experience the city, also to spend more time with his parents; eight weeks of basic training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma; took a trip to Colombia and Panama with a friend; stayed with a typical South American family in a huge hacienda; he smoked pot with his friend and two brothers and got sick; recalls a lunch date with his father just before he was due back at Tulane



for the fall semester, father gave him a *Playboy* with an article about marijuana in it; when he got home from the lunch, his father's coworker was calling to say they had taken his father to the hospital; his father had a brain aneurysm and stopped breathing, he passed away two days later; he's thankful for the time he got to spend with his dad before he passed; family was adamant he return to Tulane, a cousin took care of Ogden's mother in Lafayette; he was worried for his mom, his parents were deeply in love; chain of events caused him to rethink his goals in life;

### **Tape 746, Side B**

His father's premature death made him reconsider what was important in life; he looked to John McConnell as a father figure, John persuaded him to reconsider pursuing elective office; he married Anne Wait in 1970, they eloped to Mexico City; he did well in law school; didn't want to return to Lafayette, he felt his mother had to "build a life of her own" there; he was fortunate to be hired as an assistant to Harry Kelleher of the New Orleans law firm Lemle, Kelleher, Kohlmeyer and Matthews; he started doing corporate litigation work and renovating old houses with Ann; they had a son in March 1973; he knew he didn't want to practice law for the rest of his life, he wanted to entrepreneur in real estate development; he had brought two prominent cases to his law firm and reaped several hundred thousand dollar in fees from those cases; he used that money on beachfront properties and built a nice nest egg; he and Ann divorced; he knew he wanted to develop shopping centers; he had property from his father's estate and thought it would be good for a shopping center; he approached his former fraternity brother, James Maurin, about joining him, they formed Maurin-Ogden with Ogden as president and CEO and Maurin and vice president; they started small and are now operated under Stirling Properties; he plans to step back from the company and focus on new challenges; his interest in real estate started with renovating old homes in uptown New Orleans; Ann went along reluctantly but it was difficult moving from house to house doing renovations, while she worked as a teacher and Ogden attended law school; explanation of cost of homes, cost of renovations, profits when houses were sold, taxes, possibility of rental properties, etc.; he loved the process of creating and developing but was not prepared for the shift from homes to shopping centers; spoke with Maurin about residential versus commercial development, commercial seemed better and they didn't have the financial capability to do subdivisions or condominiums; research showed need for suburban shopping centers; Kelleher tried to talk him out of leaving the law firm, but agreed to give him six months to develop his real estate prospects; Ogden was putting deals together and Maurin was the administrator; today he "can't believe [he] had the gumption to do something like that"; there was little money to finance anything; the timing was right and they procured loans from banks, probably due to the oil and gas business picking up around Lafayette; still, they had no experience and almost no net worth; he ran into every roadblock in developing this first shopping center; the existing Kroger on the site was too small, he envisioned making it a large anchor store at one end of the shopping center; approached the store manager with his idea, store manager said he should contact the president of Kroger in Cincinnati at their corporate headquarters; the next day, Ogden calls the president, Charles Irvingham, speaks with his secretary and leaves a detailed message; the next day, he gets a call back from Irvingham who is amused at Ogden's persistence, refers him to Jerry Roy at regional office in Houston; next day, speaks with Roy who is also amused with Ogden's direct approach and agrees to visit Lafayette and look at the deal; redevelopment of the shopping center worked following Ogden's plan, textbook case and the center is now one of their most successful properties;

### **Tape 747, Side A**

After building his company and raising his son, he had a strong desire to start giving back; took part in a politics program through Loyola University; participated in the six-month Metropolitan Area Committee's (MAC) Young Leadership Forum; MAC had grown out of the civil rights era and represented all aspects of the community; existence and influence of MAC likely kept civil unrest in New Orleans to a minimum; MAC provided a valuable coalition of interests; his involvement with Ernest "Dutch" Morial's mayoral campaign, he was the first serious African American candidate for mayor of New Orleans; Ogden was impressed by Morial's intelligence and sincerity; after completing the Young Leadership Forum, he was recommended to the mayor's office and Morial appointed him to the New Orleans Clean City Committee; committee developed public service announcements for students through the Keep America Beautiful program; Ogden helped develop the "Waste in Place" curriculum; then appointed to the Audubon Park Commission where he held several positions; became chairman of the New Orleans Riverfront Development Committee; successful in getting over forty million dollars to begin clearing and construction; received MAC's Special Achievement Award for his work on the riverfront; work on expanding offerings in the LSU Business School; when he was a business school student, there was almost no curriculum on entrepreneurship; thought it was important to teach people how to take an idea and turn it into a business; wanted the Business School to start an institute on entrepreneurship; he raised \$45,000 to serve as a salary supplement for an entrepreneurship professor; they hired Robert Justice who helped to set up the Institute for Entrepreneurship; another part of the program was bringing in executives to talk about their real-world experience; worked with Bob Chinn to develop the Visiting Business Executives Program; Ogden served as the lead-off lecturer from 1987-1990; contacted by the LSU Alumni Association and elected to the board in 1988; in 1989, asked by University System President Allen Copping to serve on the chancellor search committee; process of beginning search for new chancellor, other people involved with search committee; Chancellor James Wharton had been a strong leader but created a great deal of divisiveness in achieving his goals for the university; consensus that the university needed a change, needed to bring in someone from the outside; begins explanation of how the search committee operated;

### **Tape 747, Side B**

There were strong constituencies within the university, administrators wanting the job themselves; dealing with camps that were for or against the outgoing chancellor; feeling that they needed to conduct a national search although there were some qualified internal candidates; he would have been behind James Henry, Dean of the Business School; he names a few others who served on the chancellor search committee; he took on a leadership role on the committee ; round of eliminations that ruled out the last internal candidates; the final candidates included C. Roland Haden and Bud Davis; Haden and Davis were wonderfully qualified but had different leadership styles; Davis' style was to build constituencies; Ogden wished both men could work at LSU; final interview with Davis, Ogden asked him why come to LSU so late in his career; Davis answered that he thought he could make a difference at LSU and that was exactly what Ogden hoped to hear; in hindsight, they could not have made a better selection; Davis saw that LSU had to join forces with universities in the state and not work against them; things are much better because of Davis' leadership, his mission is making higher education a priority in the state; Davis has been with LSU five years and will likely step down soon; Davis recruited Haden to serve as LSU provost but it hasn't worked out long-term; Ogden suspects that their differing

leadership styles created a difference in opinion; Haden tried to push things harder, Davis took time to build change; Ogden thinks that Haden may have sided with the faculty behind Davis' back and sensed it was time to move on from LSU; Ogden is unsure how accurate his assessment is, but it is based on his first-hand knowledge; regardless, Haden's intentions were for the good of LSU; give Davis credit for bringing in his chief competition to help him lead the university; provost should be loyal to the chancellor or at least find a balance; appointed to the LSU Board of Supervisors in 1991 by Governor Buddy Roemer; [portion restricted];

#### **Tape 748, Side A**

[Portion restricted]; Appointed to serve the remaining year of an unexpired term on the Board of Supervisors; he supported Edwin Edwards in his gubernatorial campaign against David Duke; feels that Edward committed a moral crime but not a legal crime in his nursing home deals; they had to trounce Duke in the election and they did; he's supported Edwards a number of times; Edwards re-appointed Ogden to a full term on the board, it was the right thing to do and he had recommendations from many people like John Laborde; during his three years on the board, African American and female members; he's proud that LSU's board has a progressive tradition; running for positions on the board with or against Milton Womack and Charles Weems; Ogden persuaded Roemer to appoint Weems after Roemer mad a back appointment of someone from Alexandria; final vote tallies and support from other board members for Ogden to become chair, the process was flabbergasting, he lost to Womack; he is close allies with Womack and Weems' tradition to call one's fellow board members when seeking the chair position, he didn't make calls last year, this year he's called everyone as he runs for chairperson again; discussion remainder of interview time; this is a critical time to be on the LSU Board of Supervisors, trying to make higher education a priority in the state; desegregation case in "hovering over everything we do"; different potential strategies for increasing higher education funding in the state; eliminating low-completer courses and duplicated courses; doesn't know if the desegregation case will lead to a single governing board; need to get LSU Alexandria and Eunice campuses under a board for community colleges; he takes exception to a portion of the Secure Report that claimed Louisiana has a low return on educational investment; worst things for higher education in the state are crumbling infrastructures and faculty flight; Ogden helped develop the first architectural design criteria for campuses in the LSU System; University of New Orleans has planted many trees as part of campus improvement; [portion restricted];

#### **Tape 748, Side B**

[Portion restricted]; Dean wants to interview Ogden again in about five years; Louisiana has a history of outstanding higher education, there's a lot being done with few resources; serving on the board is a great challenge due to the political leadership's failure to fund higher education; a strategy must be put in place to address the fundamental issues; idea of a public education campaign touting the benefits of higher education, followed by a legislative agenda; higher education has no dedicated source of funding and needs one; addition income tax would be one way to allocate higher education funding; board has to continue work of fine-tuning programs but funding is the ultimate issue; end of interview.

**RECORDINGS:** 8 (T741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748)

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 10 hours, 32 minutes

Session I - 2 hours, 54 minutes

Session II - 4 hours, 18 minutes

Session III - 3 hours, 20 minutes

**# PAGES TRANSCRIPT:** 272 pages

Session I - 75 pages

Session II - 113 pages

Session III - 84 pages

**OTHER MATERIALS:** Interviewee biographical data sheet (5 pgs); Interview index (7 pgs); Index with interviewee's corrections (7 pgs); Correspondence (9 pgs); Notes on restrictions (2 pgs); Exhibit catalog "Selections from a Southern Collection"

**RESTRICTIONS:** None (restricted portions have been removed from transcripts and audio)