

WESTMONT



May 7, 2010

COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Dr. Charles C. Ryrie
3310 Fairmount Street, Apt 5D
Dallas, TX 75201

Dear Dr. Ryrie:

This letter is in regard to the Westmont College oral history interview that you participated in on May 12, 2009. Your oral history is an extremely important part of our collection because it includes your stories and impressions of Westmont. The interview helps to give life to the past and we are tremendously grateful for the time and energy that you gave when you were interviewed.

Enclosed please find a transcript of your interview, and an Oral History Release form for your signature. The release will allow college officials and individuals conducting research projects to access and cite the final interview transcript.

Please review the release and return a signed copy in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If you wish to make substantive corrections to the transcript, please annotate the relevant pages and return the whole transcript as well. Our record of the transcript will be revised accordingly. Should you have any questions regarding the transcript or the release please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach me by phone at 565-6143; or by email at dziliott@westmont.edu.

Thank you for your role in assisting us as we seek to further develop and organize the Oral History Collection of the Westmont College Archives.

Best regards,

Diane Ziliotto
Interim College Archivist
Westmont College

Enclosure

UNEDITED telephone interview with Charles Ryrie

This is John Sider. The date is May 12th, 2009, and I'm going to hear from Dr. Charles C.

Ryrie [by phone from Dallas, TX)] about his years of teaching at Westmont.

CR Hello.

JS Hello, Dr. Ryrie. I'd like to start by asking how Westmont found you when you came to teach, or how you found Westmont.

CR I was finishing my first doctorate and I think Westmont made just a general inquiry to Dallas Seminary, where I was finishing at that point; and I think it was the secretary in the office asked if I'd be interested. I said I'd pursue it to a stop, on one side or the other. One of the stipulations was that I would have to teach a course in mathematics—

JS Oh, my goodness!

CR —because they didn't have a math teacher and I had majored in math in college. But by the time I got there in the fall they had gotten a math teacher; so I never had to do it. [laughter]

JS It was that kind of institution at that time. I can remember reading Ken Monroe's interview with somebody else in which he said that teachers looked forward to the time when they'd be able to teach, not just in their own specialty particularly, but just in their own disciplines.

CR Yes, that's true. Everybody had to pitch in.

JS So who actually hired you?

CR I think the dean, Paton Yoder, actually hired me.

JS Did you come to Westmont for an interview prior to being hired, or was this a phone conversation, or what?

CR [chuckling] I don't think there was anything except the references that whoever gave me. I didn't go for an interview—no. I don't remember a phone one.

JS I'm interested to know, say, at the time when you came to Westmont, what you would regard as the most significant formative influences for you, intellectually and spiritually both.

CR I think I accepted the Lord when I was five or six; my father led me to Christ. I grew up in Alton, Illinois, near St. Louis. My folks were Christians but the church was so-so—nothing wrong, but nothing outstanding about it. In college I really faced, I think, two things: mainly “Am I going to let the Lord run my life?—and if so, would I consider something like ministry?” It was a very decisive step.

JS This is during your undergraduate years?

CR Yes.

JS And where was that?

CR Haverford College, near Philadelphia. It's a Quaker school. You've probably never heard of it.

JS No, not till now.

CR Well you've probably heard of Bryn Mawr.

JS Yes.

CR Well that's the women's college (next town) and Haverford in my day was a men's college only—both of them Quakers. And Swarthmore was a Quaker co-ed school in the same area.

JS I see.

CR That was very [two inaudible syllables]. Then, of course, I did go to seminary, and there were many helpful things during those years.

JS Have you been speaking all this while primarily about your spiritual formation, or spiritual and intellectual both?

CR You know, we didn't have that formal term *spiritual formation*

JS Right. It's an anachronism, I'm sure.

CR I would say both. Certainly in seminary I would have experienced both, not one or the other—both, no question, in the seminary years.

JS Anything in particular that you recall about the adjustment of beginning your years at Westmont?

CR Yes!—keeping one class ahead of the class. [laughter] Every course was new, and I taught Greek and Bible.

JS Yes, just this morning I've been looking up in the old course schedules your course assignments, and I see that you taught Greek regularly.

CR I taught two sessions of it, 8 o'clock and 2 o'clock.

JS And I see that in the fall and spring both of '48-'49 you taught Bible Doctrine and the Apostolic Age; and I think you're saying that was the first time you'd taught either of those?

CR Yes! Yes. [chuckling] I had no formal teaching experience except for one's Christian service during seminary days. Everything was brand new.

JS And according to the records I have here, in the second year you added Prophetic Scriptures to that, and then in '50 to '52 Romans also. Does that ring a bell?

CR Not at all. I'm not sure that's correct.

JS Oh!

CR It may be, but I don't remember.

JS Well I only checked the class schedules. I can get something more definitive by looking at the grade sheets.

CR Well the Greek and Apostolic Age and Doctrine I do remember, and one summer (or somewhere) I taught second-year Greek; but it was a small class, as I recall. I don't remember Romans, or Prophetic!

JS I've found that most of my life, if it's not written down somewhere, is lost forever.

CR Well you're talking ancient history with me. [laughter]

JS Right! One thing I noticed about 1950-51 and the year following—am I right in thinking that you came in '48 and left in '52?

CR Yes. Strictly speaking, I was on unpaid leave '52 to '53; I was still on the faculty. I went to Edinburgh that year for a Ph.D.

JS That's right, I do remember reading something about that in a *Horizon*.

CR I was strictly on the faculty for another year, but there was no remuneration; so there was no commitment, either, to come back and teach.

JS Right. I have a question about your teaching assignments in '51 and the year following that. I see that you're down for five courses instead of the usual four 3-unit courses, both fall and spring in both years; and there's a handwritten notation to the schedule for the fall of '50 that adds to those courses Greek Reading, and the location is in your office. Now, what I'm interested in knowing is whether that overload had

anything to do with the departure of faculty in protest against the release of Dr. Forrester.

CR I'm sure it did. We all did extra stuff. Now, I do remember Greek Reading. I'm sure it did because, you know, two-thirds of the faculty left—not always of their choice. I was Dean of Men too.

JS That had escaped me somehow.

CR Well it didn't escape me. [laughter]

JS I'm sure!

CR I was Dean of Men for one, maybe two, years; and it was after Forrester left. So it would have been those last two years of my tenure.

JS Right. I believe that you and Professor Seger did just about everything in the Bible department for that first couple of years of Dr. Voskuyl's tenure.

CR Yes. Wasn't Marchant King there too?

JS Not then. The Kings were actually dismissed from the college prior to Dr. Forrester's leaving.

CR Oh, I didn't remember that.

JS Yes, that's quite an unhappy story, actually. I wanted to ask you what you'd like to say for the record about your impressions of Dr. Forrester's presidency and his dismissal.

CR I don't have anything really important to say about his presidency. I'm not dodging your question; it's just kind of a blur. With Voskuyl I have much more very favorable impressions, of him and his presidency. Forrester—I really don't know how to say much about him *as president*. What was the last part of that question?

JS About Dr. Forrester's dismissal. That seems to have been a traumatic time for faculty.

CR Yes. The departure was just constant turmoil. I'm sure you know that the board dismissed him and two-thirds of the faculty told the board they'd have to take him back or they'd resign; the board said: "We accept your resignation"—which threw them all off guard. I was one that did not sign that, and I was one that stayed. But from that point to the end of the year (I don't know when the dismissal occurred; I don't remember) it was constant turmoil because the group that were forced to resign were pressuring the rest of us to join their protest, and they were threatening to spread this all over the newspapers of America. (And I think, frankly, there were maybe a little paragraph or two in the Santa Barbara paper and that was about it.) There were prayer meetings going on. Even if you did nothing you were spotted on a side—you know what I mean—

JS Yes.

CR —along the one side or the other, even if you were trying to be very neutral. It was turmoil, just turmoil. It was just bad.

JS Is it a fair question to ask you why you stayed when so many others were leaving?

CR It's a fair question. I don't know what to say. I recall that I had an inquiry somewhere else; so it wasn't—I don't know for sure whether it would have panned out; but I was just glad to be able to have a chance to teach. I wasn't ready to give it up at all. If I had an inquiry, that's what it was.

JS You mentioned Dr. Voskuyl, and I've heard a number of stories about his arrival at Westmont. There's one that I remember hearing as a rumor, many years ago, and since I started this project I haven't been able to get anybody to confirm it. Do you

happen to know whether it's true that when Dr. Voskuyl arrived here in Santa Barbara, the board hadn't yet told him about the exodus of faculty?

CR Oh, I've never heard that. That would be hard to believe.

JS It is! I'm not going to repeat that without pretty reliable confirmation; but I haven't been able to find anybody who knows anything about that.

CR I don't know about that at all. Did Dr. Monroe say anything?

JS I never got to interview him, and I don't think there's anything about that in Paul Wilt's interview with him. I can go back and check that.

CR I'm sure if anybody knew he would know that, but I can't believe that's true.

JS Any particular impressions of Dr. Voskuyl in the two years that your tenure and his overlapped?

CR Integrity, openness—no fake, no put-on. If I were pressed to say something about Forrester it would be he was a good PR man for himself; but Voskuyl, none of that. He was interested spiritually in things on the campus—not that I had any special place, but his door was always open, and I remember a number of good private conversations with him. Mrs. Voskuyl (I guess soon after they came) had a weekly Bible class in their home which I taught for some time; he was a gentleman and she was a lady.

JS My wife and I really appreciated our acquaintance with them when he came back to work in Development after his time with CASC.

CR They were just a good, solid couple in every way.

JS In light of my particular focus for the work that I'm doing, on what it was like for students to be educated at Westmont, what can you tell me about your departmental

colleagues, in the time you were there? I'm thinking of Professors Page and Cramer and Marchant King, and I think Bronkema for one year, and then Seger for '50 to '52.

CR Well when I arrived, fresh out of school, I was very impressed with the Bible department. Richard Cramer was chairman, I think, and he really took me under his wing and helped me get the courses organized—especially the Apostolic Age, I remember that one—and he was just a great help: helping me to prepare, and answering questions and just keeping in touch. Dr. Page was like a hero to many people, and deservedly so. Marchant King—and Grace King—were so knowledgeable, both of them, biblically knowledgeable. Seger—I don't have a detailed memory, partly because these other people were the ones that I first made contact with. Seger picked up a lot of the load, obviously, after Forrester left. Oh—Dr. Monroe taught some, and he was always a help to me personally. Look, I was young when I went to Westmont.

JS Right—I've seen the pictures. [laughter]

CR I had a few students who were older than I; some of them were veterans.

JS Yes! You got there before the veterans all graduated.

CR Yes. Bronkema I don't remember anything about, frankly. Who else did you mention?

JS You've touched on all of the names that I mentioned.

CR I thought they were very strong in biblical knowledge. I realized that even with a seminary degree I was _____ [?] to get a lot from [them?]. Also a little sideline: you know, we all didn't have separate offices. Let's see: Page, King, myself, Grace King, the philosophy man (whose name I don't remember)—

JS Was it Keith Rees? He taught philosophy at some point.

CR I don't think that's right—we were all in the same office; so you got to know people well. [laughter] And also I remember another time we were all in Dr. Monroe's office, and he by choice would have eight o'clock classes—and not by choice I would have eight o'clock classes because I was knew; often we'd be the only two, at eight o'clock, and he would often say: "Let's pray." He would pray, and he would always say: "Lord, thank you for something to do today." He made an impression in me. I wanted to say: "Lord, I've got too much to do." [laughter]

JS That's gratitude, isn't it!

CR Yes. He was just a great help, personally, and of course to the school, stepping in as he did.

JS Twice, as interim president.

CR That's right.

JS Would this shared office have been somewhere upstairs in Kerrwood?

CR One of them was upstairs, and Dr. Monroe's, I think, was downstairs. The first one, when I first came, I'm pretty sure it was upstairs.

JS I'm interested in what you recall about other of your faculty colleagues. You mentioned Paton Yoder a minute ago. I'm thinking of Arlene Sheeley, perhaps, of faculty in the music department too; there were quite a few people in music.

CR Yes. I remember Miss Sheeley; I don't have any particular incidents to think of. The music department, I think, was very strong: Lundberg, and ...

JS Johnson led the choir when you got there—or maybe John Hubbard.

CR He was the music department chair, I think. Lundberg was a tenor soloist, and I had a lot of contact with quartets because I was available and I traveled with them on a weekend often, including Dave Hubbard. Remember him?

JS Yes!

CR Went to Fuller as president.

JS Right.

CR Dave was a senior when I arrived at Westmont. Of course he was a very intelligent man. We'd come home (can you believe this?) sometimes from Riverside—

JS Oh!

CR —before the freeway system, after a Sunday night service. Dave would usually be the one driving and I'd be awake, and we had some very good conversations on Sunday night.

JS I read something in the *Horizons* about your speaking engagements. Were you generally representing the college officially on those occasions, or otherwise?

CR I would think otherwise. You can't separate them, but I wasn't necessarily being sent out by the college.

JS You mentioned the quartets. Were there ever music faculty that you traveled with, like John Lundberg, perhaps?

CR I don't think so; I don't remember. I think not.

JS I'm not sure that I have all my questions here in a very logical order; but next, perhaps, in importance I did want to hear from you about Lyle Hillegas. I know that you supervised his dissertation on the history of Westmont, and I'm interested to

know if you have anything to say about his student days at Dallas or about your subsequent contact with him or knowledge of his career.

CR I didn't know that I supervised his dissertation.

JS I've seen your signature.

CR I must have done it then! [laughter] [*Note from JWS in transcribing: please pardon my mistake; I noticed later that you were the second reader, not the director.*] What year was that?

JS He came here in '63 to work on that, to do research and writing, and I think probably the date of the dissertation was '64.

CR Oh, OK. I was back at Dallas then. I remember him, I think, more as an undergrad than at seminary. He was one (don't ask me now who the others were) of about four of them that were classmates, and they were kind of a special circle: Hillegas and— who else?— _____[?] DeVries, who went to Moody and then he went to work for Radio Bible Class eventually. (I'm reaching for something while I'm talking to you, to see if I can put my hands on something.) [laughing] But I don't remember supervising his dissertation! It must have been OK if I signed off on it.

JS That was the only historical writing about Westmont that was published even to the campus community until the work that Paul Wilt began to do in the eighties and nineties.

CR Well, I didn't really keep in touch with Lyle after he went to Westmont. I'm still looking—yes! I found it. "March 2nd, 1957." They gave me a pocket-sized New Testament and they wrote a nice inscription on it, and it was signed (there were five

of them) [sp?]: Bud Hart, Lyle Hillegas, Hilton Jarvis, Mickey Park, _____ [?]
DeVries.

JS And you still have that memento.

CR I am looking at the flyleaf right now.

JS I've seen a photo in one of the *Westmont Couriers*, from maybe '52 or '53, of a whole tribe of Westmont grads who had gone to Dallas Seminary, and I'm wondering whether you recall how much your influence had to do with that.

CR Well—hard to say. I do remember one year there were ten men in the graduating class, and I want to say (don't hold me to it) there were nine of them went to seminary. I'm not sure all of them went to Dallas, but that was quite unusual, I think. I don't know how much influence, you know; Cramer was a Dallas Ph.D. I didn't know him till I got to Westmont. Fuller was still kind of new; they started in '47 or '48, I think.

JS Yes, that sounds about right.

CR I don't know how much (quote) “competition” that provided. But a lot did go on; I remember that one year a lot went to seminary. I can't help but have had some influence on them, but I wasn't a scout for Dallas. [laughing]

JS Right. The core of Westmont's aims, of course, since its founding have had to do with being a *Christian* liberal arts college, and I'm trying to pursue both sides of that. So I want to ask you how the faculty conceived the aims of the liberal arts in your time here, and how they pursued those aims or executed them.

CR Yes, I saw that when I went over your questions recently again. I remember that one, and I don't know how to answer it, frankly. I would like to add something, though.

JS Yes.

CR I'm just thinking—the science people were good in those days: Peter Stoner and Bolton Davidheiser. They were both outstanding Christians and outstanding in their fields, and that often (as you probably know better than I do) isn't always the case in a Christian liberal arts situation.

JS Right, and there were times later on when the sciences struggled for lack of better support.

CR I don't know that, but I remember both of those men. I don't know how we pursued it. We just did our thing and students made choices. Everybody had to take some Bible and everybody had to take some liberal arts.

JS I recall (I think I have my dates straight here) that in your third and fourth years at Westmont Bolton Davidheiser was teaching the biology and John Vosbigian was teaching physics and chemistry and some math. Do you remember him?

CR I remember that name. I had not thought about it till right this moment and I don't remember—sorry I'm drawing a blank on him.

JS Oh, it's all right. I'm going to meet him soon, I hope. I had to postpone an interview with him a month ago. He's living down south of LA and I'm still hoping to be able to see him face to face.

CR I don't remember him.

JS When I think of the science people, especially Davidheiser, I think of the conflict (as people understood it then, and lots still do today) between biblical understandings and organic evolution. With that, perhaps, as a particular example (and there could be others in other disciplines) I'm interested in knowing to what extent you think

professors succeeded in offering students a fair hearing, in your time, for any kind of ideas or beliefs that were contrary to their own.

CR I would say there was a good openness. I don't remember anything about evolution/creation coming up, but that may have been because I was preparing courses in Bible [laughter]. I don't remember. Of course Bolton Davidheiser was very creationist—but that man knew the Bible! I still keep some notes he made on the history that's reflected in Daniel 11, detailed notes that he made—just as a hobby. I think there was a healthy openness to conflicting ideas. I do not recall any debates that would not be in order.

JS I'm wondering whether you had any extracurricular functions in student organizations.

CR Dean of Men.

JS [laughing] All right! So as long as you had that office you probably weren't a club sponsor or anything of that sort—or were you?

CR No, my main job—remember Quonset Village?

JS Oh, yes!

CR My main job was to try to keep those men quiet, because the neighbors would call and complain of the noise. I lived—I don't think for the whole time—in kind of an apartment Mr. Reynolds had at the edge of the property.

JS Oh. Maybe in one of the buildings that came to be known as Units 1, 2, and 3?

CR No, I don't think so. This was Reynolds' own home; it was right on the edge of the campus.

JS Oh! OK.

CR This is really ancient history. He a little two-room kind of apartment, and that's where I lived at least the first few years—no, that wasn't the first year. The first year I lived with Mrs. Lesslie. She taught English—

JS Yes, I know that name.

CR —and then I moved closer, to the Reynolds property. But the boys would set off firecrackers—

JS Oh, dear!

CR —and all kinds of stuff; and the neighbors would call me and I'd have to ride herd on them. And some of them you would still know because they've come back for reunions, like John Crew?

JS Yes, I interviewed him last fall, and his wife.

CR And he had a motorcycle. Did you know that? [laughing]

JS I can't remember that part. So are you saying that you lived close enough to be able to keep track of these fellows at night?

CR Well, I don't remember much night duty, but I had it the next morning!

JS Right.

CR One morning I went—I don't know if you want all this stuff.

JS Oh, yes! I'm interested in anything that has to do with campus life.

CR Well one morning I went through the Quonset huts and I removed all the firecrackers.

[laughter] I was Dean of Men then, and one by one the people that lived there would trickle into my office and make hints about what kind of a person would take something from somebody else.

JS Oh, isn't that funny!

CR Yes, it was quite hilarious! That any faculty member would ever do that! [laughter] I think finally I admitted it—well, they knew I had done it. I said: “I’ll give them back to you if you’ll promise not to shoot them off.” [laughter] We really had some good times. I think we had good relations, except the few I had to discipline. But that was tough. We had one case—more than one. I think there were four of them involved; they were caught drinking—

JS Oh, dear!

CR —and this was totally out of line, you know.

JS Right.

CR And I remember the penalty. It was very strict campusing. I told them: “I have to find you either in the dining room or in your class or in your dorm or in the library. If I look for you and you’re not in one of those places, you’re out of here.” And to their credit, they all agreed and kept to it.

JS For what period of time would that have been?

CR My faint memory is it was happening not long before graduation; so it wasn’t a whole semester. I don’t know. I’d be risking a guess; but it was very strict, and the fellows agreed and they did it. My hat off to them.

JS I’ve read and heard a lot about the social atmosphere, generally described as a “family atmosphere” at Westmont in those earlier years, and I’m wondering whether you have any comments or recollections about that.

CR I would say that’s a good characterization of it. Of course, the college was small and people knew each other; faculty knew students and students knew faculty. I would say that’s very good. If you ate at the college you all ate in the same cafeteria.

JS The alums I've heard from are very positive about the social atmosphere generally, and about the spiritual atmosphere. Did you feel basically satisfied with the spiritual atmosphere in the years you were at Westmont.

CR Yes. When you say "generally," yes. You know we all have some things we'd like to see better, but no, I think generally it was positive, and there was a good response in most cases. There was one of those (quote) "revivals" that were going on in Christian schools, where students would get convicted about some of their sins and line up to say something about them. Are you aware of what I'm talking about.

JS Yes, I've heard about one particular chapel, I think, where that happened.

CR Yes, it happened at Wheaton and I don't know where else.

JS Yes, I think it happened here soon after something like that at Wheaton. What's your take on that?

CR Not all that positive, frankly. I just think some of those things are best not said. I think many of them were quite genuine, and helped move them along, but—you want another piece of trivia?

JS Certainly.

CR We lined up for the cafeteria,

JS Yes.

CR If you had a committee meeting, as a student, or something after dinner you could break in the line at the front—and faculty could. I remember one girl who, the day or the night before, had given one of these heart-rending testimonies; and soon after, within a few days, I was standing in line (I had no urgency; I was just in the line) and

she came up to the front of the line and cut in. Some student standing near me said: “I wish she’d gotten reviled about cutting in the line.” [laughter]

JS That’s great!

CR And there was a lot of truth to it.

JS That runs parallel to some things I’ve read in letters to the editors of *Horizons* in the fifties and sixties about other kinds of inconsistency, but Westmont still isn’t the Kingdom of God on earth, altogether.

CR No, I don’t suppose so. That revival—whatever—had good points, but personally I don’t warm up to that thing too much. I warm up to what they’re trying to do, but not the way they’re trying to do it.

JS I wanted to ask you also about the intellectual atmosphere among students when you were here. In the years I’ve been here faculty have complained from time to time about the lack of students’ seriousness about academics. What’s your take on that, in your time?

CR I would say they were serious. I would not have complained about a lack of earnestness about their academic pursuits. They were college-age kids, but no, I don’t have that impression. My impression is they were good, solid, interested—and wanted to do what was right.

JS When you came to Westmont the faculty were still in what I’ve heard some people call a “missionary mode,” willing to make extraordinary sacrifices for the sake of a young institution. If we can bracket out the Forrester affair, apart from that what was faculty morale like when you were here?

CR Yes, if you take out that— [chuckling]

JS I know that takes out an awful big piece.

CR I think there was good harmony in the faculty. You know, if you're in the same office with four other faculty [laughter] you can't _____ [?] the way you want to. You learn from each other, just accidentally and incidentally almost.

JS Did you find that more of an advantage than a disadvantage?

CR Absolutely! Now, looking back on it, absolutely. Even at the time I never thought: "Oh, I've got to have an office to myself." If you wanted to talk to a student privately you'd just walk across the hall to an empty classroom, or in California you'd walk out on the campus.

JS Right. Most days.

CR [inaudible brief remark] There was no lack of venues for privacy. I would say, looking back on it, it was a real help. I think of things I learned from Marchant King, for example, and Kenneth Monroe. They were just great. If we were stuck in separate offices I would have missed all that. I don't think you can institute that now [two inaudible syllables] an office with a window.

JS Right. I'm always impressed again when I'm reminded how, not just fervent, but effectual the missionary emphasis was at Westmont in the early years. I've seen Lotus Campbell's Eastern Baptist master's thesis, which reported on her survey of Westmont alums; she was Robert Campbell's wife—they graduated in '44. She did this—oh, I don't know—in '50, '51, somewhere in there, and got responses I think from about 180 of all the alums of Westmont by that time. She found out that of the respondents a third of them were either active in missionary service or were preparing for it, not to say anything about lots of others involved in other kinds of Christian

ministry. I can't help feeling the contrast between that and the lack of emphasis on social service—the kind of thing that goes back to the beginnings of the Salvation Army—not just at Westmont when I read about it, but when I think back to my own early years. I was growing up in the fifties, and I recall a time when it seems as if, if you got involved in social service in the name of Christ, people would think you'd gone over to the Social Gospel. I can remember hearing at least one pastor speak that way.

My question has to do with the fact that I've been able to find almost nothing, in the forties or early fifties, in the way of student activity except for evangelism—plenty of outlets for that, but do you recall anything in the line of practical social/economic outreach at a time when that wasn't very popular among evangelicals?

CR No, I really don't. I don't even remember—I presume Westmont had a student missionary fellowship?

JS Oh, yes! Yes, that was very active.

CR But I don't remember much about it, frankly. I don't think in those years there were opportunities like there are today for students to do two summer weeks on the mission field.

JS Not until some time later.

CR My first experience on a foreign mission field was one Christmas vacation when I was at Westmont and I went to Mexico; but I don't think students had those opportunities.

JS Not that I'm aware of.

CR I do think Christian Education was a popular major at that time—

JS Yes.

CR —and then (again, painting with a broad brush) regular certification in public education became a major that a lot of them wanted because it provided a job. I've never investigated how that evolved from Christian Ed to regular education.

JS I'm in the middle of working on that, of course. They ran parallel for quite a while.

Were there students who left a particular significant impression on you?

CR From Westmont days?

JS Yes.

CR Oh, boy! You're testing my memory.

JS Oh, I often have a qualm of conscience when I ask a question that I don't think I could answer myself.

CR Well, John Crew's one because he went to medical school in St. Louis University, and my home was twenty miles across the river in Illinois; and I had rare but occasional contacts when he was in St. Louis and I was in Alton, and I've kept in touch with him in the years since. In fact, we'll talk on the phone sporadically; I talked to him probably three weeks ago. John's just been a real credit to Westmont and to the Lord. Who else in those days? (I remember some names, but—) I remember Lyle more from Dallas. Phil Hook. Phil, Margaret, and Paul all went to Westmont.

JS I got to interview Margaret and Paul at Homecoming last October.

CR Yes, in fact, after your first contact I asked Paul if he knew what all this was about.

He said: "Oh, I got an interview when I was out there." But Paul lives here, and Phil's

not far. I keep up with Paul particularly. Oh, boy! I don't know what to tell you. If you'd name some names I could tell you!

JS Well, I'm getting the impression that the class of '50 was particularly notable for people who went on to great things. I won't be able to remember all of those now, but I got to interview Ken Ogden and his wife in Colorado last week. You mentioned Dave Hubbard, but I think he's a little earlier than that.

CR Yes.

JS Howie Stevenson and Bill Beasley in music.

CR Yes, yes. See, I didn't have much contact after with hardly any of those unless they happened to come to Dallas. But yes, I remember Howie well, and Beasley, and Les Howatt. Does that ring a bell?

JS The name does. I don't remember anything in particular about him.

CR So many Westmonters were West Coast people, and in the subsequent years unless I went back to the West Coast for some other reason I would not generally have touch with them.

JS Of course.

CR But I don't remember those names you mentioned. Les Howatt was—he is, I think—a kind of business person up in the Portland area.

JS Ken Richardson was another graduate of 1950. I got to interview him a few months back.

CR I've lost track of him.

JS May I ask whether, in the four years you were actually on campus at Westmont, there was any perceptible trajectory to the college in that time?

CR You mean in what they were doing, going, aiming?

JS Yes. Any obvious direction with respect to any of the things we're concerned about?

CR I don't mean to be facetious—I'm not being—but keeping the college open, financially, was very important, and hard in those days.

JS That was a critical time.

CR Yes, very critical. Mrs. Kerr kept it open, I guess, almost single-handedly.

JS For a long time.

CR But as far as academic or spiritual direction: I don't like the idea that the olden days were the best, but I think in those days we had good balance, and [two inaudible syllables] the upset with Forrester, good stability. Voskuyl did a great job, I think, coming in,

JS Well, he brought the college from the brink in 1950 to accreditation in 1958,

CR Yes, yes.

JS I don't know to what extent you've kept in touch with Westmont College in all those years since you were here, but I'm just wondering what your take is on the subsequent development of Westmont.

CR Oh, I don't have any real contact with it. Occasionally I see somebody like Paul Hook, who sent his kids there, but I don't get any mailings from the college. Don't put me on another list, will you?

JS OK. Right—I understand that request.

CR I would be interested and I would read them, but I'm trying to simplify life, at my age.

JS You have my sympathy in that. I've been trying to do that since I was a young man.

CR Oh, you got a head start on me. [laughter]

JS I read Thoreau as an undergraduate and I've never been the same since, in that respect.

CR I don't have anything I would think or take or presume or guess—it would be just that, a guess.

JS What other questions should I be asking you about your time at Westmont?

CR Did I enjoy it? Yes. Did I learn a lot? Yes. How do I look back on those years? As very personally profitable.

JS I'm sure glad to hear that.

CR And why do you say that, may I ask?

JS Well, because it's happened often enough in my interviewing that either faculty who are no longer with us, or students, didn't have a real happy experience at Westmont.

CR We've taken up the one problem, the unhappy one.

JS Oh—yes, and I sure can't leave that out in trying to account for the informal education of students at Westmont. I asked Ed Potts whether there was anything, indirectly even, educative about the history of Dr. Forrester's presidency—especially his dismissal. He said: "Oh, yes!" He was very quick to respond in that general way to the question. I can't remember what he said in particular.

CR I remember Ed Potts. I'll tell you something—

JS OK.

CR —and I learned about that—two things: the board is the final authority; and second, usually the institution survives and the rebels don't.

JS Mmm! I can think of a few particular cases of that in the college's subsequent history—of your latter point, yes.

CR Yes. Well we don't think that, to make a revolution [? not fully audible]. It's the institution will survive. It may change, it may not go the direction you want, but it's going to survive.

JS Mm-hmm. I've found, at least in quite a few cases of alumni who aren't happy looking back on Westmont, they also tend not to be happy about where the college is now; and I don't think it's cynical or unfair to say that it's usually because the college hasn't taken the direction that their own lives and thinking have taken.

CR Yes, that would be expected. That's not unusual, that they measure it all by themselves.

JS It figures.

CR But I'm not dodging your question.

JS No, I understand.

CR I don't know enough. The only generation that I really know much is the Hook boys that graduated maybe five years ago or something, and they don't talk about the college particularly. I think they felt they had a good education.

JS What can you tell me about how you decided when to leave Westmont?

CR Well, I took a trip to the Holy Land in '49 with a very pro-Israeli group, and the state was only a year old.

JS Right.

CR It was not a religious group at all. I don't know how I got hooked up with them, but I went; and on the way back I stopped in Edinburgh, I think, or in England. Anyway, that's when I learned about Edinburgh—the University, and I thought for me to do a non-seminary doctor's degree (you know what I mean—

JS Yes.

CR —a more secular one), I'm not a philosopher and I wasn't interested in philosophy, and I'm not a particular linguist and I didn't want to get into a Th.D. in Greek or Hebrew from Dropsie or somewhere like that. And I think I stopped in, but I'm not even sure, but I heard about Edinburgh, that you could do a Ph.D. more or less in history, church history or people or movements, and that they were not anti-evangelical necessarily (they weren't evangelical). I got to thinking about that: "That might be a place I could really feel it was worth the investment in time and energy and money." Then I think another piece of the puzzle was "If you're ever going to do it, do it!" That's probably the reason I left when I did; but, as I said, I was strictly on a leave of absence that first year away, and I'm not sorry. I think Edinburgh was just good for me; I learned a *lot*, and professors were liberal in the right sense of the word. You know what I mean?

JS Yes.

CR My major advisor told me one time: "I'm just an old-style theological liberal, but I wouldn't change your views for anything."

JS Now that's liberal thinking, isn't it!

CR It really is. They accepted that. Are you acquainted with New Testament Greek at all?

JS No. I recognize Greek roots and that sort of thing, and I learned the alphabet once, but beyond that, no.

CR Well, the United Bible Society's editors of that New Testament, one of them was my advisor—the one that said that to me, and he was just a great help—and I could get a subject that wasn't raising red flags, nor compromising my beliefs. But to answer

your question: I found a place that I thought would be worth it, and I realized the time to do it is as quick as you can.

JS Right. Were you able to complete that program in one year?

CR No, but in two. It's a British-style dissertation degree.

JS Yes, research degree. I've got here in a *Horizon* article an indication that after that one-year leave of absence, '52 to '53,