Jerol Garrison: Wayne, the aim of these interviews is to shed light on what kind of

newspaper the *Arkansas Gazette* was. We want to talk about the

quality of the paper and the people who worked there at the

Gazette.

Please describe when you worked for the *Gazette* and what your

duties were and your title.

Wayne Bolick: I came to work there in 1953. I had finished an apprenticeship at a

job printing plant. I didn't know that much about newspaper work

but I came there because that's where the work was. And I found it

pretty exciting. I had to learn a lot of new things. I knew how to

print right, but I had to learn to do it faster in there, because

everything was faster, faster, faster. At first when I worked there I

worked as a floor man, where I stood up and put together ads, and

things like that. Floor men also put together the paper, physically,

the news and the ads together. But I didn't work on that part until

later. At first I worked as a floor man, basically putting together

ads. I wanted to work on the Linotype machines, but about the

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only way to get on a Linotype machine was for somebody to give you a chance to get on there and do it. It was hard to learn. The keyboard had ninety keys on it, with separate keys for caps and lower case, and different fingering for cap letters and lower case letters. It'd almost drive you crazy to learn the touch system on it. But the other guys had done it. So I grabbed a little time whenever I could. I'd had a little time as an apprentice, but very little. And I got a hold of a practice keyboard, which was actually a keyboard off a Linotype machine, which made it feel just as it would on a machine. They had a distinctive feel, not like typewriters at all. Each key had a small weight counter balance to give, a spring-loaded feel. I practiced on that and I got to the point where I couldn't really do any better. Because on the practice keyboard you never really knew if you were hitting the right letter or not. It was just keys. Then you had to find somebody to trust you to let you run this complicated, expensive machine, to see what you were doing. I gradually worked enough time to where they would use me extra. I finally got to the point to where I had to quit the floor side to go to the machine side. So I actually, in effect, quit my job to go to the other side. I didn't quit the *Gazette* composing room, but I quit the priority list on the same side of the floor and went to the machine side, all in the composing room. The pay was the

same. This was only a change of work class and seniority.

JG: What year was that?

WB: Oh, gosh, it must have been about '56, something like that.

JG: So about 1956 you became a Linotype operator.

WB: Yes. Then I worked at that for years, on what they called "the line." They had the
        ad wing, where you sit and set type for ads — slower, more cumbersome, it took a
        lot of know-how. But it wasn't as grueling as working on the line. Anyway, I
        went to work on the line. And the line was, well, they expected you, in those
        days, to set 1,800 lines of type a day. That means a two-inch, column-wide line, I
        guess, eight words, or so. That was a lot of type, a lot of type.

JG: This was on the advertising line?

WB: No, no. This was on the news line. And you had to stay after it, I mean, you had
        to stay hard after it to set 1,800. I told the boss one time when I first got over
        there, and I was slower, and he said you had to set 1,800 lines to hold a job over
        there, and I wasn't doing it; I said, "There's not a man over there setting 1,800
        lines." He said, "Maybe not, but they can do it if I tell them to." Anyway, they
        needed help on the line badly enough that he let me stay, because I was
        improving. And I guess he could have fired me back to the floor side. But I
        stayed on and improved, and greatly improved. I got to be one of the better guys,
        if I say so myself. I took on some of the harder tasks. I took on stock markets and
        tabular work and baseball boxes, which were difficult to typeset, *very* difficult to
        typeset, because you didn't just run to the end of the line and go. You had little

short lines and abbreviations.

JG: You had to know where to put the space bars, didn't you, in order to make the columns come out even?

WB: That was something that nobody seemed to understand who didn't work back there. In each line on a Linotype, you had any number — you had to have at least one, but the more the better — of what they call "space bands." Now, a space band was a variable space. They dropped in. At the end of every line you had to make a decision, "do I have enough in this line?" so the right number of space bands were there to justify the line. If you didn't, you'd have a hell of a mess. You'd have a "squirt," or various other problems. You'd have metal everywhere, causing delay and a lot of problems. It was just something you had to learn to do. It was a judgment call on every line, to know whether you had enough space bands or not. But if you had four space bands, you were pretty safe. That would take care of almost a quarter inch. But then you had to divide the words. No computer divisions.

JG: You had to know where to put the hyphen?

WB: You had to know where to put the hyphen. I bought a little book, 20,000 words, I'll never forget. All it had was hyphenations. I read that thing through about three times. I spelled well, but it wasn't until then I realized that a lot of words that spelled the same divided differently if they were a verb or an adjective or a noun. Like project, pro*ject*. Produce, *pro*duce — things like that. You had to define what part of speech it was before you knew how to divide it. But it got to

be a game to outwit the proofreader. I never will forget one time, well, I got pretty good at it — win a game, not win a game — and one old proofreader there, just the finest fellow in the world, he was always trying to catch me on one. So I came across a word — the first time I'd ever seen it in my life — it was "homogeneously." And I divided it like "homogenized" [laughs]. Anyway, I mis-divided it and Jimmy Newsom marked it on me. And when he marked it, he told the people in the proofroom, "Bolick will be in here in a few minutes," to look it up — that's where the big dictionary was. And sure enough, there I was and everybody got a laugh out of that. That was good. But he said, "Well, you'll never divide it wrong again." I said, "No, I never would." And I never forgot it, I'll tell you, and I guess it's been about forty years.

JG: Well, setting the material on the Linotype was actually just doing the same thing that the reporters had already done.

WB: Absolutely.

JG: You had to take what they had written and you had to more or less just write it on the Linotype.

WB: That's right, absolutely. So, I learned a lot.

We used to set syndicated copy: "Dr. VanDellen," "Better Speech," "Ann Landers," everything but the crossword puzzle. We had to get a plate on that because we didn't have those little symbols and things. We used to call that "canned stuff." The copy would come out, but they always had to edit it, because they wanted it to be the *Gazette* style. No matter who wrote it, where or when, it

had to go through the copy desk. The copy editors would have to put our style on everything.

JG: So it came already printed.

WB: It came already printed, yes. Then they'd go through and mark it. They'd get rid of all the split verbs and split infinitives, and so on. Yesterday in the *Democrat-Gazette* I noticed about four split infinitives, and I thought, "Boy it used to be the copy editors wouldn't let that go by for a minute." I guess times have changed. Anyway, no split verbs, no split infinitives. They fixed all that. They'd change all the spelling, they'd mark it right on the copy. Then they'd glue a piece of newsprint on the top and write a headline for it.

JG: How long did you operate the Linotype machine?

WB: Oh, I guess twenty years, but not all those years doing that part. I did that about ten years. Then, I moved on up to setting headlines.

JG: There was still a lot of fill you had to do?

WB: It was still Linotype, but I would set the headlines and then route the copy. I'd put it on a little "hook" for people to set several pieces at a time, folded down and spiked. They'd grab a "take" from the hook — they couldn't see what was on there, they couldn't pick their copy. When they took it off — some of it was more difficult than others — they had it, and it could slow them down.

JG: They took their chances.

WB: They took their chances. In fact, in the old days, guys used to take the more difficult work, like tabular work, stuff like that — this was before my time — they

told me they used to trade it and pay the other guys to take the hard stuff. But I ate tabular work up. I liked it. It was kind of a mathematical thing. You just had to count backwards. Every time you'd put a figure in you'd have to decide how many digits it was and then add how many spaces and thins and quads and ems and ens were needed to make it equal whatever the width of your column was in figures you'd just have to count backwards. It was pretty easy. It was like making change.

JG: But it only got easy after lots of practice.

WB: That's right, that's right.

JG: When did you move off the Linotype machine and become the composing room foreman?

WB: Well, to be exact, I wasn't the composing room foreman. They were very particular about their titles back there. The composing room foreman was *the* powerful man in the composing room. He did all the hiring and firing and everything. And he had assistants. I was an assistant. I was, I guess, what you would call assistant number two. The foreman was required to start working daytime, because so much of the production planning was done in the daytime. He didn't want to go to work daytime but he went to work daytime. And they had to have a foreman seven nights a week. I had been assistant, so I became night foreman two nights a week, the other man, five. Gradually, I got to be five nights.

JG: When was that, in the '60s? '70s?

WB: Oh, yes. I think the first time I worked as an assistant foreman in charge one night

was in '72, something like that. Then I just gradually gained a little ground as people retired and left. But the thing that helped me the most back there was that I always felt like the composing room foreman; the foremen ahead of me always looked at the newsroom as a kind of necessary evil that heaped copy on them too late and made their deadlines hard to make, and it was true. It was true. Copy did lump up toward the deadline, and you sure in hell couldn't make your deadlines if they lumped up on you. But I seemed to have been a little more sympathetic to them, and helpful, I think. I made a lot of friends in the newsroom at the expense of some friends in the back shop, but I got along okay.

JG: You were working always with metal type, metal slugs.

WB: Yes.

JG: Each slug, in the width of a column, was, I don't know, about an eighth of an inch thick on one end and . . .

WB: Well, various sizes. On headline type on Linotype we set up, I think, for thirty-six point, which is a little bigger than a half inch. That was slow and cumbersome, but you had to do it. Then, along in there we got a machine called a Ludlow, which was a handset machine, where you had letters and a case, just like a type case of lead, but they were brass. You put them in a little stick, locked them up, put them in the machine, put the handle down, and it would go "pitchoo," and cast lead on there. It would cast your big type for you — great for headlines. It was actually much faster than a Linotype machine because it was simpler. They converted all the big headlines to that, because they had had bigger headlines in

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just loose type–giant headlines, they'd just be loose letters. When I came there they had the Ludlows. They were using them for ads, then they started using them for news more and more, and it just got better and better. So we didn't have to set any big headlines on the Linotype. Most of the time I worked the headline machine, and most type we set was thirty-four point, thirty point, twenty-four point, eighteen point, fourteen point, twelve point, then it went to the body size. Body size was various sizes. When I first went there, I think it was seven, then it went to eight, then it went back to seven-and-a-half point.

JG: That refers to the point size or . . .

WB: Point size, yes . . .

JG: Or how high it is.

WB: Yes, I think seven point type — I can't remember, it had to do with how wide the slug was on it and how much white space there was between the type. I think they figured seven or eight lines to the inch. The little type, for the markets and such, five and a half points, was fourteen lines to the inch. It was called "agate." It took a lot of typesetting to make a column of that.

JG: In the later years of the Linotype, I believe that they had machines that punched information into perforated yellow tape, and somebody fed that tape into the Linotype machine.

WB: Yes. That was called TTS: teletypesetter. They used a yellow tape, which was just yellow bond paper. As people would punch — we called them "punchers" — they were actually typesetters, but the typesetters didn't like to call them

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typesetters, so I'd call them punchers. They'd have a typewriter-type keyboard, with a few more pieces of information on the keyboard, and they'd punch, punch, punch, crossways across the one-inch wide paper. They'd punch a combination of, I think, three holes above and three holes below and a feeder hole down the middle. It was just like a little perforated line, but it was actually a little feeder hole for a little cog to feed it through. And every time they'd punch a letter it would move one step. They would punch a series of side-to-side lines. If you were *really* good, like a telegrapher, or someone like that who had learned his trade, you could read that tape, by combinations of six holes.

JG: Like reading braille, only holes . . .

WB: Yes. All I ever learned to read was enough to re-feed that into the Linotype machine, if I had to, because I didn't punch it. I didn't have to read it. But if I went to put it on the machine and had a mess-up over there, I knew "elevate." "Elevate" was where it came to the end of the line and it told that thing [the Linotype] to go up, just like when you're sending a line away after you've set a line of type. If it messed up, that's where it messed up the Linotype machine. Elevating was a tricky thing that was better done by hand than by machine, because if it went up a little crooked, it would go "bam, bam," and everything would go to hell, and you'd lose the line, have to do it all over again, and pick up all the mess.

JG: Did one person feed that tape into three Linotype machines?

WB: Well, three would've been better, but most of the better guys ran four or five. It

was a good thing, but it wasn't the answer. The idea was to get more production

out of the Linotype machine, which was costly, very costly. I guess it worked,

because the machine never got a drink of water, or went to the toilet, or anything,

you know. It just buzzed away.

JG: When you went to computer operation, I think it was 1973, the Linotypes, then,

were phased out, weren't they?

WB: Gradually, yes, gradually. Back to the paper-fed machines, where that really was

your biggest, biggest advantage was that you got information in, from the

Associated Press, the United Press, Reuters, and various others, directly on tape.

Those things would just sit there and grind — jump, jump, jump, jump, jump —

and there's a letter, every time. It didn't sound like much, but you look around at

fourteen feet of that stuff on the floor, and you could take that stuff, feed it

directly into the Linotype machine, and we didn't have to set the stock market any

more. The stock market: we increased our coverage of the stock market to page

after page after page, and all of it came in on tape. That saved a lot of controversy

there between those who didn't want to do it. And they finally reached an

agreement that if stuff was keyboarded once, it didn't need to be keyboarded

again. So, if an AP man put his story in, they could move it, subject to *his* bosses

approval. In other words, you could take that tape, and you could feed it in, but

locally, it wouldn't be our style. So we had a lot of problems there. We used to

just let it print out, and then they'd mark it and we'd reset it. But then we

gradually got to where we could go through and set it and then change minor

things, or compromise on it. But basically, the style wasn't as strict later on,

especially on sports topics and stuff like that.

JG: When did you go to computers and making up the paper with just computers?

WB: Well, it was such a gradual thing. The first thing we got was a little ol' machine

that enabled you to take the paper tape and run it into the Linotype to set baseball

boxes and things like that. And we thought that was really something. It would

run ten lines a minute. Boy, we thought that was the hottest thing going. Later

on, it would put it out in phototype that ran twenty-five lines per minute. And

then, in about a year, they came out with one that would go fifty lines a minute.

Then, they got faster and faster. The first ones worked with concentric wheels of

typefaces, with numbers and things on them, and circles around that. And that

wheel would whir, and a little lens would move up and down, catching the

different rows, and a strobe light would come on at a very precise moment and

strobe through a particular letter, in a particular size that it needed, and flash it

through to a piece of paper that was later developed, and that was a box score, or

the markets, or whatever. It was very good stuff. But it just got better and better

from there. So the first thing we started doing was that type stuff, and then we

. . .

JG: So you had a page proof, then, and you just picked the box scores . . .

WB: Yes, we made up some big grid sheets that we had printed up to the size we

needed. They had pinholes on the side, little quarter-inch pinholes, just like

notebook holes. You'd put it in there, and all the way down the line you'd work

on those pinholes to keep everything in register. It had blue lines on it. And we'd "wax" it. And after the wax you'd just put it down and mash and it would stay in place pretty good. If you wanted it to stay real good, you had a little tool, a little burnishing tool. A lot of people used a roller. That wasn't too good. But you took a smooth little "bone," as they called it, and you'd just generate a little heat on that wax and it would stick down good. You could always pull it up and move it if you had to. It was a lot of eyeball, you know. Get it straight, get it straight, keep it clean, blue lines. And on the pages where we made up the news, we had the column rules printed in. Blue wouldn't photograph, but what would photograph would be what we'd paste on there. We had column rules printed on there in black, so you didn't have to deal with that. So you'd just stay within the column rules, and eyeball it, and hope you got it straight. We could use all of these various inputs. We could use the paper tape that they'd punch to come out in "cold type," as they called it. It would come out as paper you could paste down. They called that "paste-up."

JG: It was not on glossy paper, was it?

WB: Well, no, it was just good contrasting paper. It was paper of a nature that the wax wouldn't show through. It had enough coating on it to stand waxed paper without showing through. They used to have a lot of errors along the way, mysterious errors, sometimes, and they couldn't figure out what it was. The paper tape that they were using would get a little oily in places occasionally. They used a photocell in those days, to shine through to make the connection, and the

photocell would shine through the oily places, where it wasn't supposed to. But

prior to the photocell — talk about the paper tape feeding the Linotypes — they

actually had little fingers, little metal fingers that would come out and feel if the

hole was there. If the hole was there, the little finger went through the hole. If

there wasn't a hole there, it would stay back. That's how delicate it was. The

paper would hold the little lever back, and that would tell you which letter to fall.

It was all electronic. Of course, by then, the handwriting was on the wall. The

Linotype was ready to be gone. They just gradually went out. I think the last

thing we put on cold type was classified ads. The reason we did is that you'd get

classified ads all day long. They were all on separate sheets of paper, believe it or

not, for every ad. The Linotype operator would take them and go to set them, and

put them in classification numerical order, and then set them that way. But every

time he'd set a galley of them — he had a different set of numbers each time — so

when the guy would go to put the ads together, he'd take all classifications, fifty-

five or fifty-six, I think. Everytime he'd work a galley, he'd have to combine

them all, all the fifty-fives together, and all the fifty-eights together, and all the

sixty-threes together. It was a continuing job. It got to the point that when he got

to the end, he couldn't make up the paper, the classifieds, until he got all of them.

If you didn't, you'd have a galley here, and you'd have number 822, or something,

on the end. Or 600, the numbers were lower in those days. The bigger the paper

got, the more complicated the classifieds got. Two guys couldn't really do it,

because one of them would sort them for him, but then he had to wrap them in.

And when you wrap them in, you had to put your high numbers first. And you never really knew how many pages of classifieds you were going to have until you got through. It was very much of a problem for planning the paper, planning the press run. You didn't know how many pages there was.

JG: Well when were classifieds converted from hot type?

WB: Oh, I can't remember exactly, but . . .

JG: Probably around 1980?

WB: Yes, it was probably '81 or '82, something like that. But I'll say this, Hugh Patterson was always very good at trying to give us the very best to work with. He never hesitated to give us the *best* stuff. He may have hesitated, but it didn't seem like it. We were always at the forefront in getting new things to do better. When we went to cold type for classified ads, at first, this thing would integrate them. When they would set the classified ads in the classified ad room, they would go into the computer and *it* would store them in their proper order. It would take about twenty minutes for them to close the classifieds at, say, 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon. And it would take about twenty minutes to reconcile their classifieds, to generate them. They would generate all of them in one long run, starting with the high number first and working backwards. So we'd get the high number and we'd start what we called "backing them in." We'd just wax those things. They would come out in *long* runs. We'd trim them out narrow. It was very hard to trim those things. You had a little machine that would trim both sides at once, and you had to be real careful not to cut into the ads. They'd wax

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those things and stick them down and cut them off. You had already prepared the page with your display ad. The display ads were done in cold type, in a different department. You'd put those multiple column classified displays around the bottom and you'd hope they would fall on the page where the rest of them were in that category. You'd hope the car ads would fit with the display car ads. Sometimes it took a little planning and moving. But, basically, you knew how many classifieds you had. It would tell you that you had twenty-two pages, or eighteen pages, or six pages on Monday, maybe twenty-six on Sunday. You'd start backing those things in and it was pretty interesting. It was always, "How many pages did the classifieds make?" But it got better and better.

Then later on, they got to where it was really super. The first thing they did this way was the markets. They got the markets in a similar manner and they programed this thing to take the markets — and you could put the parameters at the bottom, so you'd know what display ads you were going to run on the market page — then you could tell this page to start making up the classifieds. And it would make up the classifieds, full page width. The most amazing thing is that it knew what the top line was going to be in every column. It would make it up top to bottom. In other words, it was wrapping those things electronically, knowing where to break and go back. They'd come out in one long sheet and there would be a place that said "put Balch Motors here," and "put so-and-so here." You'd just stick it all on a grid sheet and you were gone. It really saved time. They did that on the markets first then they did classifieds the same way. That was

completely cold type operation.

JG: You still had to stick each column down, didn't you?

WB: Well, no, when you got a page, you had your grid sheet there, with the blue lines

on it, and the column rules on it, and you'd just cover them up. This thing would

come out in one wide sheet, about fourteen inches wide, on photographic paper

with the type on it. It would just go down gradually, and not too slowly, either. In

about a minute you'd have the whole page out. It would have the page number on

it and everything. All you had to do was wax that big sheet of paper, register it in

on the grid sheet, and then put your classified displays on top of it, which was a

very minor problem most of the time, compared to making it all up.

It was super, super. And the beautiful part about it, two people could do it, or

three people could do it, because all you had to do was look at the page numbers

when you got through. It was a great time saver. They never could have put out

those big classified sections without it. And they could also move their deadline

closer to the end of the day, too. They didn't have to close out at 1:00, or 2:00, to

get everything done. As they got more modern, they could go up to 6:00 at night

and still make them up by 9:00, in time to go to press.

JG: Let's talk about the deadlines, now, for the news department. The first edition, as

I recall, came off the press at 10:20 at night?

WB: Well, they changed from time to time. When I first went to work there — this is

an interesting part — the *Gazette* city edition, the final edition, had four stars on

it. But we didn't have but three editions. Everybody said "why?" Well, when I

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first went to work there, on Sundays, actually Saturday nights, we came out with an edition where our deadline was 8:00. We wanted to be on the street before 10:00. And they had a bulldog edition. They wanted to catch the people coming out of the theaters, and the people on the street, going out to breakfast, and things like that. That was a one star edition. Then, what later on became the first edition had two stars. The second edition had three stars, and the final edition had four stars. When they did away with the bulldog, which only ran two or three years, well, they couldn't sell the three star as the final edition. It had to have four stars on it. So they had two stars, three stars, and four stars for the three editions. The deadline in the composing room, for many, many years was 9:45. That meant the deadline for the news.

JG: What if there was a big explosion, or a big fire, or something like that? They had to get that story to you by 9:45?

WB: Yes. But basically, the way it was supposed to work, the hotter the news, the later it was supposed to be. You were supposed to work this stuff without lumps coming through, and that was always the big argument between the composing room and the news room. Everybody with a story wanted theirs to be last, because they wanted to get the latest material in the story, which was quite a problem. But if you had a long story, and it was coming up near deadline, the thing to do was to keep it in short takes. You'd have, say, "guv 1, guv 2, guv 3, and so on. And you'd work a lot of it backwards, because you could do a lot of your story before the end. If you're working on something like the legislature, and

they were still in session, you could top it at the end with what you were leading

with. Your hot stuff ought to be your last stuff to go in there. It was very difficult

to do it that way. But if you had short items, you'd just try to get them out as early

as you could so that you wouldn't lump up the end and get in the way of the actual

deadlines. Usually your page one stuff, and page one B, which we used to call the

"high page," was the stuff that had to come out last. Then you'd actually work

from back to front. When you got your last one, you'd start going in. Sometimes

you could put your lead in, but, basically, you couldn't put your lead in until you

got all of it set. You had to have your lead to start putting it in, but you could

keep adding on to it. But the part they wanted first was always the hottest part,

and always the latest results, and so on. They could start out and feed them to you

and then we'd try to set it as fast as they'd come out. They'd get their beginning

— they'd send out the first piece, second piece, third piece, and we'd put them all

together. We'd slug each little thing with a Linotype slug that said, say, "guv,"

"guv 4," "guv 5," and soon as they'd come up, they'd take them to the other side

where they'd put them in the page, and they'd just slap all that type in there. They

did the same thing when they got cold type, except it was all collated in the news

room. When it came out it was usually one long story. But, basically, they'd

come out in pretty long pieces. We'd just wax it and put it down. But you never

knew where you were going to be until you got all of the story. So, whoever was

doing make-up, the printer and the person from the newsroom, had to get there to

make it fit. If you allowed a certain space for a story and it ran too long, you

might just have to chop the tail end of it off.

JG: Who would make the decision on what part of the story to leave out to make it fit?

WB: The make-up editor.

JG: They would be some one from the newsroom.

WB: That's right. There was a make-up editor down there all the time.

JG: They would be the news editor, right?

WB: Yes. The news editor would have someone down there to get everything started.
        Then on the very last stuff to move, which was usually the hottest stuff, the most
        important news, for both local and national — usually the latest to come in —
        they'd get there and they'd have to make it fit. Of course, hopefully, they had read
        all these things. I never will forget, one of the old editors always said, "Just cut it
        from the bottom." I think it was A. R. Nelson who said that, or it was attributed
        to him. He said, "If it was written right, you can cut it from the bottom." Of
        course, you could revise it for the next edition, and most often they did.

JG: Who did you deal with in the newsroom during those years you were the night
        foreman? Did you come out a lot to talk to the news editor?

WB: Yes, yes. I dealt with Bob Douglas a lot, and Bill Rutherford, and Carrick
        Patterson. I dealt mostly with them. Many times I'd come out to expedite
        something because I didn't want to wait on the copy boy, or something else. I was
        young and full of energy and sometimes I felt that I could expedite something by
        just going out and asking, can we do this, can we do that? Or something would be
        getting out of hand, and so forth. I had a good relationship with Bob and Bill and

all the other news people. I used to work with one guy who was always off on

deadlines, always off on deadlines. He would work the late edition. He'd revise.

I'd try to tell him about the deadlines and he'd say, "Well, you know, I can't make

the news." I said, "Well, I can't make the deadline if you can't make the news."

But there just came a point where you had to say, "I can't take any more copy." If

something was half done, we'd just have to be late, because we *had* to take the

rest of the copy.

JG: You mean if it was a major story?

WB: Yes. And quite often we were late. But, hey, if I was late, I had a sheet there that

had everything on it: the copy moved at 10:02, "guv 1," or "guv 2," or something,

moved at 10:02. That meant that's when I got it. And it took me X number of

minutes, like ten minutes to get beyond there to a plate. But we really had it

streamlined, even in the metal days, when we were up on the second floor. We'd

get the last piece of type across the dump to make-up, and put in the page, and

lock it up. From that point to the street, with a curved, metal, lead plate, was

about ten minutes. Pretty damn good. In other words, you could almost set your

clock by it. They have an assembly line back there in the plate-making

department, they'd roll that plate back there, and roll the mat, put it in the dryer,

then they'd put it in a thing and pour the hot lead on it, then shoot it up, one guy

would shave this, one guy would shave that, slap it on a press, turn that press on,

and they were gone. It was pretty quick starting up the old metal plates. But

when it got to offset printing, the start-up was a little more complicated. You

have to get your ink and water regulated. The paper starts out black. It takes

about four or five hundred papers to get started. You have a lot of waste in there.

JG: When was the conversion to offset? 1980, something like that?

WB: Well, we converted, I'd say, about '82. We had some steps in between. We had

some plastic plates that we made. They were raised letter plates that we glued on

the press. And we had some other intermediate steps. It's hard to say the dates.

We didn't change over to offset until we got in that new building.

JG: In the east end of Little Rock?

WB: Yes, east end. When they built that, they really went offset. That must have been

'87, or '88, somewhere around there. Of course, that was the only way you could

do it, because you couldn't convert a letter press to offset, without major expense

and major downtime — I'd say, six months. Then you'd have just a half-breed

press, so to speak. The offset presses that the *Democrat-Gazette* is printed on

today were the *Gazette*'s presses. Getting ready for the move to the new plant . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Beginning of Tape 1, Side 2]

WB: . . . we went through some gradual changes to kind of prepare for doing cold type

by making some intermediate-type plates that were made out of plastic. We used

them on the letterpress plates. But we made them up to that point the same way

you would if you were going to an offset plate. So we were ready to go to offset

whenever they got the press going at the new plant. Eventually that whole area,

where the old press was — after it was moved out — was made into a nice plate-

making area. And we would ship the plates down to Sherman Street, to the

pressroom. We'd have a truck that would just go back and forth. When you'd get

a handful, he'd carry a handful, and they'd put them on down there. That's the

way it was. Then, when the offset press started running full time, that was a

drastic learning experience for all the pressmen, because they were letterpress

printers and they had to learn to run an offset press. I'm sure it was just as drastic

for them as it was for the composing room people. But they got along very well.

It was a complex machine, but the most modern, and everything worked out very

well, with tremendous production and tremendous quality. They're doing a super

job even today, on the same presses, so they were state-of-the-art then and still

are, I suppose.

JG: You mentioned that the first edition had a deadline of approximately 10:20. Now,

the second edition, what was the deadline for that?

WB: Oh, seems to me it was about midnight. Then the third edition, the city edition,

was about 1:15. These were composing room deadlines that we had to turn the

paper over to the platemaker. I'm sure that the newsroom deadline was fifteen or

twenty minutes ahead of us. But, there again, we wanted to get all the box scores

and things in the second edition. So many of the baseball games were still in

progress during the first edition. Then, when they started having baseball games

on the west coast, we'd always sweat the baseball games from the west coast

because a large percentage of them weren't over by the time we'd have our city

edition. So we couldn't run the boxes. You could just run a lead. It was kind of

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embarrassing to come out in the morning paper and say, well, the game wasn't

over at press time. But that's what you had to deal with for the west coast games.

JG: Now, in figuring out what news stories you needed, and when to cut off for each

edition, you would be working with the news editor and the sports copy editor?

WB: Yes. They'd usually run things out from their departments until they got up to a

certain point. At a certain point they'd figure that the rest would flow, and they'd

go to the composing room to engineer what they'd created out front, and to make

sure that we got everything that was coming. The editor would stand there and

say, "Okay, go with this, and go with that." Basically, we would just wrap the

type in as we got it. But you still had to do it in order, I mean, if you had ten takes

on something, and you didn't have the third take, once you put in the second take

you had to wait until you got it. You could leave a certain hole there for it, but

you'd have to make it fit.

JG: Do you remember some big incident that occurred some night in getting the paper

out? Was there some big problem where the news just didn't arrive in the

composing room and you were tearing your hair out wondering how you were

going to get the paper out?

WB: I remember when Frank Broyles stepped down as coach at the University of

Arkansas, we had the story and nobody else did. We didn't want anybody else to

get it until it had come out in the first edition. So we stalled the paper a little bit,

intentionally, so that it would miss the 10:30 ending of sports on TV. Of course,

the TV stations weren't watching us, but the Associated Press and everybody else

was in there waiting on our first edition. Usually it would come up about 10:15 or something like that. If we were going good it would come up at 10:10, sometimes 10:05. I remember one guy, who shall remain nameless, he was standing waiting for the paper, he said, "What the hell's holding up the paper?" I said, "Oh, I don't know," but we wouldn't let him go anywhere except where he waited for the paper. When it came up and he saw that paper, oh boy. It was about 10:32 or 10:33 when it came up, and the TV stations had already gone to network, so they couldn't get it out locally. And the *Democrat* couldn't get it then either, because they didn't have it. They knew something was up but they didn't have it. But, anyway, Orville Henry had the story about Broyles.

JG: A major coup.

WB: Oh yes, a major coup. I remember that one of the guys from the Associated Press was trying to get the story and he kept trying to get a hold of Broyles that night. Later on he told me, "I just finally called up and asked, 'Am I going to get to talk to him tonight? Just tell me, yes or no.' They said, 'No.'" So they had to wait until the next day to talk to Broyles. Orville had scooped them on that. I remember another thing that was kind of interesting, it was, oh, back in the hot type days. It took a lot longer to put together a big story with hot type, I mean, it was just physically a lot of trouble to make plates, and make the half-tones, and then make another plate from that half-tone, and it was just physically lot of work to do. You had to have a lot of people setting the story and putting it together, just to produce the type, if nothing else. I remember Dwight Eisenhower

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was about to die. I said we better get this story together. This was a long time before he died, but he had had a heart attack, or something, and they felt that he was going. While he was in serious condition, they started getting the story together. I remember we got about two or three pages of type. We actually made up the "back when" pages of Eisenhower. We made up all these pages about Eisenhower, everything up to his death, except "He died at . . ." We got all that ready and nothing happened. So we just took those pages and we put them in a frame. We had them ready to make a plate. We had a big thing we used to call a "slide" where it was page stories. You'd slide that in there, and we kept those pages for years and years, I forget how many. Finally, at one time, we said, "Well, we might as well throw this stuff away, because it's too dated." And they said, "No, no! That stuff is good, and it would be more trouble to revise and do again." By then, they had more modern ways of doing everything, so we finally threw them away. But we kept Eisenhower's background stuff for his obituary, in type, in *page* form, for years and years and years.

JG: He lingered. He didn't die . . .

WB: He didn't die then at all. It must have been ten, twelve years later that he died. But he did have a heart attack and they thought he was going to die.

I remember another time we had a fire there. That was back, oh, in the 50s. We lost our power. We thought we were never going to get the paper out. We finally did that night. But the basement was full of water, and everything. We didn't have any electricity, because of all the water. And we were going to have to set

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some type. We took young and strong people, like myself, and took a Linotype

magazine that had the mats for our typeface in it and walked over to what was

Democrat Printing and Lithographing, over there on Second Street, up on the

second floor. They had, oh, I guess, eight or ten Linotypes up there. They did a

lot of book publishing and stuff. We put our magazines on there, and we set type,

and actually physically carried galleys of type from Democrat Printing and

Lithographing back over to the *Gazette* composing room. It was about two

blocks. Then, with flashlights, we put together type so that when they did get

power we could make plates and go to press. We made the city edition that night.

And I thought that was a miraculous thing.

JG: What year would that have been?

WB: Gee, I don't know, it must have been about '55, '56, something along there,

because I remember that it was still daylight, enough light, I guess maybe 6:00 at

night, or something, but it was still daylight. I remember coming out of the

building and there was a TV cameraman there, back when they had the old film

camera that they wound up, or something or other. And I was walking out of that

building carrying that magazine and saw the TV photographer. He said, "Hey

buddy, I 've got to wind up, so would you walk back in and come out again?"

[laughs] That magazine must have weighed seventy-five pounds, but I walked

back in and put on my best straight face and walked out, just the best little actor

you ever saw, carrying that — the building wasn't smoking exactly, but I always

joked that I walked back into a smoking building for a TV photographer. But then

I walked back out and I just walked around the corner. I was on TV, carrying a magazine over to Democrat Printing and Lithographing. I always thought it was awfully good of DP&L to let us set type over there. Of course, we had a lot of type already set, it wasn't the whole paper. When it happened we had all the canned stuff already in type, and all the feature stuff was already up, so we just had to top it off and say "we had a fire but here it is."

JG: You printed some extra copies of the city edition . . .

WB: Well, everything was city edition, I mean, your first edition when it went out, it was city edition, everything was final edition that night. It was late. But in the old days you could be late without as much problem as you had later on. As the paper got bigger you had more and more state circulation and you just couldn't get a paper to Fayetteville if you didn't start pretty early. And out in those rural areas, if you didn't get a paper to, say, Russellville early enough for route people get it out to the homes before they had to come back to go to another job, well, they'd just leave it sitting on the street. So the bigger the paper got, the more complicated it got to be late. And the truck driving people, it caused more problems for them.

JG: The first edition went to the far corners of the state?

WB: Yes, basically. We used to have maps. We'd know what areas were where

JG: The second edition was sent to places maybe fifty or seventy-five miles out?

WB: Yes. In the early days we used to really gear the paper to those editions, I mean, you'd have a lot of the same stuff, but you'd have news pertaining only to those

areas — the obituaries in particular. You had people out there who would do obituaries and send them to you. That was their job. Then you'd make up obituaries for the first edition. You'd have the first obits — the most prominent obits were about people in the first edition area — and then you'd get copy back later on for the second edition obits. And you'd make up the page completely differently for the second, and completely different for the third edition. In the first edition they'd put the obits for the state deaths, and they'd list them. Then in a smaller section they'd have line obituaries that would just say "Little Rock deaths . . ." Later on in the second edition they'd say "Arkansas deaths . . ." Arkansas deaths were those deaths out of the first edition area and they became obits in the second edition. By the city edition you had "Arkansas deaths" and then you had your city obituaries that were bigger, and the "Arkansas deaths" were just little line deaths, "so-and-so, age 93, Jonesboro," or something like that. It was a complete remake every edition on the obituary page. Complete remake on the sports section, every edition.

JG: Did you ever get into an argument with any of the editors over what was going to happen to a particular article?

WB: No, no, never did. I didn't figure it was my place, although I can remember what did happen to my boss one time. He saw a story come through, somebody called to his attention that in the Letters to the Editor, they were calling a major, national politician an S.O.B. And it came out in the paper as a quote from this guy. Somebody thought it was funny and called his attention to it, this was before I was

in charge of that area, I was an assistant in that area, and it came to the attention of the boss who was pretty much a tyrant himself, and he told one of the editors, "You don't want to put this stuff in here." He said, "Well, yes I do." He said, "You better call somebody." So the editor called his boss who said, "Yeah, let it go." So my boss called Mr. Heiskell and said, "I want to read you something that's maybe going to appear in your paper in the morning."

JG: Your boss went around the editor?

WB: Yes, he did. He stopped it.

JG: Mr. Heiskell actually stopped it?

WB: Yes, he actually stopped it. I remember the editor, one of the more intelligent heads said, "That's just the way it is. Fight it and you lose. He owns the paper. He doesn't want that word in his paper." It wasn't who he was calling it, he just didn't want that language in his paper. He was very specific about what he wanted in the paper.

JG: Did the letter get in a later edition, or did it just never get in?

WB: No.

JG: So Mr. Heiskell agreed with the composing room foreman that that letter did not need to go in the paper because of a particular word that was used.

WB: Yes. "Son-of-a-bitch" was the word. So-and-so was a son-of-a-bitch.

JG: So the letter got deleted just because of that language?

WB: Yes. This letter to the editor was calling — I can't remember who it was — but whoever it was, he didn't object to him calling him that, but he didn't want it

quoted in his paper. There were a lot of things he didn't like. He didn't like, well, you couldn't call a stone a rock.

JG: Mr. Heiskell?

WB: Yes, that's right. You couldn't say it was a rock. Pebble, boulder, stone, okay, but you couldn't call it a rock. I remember you couldn't use "spurned," unless it was talking about a lover who was spurned. You couldn't say "spurned." And you couldn't say "an electric wire was carrying so many volts of electricity." He wrote a letter back one time, posted where we could see it, saying, "That power line was no more carrying volts of electricity than a water pipe" — let's see, how did he say it? Anyway, you couldn't say it was "carrying" electricity. I remember one of the editors, a funny guy, he said, "This has come up again. What do you think we ought to say?" To make everybody happy, I said, "Why don't you just say that the wire was electrified?" So it came out "electrified" and everybody was happy. It was about a wire that had fallen down over a car and a guy was trying to rescue somebody from being electrocuted. There were just a lot of words like that they didn't like.

JG: Do you remember any other incidents like this "son-of-a-bitch" incident?

WB: No. I really don't. I'm sure there might have been some.

JG: Did you ever call Mr. Heiskell yourself?

WB: No, never.

JG: Did you ever argue or try to make a point with one of the editors about something that was scheduled to go in the paper that you didn't think was appropriate?

WB: No, no.

JG: You just took the editors' word for it.

WB: I probably agreed with the editors. My sympathies were with the editors. I got

        criticized for that. One time my boss told one of the other bosses, "Wayne's too

        friendly with those guys in the newsroom." I guess I was. But anyway I liked

        them and they liked me. We got along fine. I tried to take care of their interests

        as best I could. I thought it was my job, and we got along well.

JG: Well you certainly spent a lot of time in the newsroom conferring with the editors.

        I remember seeing you there myself.

WB: Well, I was in and out in the days when I was running the headline machine back

        there and routing the copy. If a headline was too long — the editors always

        wanted to make the headlines too long — it was very difficult to write the

        headline and get it full. Say what you wanted to say, without making it too long.

        And on a metal base, if it was just a *hair* too long, it wouldn't go. And it was

        wrecked. The story was at a dead standstill in those days until that was taken care

        of. So, if you were going by a certain pattern of getting this page out then that

        page out, this story would hold up until it would go back, the headline would be

        rewritten, and we'd hope *it* would fit. I remember one headline in particular, it

        always used to come out — I was surprised it ever got past the news editor — but

        in our thirty-four point headline type, they'd always want to say "minimum

        wage." "Minimum wage" would not go.

JG: In one column?

WB: That's right. It had to say "minimum pay." And I knew they'd always change it

to that, so I used to go ahead and set the headline that way and hold it. Then I'd

go out there with two or three headlines and say "I need these to be returned." I

wouldn't want to wait for the copy boy. He might be gone to get sandwiches, or

something. I'd just say, "Well I'm held up until I clear this." You'd have to

change the machine over from one typeface to another, so I just wanted to

expedite it. It would take two or three minutes to change the machine over to a

different typeface and go back and forth. It was a lot of extra effort if you did all

of them separately. I'd have them in little groups. I'd go out there and say, "This

won't go," and they'd change it. Most of the time I was out there I was trying to

get headlines re-written. Later on we got a deal where we could, instead of

putting a piece of newsprint on top, we'd put a little snap-out form, a little two-

part carbon copy, and they'd glue that on there. Then when I'd get it, I could go

ahead and spike it and get it started. I'd set the headline from the carbon copy. If

it didn't fit, I'd send the carbon copy back, you see. The story could keep on

going. I could keep putting in the type, and so forth.

JG: This is where the headline is pasted to a story?

WB: That's right, that's right. You didn't want to hold it for long. We'd use a snap-

out form. We'd snap out and put one piece of paper with the type so that when

the guy would come back up to match the headline with the type, he'd see that

little piece of paper there and know that wasn't necessarily going to match, but

that was the carbon copy of the other one, and they'd change it. That way it

worked pretty good. That was a major hurdle, getting those snap-out forms to

keep the copy flowing. You had to keep it flowing, that was the thing.

JG: So you had the original of that snap-out form that went with the story and the

carbon went to the Linotype operator or the Ludlow operator?

WB: That's right. Then they'd play around with that. While they took fifteen or

twenty minutes to get this other type set, they could be working with that headline

and changing it two or three times if they wanted to.

JG: Did you ever see Mr. Heiskell come into the composing room?

WB: Yes.

JG: When would this be, at night? Did you ever see him at night?

WB: No, not really at night much. Of course, he was getting pretty old when I came

there. But, he used to come down every day and he'd check into the higher things.

He'd look into the letters going into the paper and just see what was going on.

JG: Did he come back to the composing room?

WB: Yes, he'd come back to the composing room. He'd talk to the boss back there.

He didn't talk to me much, just a nice "hello." He was real friendly with my boss.

JG: He would sometimes read the letters to the editor that had already been set in

type?

WB: He'd read them off galley proofs and things like that.

JG: Did he ever read the editorials that were going in the paper off the galley proofs?

WB: Oh, I'm sure he read them before they came out to be put in galley proofs. That

was one of his main things, I think. That was basically what he did. That was one

of his main interests. I don't really know what he did, but that's what I was told

he did. I remember they had a typewriter in his office that was big enough for him

to read — it was like what they used at conventions to make name tags and things,

a typewriter with quarter-inch letters — and he used it to type memos on that

typewriter back there.

JG: In the composing room?

WB: No, no. In his office. He had the typewriter up there.

JG: Did some of those memos make their way into the composing room?

WB: Oh yes. We'd get memos.

JG: Did you ever see Mr. Heiskell come into the office, say, after 5:00?

WB: I never did. I was always a little busy at that time of day. I'm sure I've seen him

in there. As he was leaving for the day he'd come in and visit with my boss and

visit with the editors, and so forth. But basically he didn't have a lot to say in the

composing room except to the boss.

JG: Did Mr. Hugh Patterson ever come into the composing room?

WB: Quite often.

JG: Quite often?

WB: Yes.

JG: During the day or night?

WB: Oh, both.

JG: What was he looking at?

WB: Well, I couldn't say, specifically. But I'm sure that if something was going on, like elections and things like that, he'd just be there to see what was happening. He'd come back and forth. All the election parties were close by, at the Marion Hotel and other places. And all of the upper bigwigs and editors would be in and out.

JG: What would they be looking at?

WB: I don't really know, just what was going on, what was happening.

JG: Did they look at galley proofs?

WB: No, not really. They seldom looked at galley proofs.

JG: They were looking at reporters' copy?

WB: I'm sure they were looking at wire copy and things like that, you know, to see what was happening — who won what.

JG: Did you ever have dealings with Mr. Heiskell or Mr. Hugh Patterson?

WB: I had dealings with Mr. Patterson, but practically none with Mr. Heiskell.

JG: What would you have dealt with Mr. Patterson about? Do you remember something in particular?

WB: Oh, sometimes it was deadlines, sometimes it was disagreements between the composing room and the newsroom. The only thing I can remember specifically is about deadlines.

JG: Now, you were a member of the International Typographical Union, weren't you?

WB: For many years, yes.

JG: When did you leave the union?

WB: Well, when I went to work there, in '53, everybody in the composing room was in the Printers' Union [International Typographical Union]. Next, plate-making department in the Stereotypers' Union. The next department was the Pressmen's Union. And the next department was the Mailers' Union. They all just flowed one right after the other. Each one had its own contract and jurisdiction, and so forth. In the composing room, you couldn't touch any type. Editors used to use a pencil to point to type. The minute an editor touched any type back there, some of the old stalwarts would say, "You can't do that!" Boy, they'd complain. The boss would tell the editor, "Don't do that. You'll disrupt things." I remember specifically, one editor used to use his pencil all the time. It was great [laughs].

JG: He would touch the type with his pencil?

WB: It was a friendly thing. But even if you were one of the bosses in the composing room, they wanted you to be a member of the union, because occasionally you'd want to touch the type, you know, to expedite something. So all the workers in the composing room were members of ITU. In fact, I draw a pension from ITU, which is CWA now. I draw pension from there, minor as it is.

JG: Communication Workers of America?

WB: Yes. It's a minor thing, but the old Printers' Union had a strong hold for years and years. But as the technology changed the Printers' Union began to lose strength because of the newer ways. The electronic stuff was more complicated to begin with, but when it worked it was so fast and good that it saved a lot of labor. I can remember when we changed over to cold type, one of the things that they

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were very proud of at the *Gazette* was that they didn't put anybody out of work. Just through attrition and re-training we changed that whole mess over. And over a period of years we had a lot less paperwork in there, because we just didn't need that many people. The main thing involved the typesetting. The copy came in already set. The editors would call the AP copy up on a computer screen electronically, edit it, send it to the composing room in the *Gazette* style, and we'd put it right in the paper.

JG: It was the same with the reporters' copy?

WB: Oh, the reporters did the same thing.

JG: On the computer screen.

WB: Sure. As the reporters got on to cold type, they'd input it, it would go over to the rims, the editors would put the style in it, pass it over to the news editors, the editor would look it over, okay it, and send it to composing. It took a lot less labor to produce.

JG: It knocked out all the typesetting, didn't it?

WB: Yes, it did. Most of it. A lot of editors wouldn't set their own type — old dog new tricks. They'd type it up, bring it down, and we'd set it. I never will forget that. I always thought, "I'm surprised at that," but I can remember some people, boy, they cussed those new electronic keyboards. I remember one of the funniest things — of course, we'd been used to electronic keyboards for a long time — but they would *beat* on those computer keys, because those old typewriters were heavy. But the new electric ones, you just had to touch them. A different world.

JG: When you talk about electronic keyboards are you talking about the electronic

        keyboards on a computer?

WB: Yes, as opposed to the mechanical keyboards on a typewriter. They were so

        difficult. It took a lot of muscle to do a lot of heavy typing. I remember Robert

        Shaw — he was working in the sports department, and he's at AP today, I think

        — boy, he could hang that phone on his shoulder and he could type as fast as

        anybody could talk. He had muscles in his arms like nobody's business. He

        could just burn a typewriter down. I was always amazed at how fast he could

        type.

        I retired in 1991. I was sixty-two. I'd been there almost thirty-eight years. I had

        done almost every job in the composing room and enjoyed doing them all and

        enjoyed learning the new things. I liked my job and I enjoyed my years there. I

        liked nearly everyone I worked with, with few exceptions. And I enjoyed working

        with the people in the newsroom very much. I made a lot of close friends, lifelong

        friends. I always thought we put out a good paper. I always thought we went to

        great expense to put out a good paper and have it right. I was very much in

        sympathy with the newsroom trying to do that, trying to do the best and get it the

        way they wanted it. I was real proud of the *Gazette*, real proud of it. I was proud

        to work there.

JG: When you went to work at the *Gazette*, your boss there was . . .

WB: Ernest Dodd. E. D. Dodd.

JG: He was the composing room foreman.

WB: Yes.

JG: You later became night foreman under him, is that right?

WB: Yes. I was called "night composing room foreman." Basically, an assistant

        foreman is what I was. I just happened to be foreman when the paper went out at

        night.

JG: Is that the same job you had in 1991.

WB: Yes.

JG: Now, that last few years you were under the Gannett Co., weren't you?

WB: Yes, and that was a lot different from, well, Gannett didn't hesitate to buy the

        best, spend the most, whatever. But you always had a string of people coming

        through that you never saw before and would probably never see again. They'd

        look at balance sheets and flow sheets and things, and tell you how to do it.

        They'd tell you what you need, how many people you need, how many deadlines

        to meet, and so forth, but, hey, they learned it from textbooks. But I got along

        pretty good.

JG: You retired actually before the paper closed.

WB: Yes, I did, six months before it closed. I'm actually retired from Gannett.

JG: Did you know at the time that the paper might close?

WB: No. It was the farthest thing from my mind and many others.

JG: You just decided it was time to retire.

WB: Well, I was just getting kind of tired of working that hard. I was getting older and

        I didn't have the energy I had before. There were a lot of new people there who

would come and go. I just felt it was time to go.

JG: Let me go back just a little bit to the period when there was probably more news flowing through the newsroom than any other time, I'm talking about the 1957 Central High School crisis. Did you notice that the *Gazette* was very busy back then?

WB: Oh yes. I remember a lot of things about those days. I can remember a lot of dissatisfaction among some of the people who worked there, and what was going on. I remember we used to park our cars west of Broadway, various places up there where we could park without meters or time limits. We'd park up there and walk down and go to work at 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon. We'd have to leave and go up there at the wee hours of the night sometimes, and I can remember that we were fearful of going to our cars during some of those days when everything was hot and heavy. We had a lot of threats.

JG: You mean that there were members of the public that had feelings of animosity toward *Gazette* employees?

WB: Yes, you bet.

JG: How long did that last?

WB: Oh, not long. I'd say three, four, or five months.

JG: The *Gazette* lost a lot of circulation, didn't it, for its stand on the Central High School Crisis?

WB: Oh yes. That's right. They suffered a lot.

JG: But they gradually built the circulation back.

WB: Yes. I thought the *Gazette* was very courageous in those days. And I thought the *Democrat* wasn't. I thought the *Democrat* took full advantage of the situation to gain more circulation. As far as I'm concerned, the *Gazette* was right. And I was glad to be a part of it.

JG: Did you generally agree with the *Gazette's* editorial policy?

WB: Mm, generally — I'd say ninety-nine percent of the time. There were a few individual editors I didn't agree with, occasionally. But it wasn't on race. The only thing I ever disagreed with them on was, well, they'd get to harping sometimes, later on, about gun control, and I was a target shooter. I felt that a couple of them went overboard about nobody ever having a gun. I disagreed with them on that. I'm not a gun nut, and we probably do need some control on guns, but I wasn't for giving up my pistols. I've got them locked in a safe today. I kind of collected them for a while, and I used to target shoot. I'd like to sell them, but I don't know what to do with them.

JG: Generally speaking, then, your career was a pleasant experience at the *Arkansas Gazette*.

WB: Yes. I enjoyed my time there. I made a lot of wonderful friends and I have a lot of great memories, a lot of great memories.

JG: Thank you very much, Wayne.

[End of Interview]