

Interview with Eugene Whitehouse
Marquette, MI
August 27, 2008

Subject: NMU in the 1960s and Professor Andrei Lobanov-Rostovsky

START OF INTERVIEW

MAGNAGHI, RUSSELL M. (RMM): Interview with Eugene Whitehouse, Professor of history emeritus in Marquette, Michigan August 27, 2008. Okay Gene, we've done this before, a while back, and what I'd like to do today is to focus on Professor Andrei Lobanov-Rostovsky, who was kind of a famous historian, but was ignored when he taught at Northern for a number of years. What I'm trying to do is reconstruct who this man was and what he did when he was here, and I think part of the time you were here during his heyday.

WHITEHOUSE, EUGENE A. (EAW): Okay. Actually, when I was thinking about it, I felt I could tell you sort of what he was like as much as anything.

RMM: Before you do that, you had known him for...?

EAW: Yeah, actually I am going to spend much of my time before he gets here, because as I remember I could say more about that period. When I first met him I was a graduate student down at the University of Michigan majoring in history. I first met him, as I recall, when I took his course in the summer: Russia and Asia.

RMM: What year was that?

EAW: Uh, somewhere... '56, '57, something like that. Probably at least '57 would be my guess. Afterwards, I kept applying for money through the department. Their system was that you didn't get anything until you'd been around for a while. So about my third year of the four years I was there, they gave me the opportunity to help grade papers. Lobanov gave essay exams, rather lengthy ones, to fairly popular classes, but he still wanted to grade his essays; no multiple choice for him. And so, actually, he graded some exams, I graded some, and then another youngster graduate student graded the rest of them. I did these things working with him, and I got to, in effect, take a second class with him, because this class that I grading in was Russia since 1815, and I had not taken that course. So what I did was, rather than taking notes, it turned out that Dick Sonderegger, who was at Michigan and then came up to teach here at Northern, had taken notes. He kept them, and they were very good notes, and so what I did was, sit in class and follow Sandy's (?) notes to see what they were rather than taking them myself. I may have added a little bit, but mostly his lecture notes were good enough for me to learn what the course is all about, so then I could grade all the students. Finally, for a while he was on my dissertation committee, where I had half a dozen of five people from history and one from political science, so he was one of the secondary history figures. He eventually got off of it when he retired from the University of Michigan, but those are the ways I had contact with him. This gave me a fairly good picture of the way he operated.

He was very popular instructor. Russia and Asia took probably 25-30 people but the Russia since 1815, ____ the University of Michigan, but still the class was packed. You had, I think, about 285 students in there, and every seat was filled. As a matter of fact, there were stories about people who wanted to get into this course and knowing it was difficult, that sometimes they would come in, and they'd not be registered – I think it was before pre-registration, what have you. The story was that sometimes knowing the class before had not too many students in it they would come and sit in that class so they would have a seat and wait for him. Of course they would sit around and chat amongst themselves and the professor teaching that course would get upset. Part of the reason why they wanted to be in there was that they had this feeling that Lobanov had something of an accent – he's still quite fluent in English. But they had the feeling that you had to be down front to be able to understand him. I thought that was a myth because, when the place was packed, the only way I could sit and hear what was happening in the course was to pull a chair out – grab a chair from another room and sit out in the corridor, at least, for the start of the semester, by the open door, and I was able to follow it reasonably well. Another rumor was that there had been at least one case of a fistfight between two people who wanted the same seat down front, and even, the story went, true or not, that someone pulled a knife and stabbed a guy. Not seriously, but _____. I can't guarantee this, but the story went around at least it was one of those. It may not be true, but people tend to believe that it could be true.

So he had these very popular people here at Michigan, very popular people here at Michigan. And he was someone who was very consistent in what he said, because "Sande" had taken the course a couple of years before I was getting ready to do grading, and the lectures were identical; that is, you could do it. As a matter of fact, Lobanov is a great joke teller, and at least more than once I'd come along in Sande's notes, it'd say, "Funny joke in here." He wouldn't put the joke down, and sure enough there would be a joke and I suppose it was the same one. Somewhere along the line I have a memory of, perhaps that he and I had had a little conference or something and we were walking off to class together, but he was getting ready to lecture. He never took any notes with him, and what he did was, just before the lecture, go in and grab the book and I imagine what he was doing was checking on a date or a name or something like that, just where he had it right. But on that he was going strictly by memory, and the memory was so solid that it hardly varied from year to year he was teaching the course. And, later on, when he came up to Northern, then I happened to mention casually that I typed up my notes after I had taught a course for a while. He was rather startled. He didn't understand why I would want to do that. Well, it kept me from talking too much, you know, it kept me on the point.

RMM: Now you're saying your own notes?

EAW: I typed my own notes, yeah. This was when we were at Northern, teaching together, and he was kind of...

RMM: ____?

EAW: You can do it that way. He didn't criticize; he was not a person who was terribly critical. His tasks were exceedingly straightforward; as a matter of fact, in that summer, it was kind of intriguing. I took two courses back to back, and it turned out they had mid-terms on the same day. And so, I went from the one course I had, which was European History since 1815, that was Europe or something... It was 19th century Europe, which could've been 19th century intellectual history, because you've got this big fat book of readings; _____, Burke, and all these famous people, and they're politically oriented. But still, it was heavy into the readings. So this professor had for the test, draw up a debate between two or more of the characters that we've had so far, discussing events of the early nineteenth century. So I

chose two people, I even had them arguing, fighting about it in one hour – you know, debate is supposedly bringing out how the various ideas they had and whether you thought they would agree or disagree. As soon as I finished that (that was an hour) I dashed upstairs with my other trusty blue book and took Lobanov's test. This test was, discuss the steppe land from Attila the Hun to Batou the Mongol, which is roughly from 400 to 1200. Interesting enough, perhaps, I got exactly the same grade in both courses; A-, to be honest about it. Incidentally, I may have helped grade the Russia and Asia course, too. My memory fades a little on that, but at least I looked – I was grading those courses, and so then I went back to my test that I take on that summer thing, then I went back and graded that one, and it seems right; A- was about what I deserved. His tests tended to be, to some extent like they were very straightforward; he would start talking about anything that happened that you could think of that was halfway worthwhile in those, about a thousand years.

RMM: On the steppe?

EAW: Yeah, in the steppe lands. They're not impossible questions, but you went to it. A lot of people went to ____ Europe, of course, complains that we don't have time. So he said, "Okay, tell you what. The next test, I will give three questions, and instead of having usually two additional history [and] take them all," he said, "take just one." And so I was grading those and what happened, the students, which started off too early, you know, caught a lot of background material he didn't really need, then they get into the middle portion which is what he really wanted, and then they keep on going through the rest of the stuff, so the result was, that they wrote just about as much meaningful things, relevant materials, as they did beforehand. On top of that, here you have him giving this bonus as the class, of course, was over two, almost three hundred students. There were at least a dozen students who missed the class, they all came down and he pointed to me, "You take care of 'em, Whitehouse." I said, "Okay, we'll give the test but you'll have to give me an explanation of why you've missed the class." I got all sorts of reasons: some of them were exceedingly candid, female problems were mentioned once or twice, for example, car broke down. There was absolutely no reason why anyone wanted to miss it unless they hadn't got a ride, they had a hangover, and didn't get a ride to study, or something. And so he said, or I say, "Okay, now give me your schedules." I worked out a time when I could get all of them together at one time, and he gave me the question and the question, "Oh, some people were leaving after five or ten minutes." I say, "Boy, they really did well on that quickly." No, no, no, no. I don't think he was malicious about it, he just chose a test that about a third of the people didn't have a clue as to what he was asking about. He worked it out so they weren't penalized. And then on top of it, with this grading scheme, Michigan had a system in which all finals were three hours. And, you had 72 hours from the start of the test until you had to have grades in for the semester. So, with this Europe since 1815 the three of us were working – I think we got the grades in about three minutes before the deadline, I don't know what the penalty would have been for not doing it – there probably would've been phone calls saying get 'em in, won't you, and, at least that's what it is at Northern, but still. This is, by the way, in the summer, in the spring semester, and Ann Arbor varies at that time of year but this was hot and muggy, and so we were working long hours to get all that stuff done, and again he was just asking these very lengthy questions, where, you know, you're stuck, blah writing, finally holding onward to the very end. The courses were quite interesting material. I wouldn't call him terribly profound or interpretive. He was fairly old-fashioned, narrative history with the events. However, he presented it in a way so that it was reasonably interesting, and then he threw in these various anecdotes. Usually the jokes were not made-up jokes, but they were humorous things, sometimes taken strictly from history, and sometimes later on, from his own personal experiences and enough so that they were very popular. As a matter of fact I recall, just before spring break, in Ann Arbor you had a lot of students coming from all over the country, New York particularly, I think. And, as a result, when a vacation – because he didn't have me

take roll (he could have, if you had a big seating chart, and everyone was supposed to sit there) – I took roll myself in the Kaye Auditorium, all right, assistants take roll. It could've been done, but we didn't bother, so attendance was essentially an honor system. But what would happen then, because people lived at a distance and often I suppose with rides, or simply they wanted to get there [and] not spend all their time traveling and have half a day at home, they started leaving early. So the last day or two of class – class was supposed to be held, there were a lot of students missing, so one student said, "Professor Lobanov, given the fact that you are – the class is, you notice, kind of small – instead of just lecturing, why don't you just tell stories?" And he did, he told stories for the whole hour and everybody sat there and enjoyed it. Most of the stories I don't remember, I must admit. I do remember, too, he never made himself the hero in the stories. There was one that, I'll probably miss some crucial detail, but, during World War I, he was a young lieutenant. My guess is that he was probably 21 when the war started, that would be my estimate, and I won't tell you why on that one. But he's in there, he is a lieutenant, and they're fighting this time against the Austrians, and many of the people in the Austrian empire, which may have been non-Germanic – Russ, you know the different things – and some of them were not terribly enthused about fighting for the dual monarchy. So one time, he came up to a situation and he saw a whole bunch of enemy soldiers, and a whole bunch there, and he was just himself, just one or two others with him, maybe a sergeant or something like that, and he said, "Wow, this is kind of dangerous," and so he saw from the hilltop down there in this little valley. They realize these people are all disarmed and there's some Cossack riding around, maybe a couple of them, riding around in a circle, so they're just keeping them in order. They'd all surrendered to this one guy. So Lobanov says "Oh, that's good!" He comes riding in very proudly, and he says, "Okay, let's take 'em on in." And so he leads his whole crew into the, wherever they were keeping the prisoners, making it very clear this was not a terribly heroic act. They'd been pretty nervous before. He says, "Oh, okay, ____." That was about what you'd expect. The other story I remember was out of a different one. This was in between the two revolutions of 1917. The Kerensky government, the liberals were in charge, and they brought in some public relations character to lecture the people, lecture the troops. And as he's lecturing away in sort of a dull drone and saying what we intend to do, we're going to carry on the war, and all this sort of thing, the noise outside in the streets had people look, and there's demonstrations for the Bolsheviks. He noticed that people were getting bored with that and some kept drifting away, so the only people who were left in the room were a few of the officers like himself and the sergeants – everybody else had finally left to join, or at least observe, if not join, the demonstrations. And I think the point was that the support of the liberal government was fading, the Bolsheviks were growing – of course this was, I assume it was in one of the big cities. He had a whole fund of these types of stories that went back into the earlier history which he stored in his fabulous memory, and I think he told stories for that entire hour that time _____. People were very happy to hear where he was – as worthwhile as the lecture would have been, I wouldn't say that, but that was what he was good at. Physically, you would think perhaps as Russian aristocracy – he was a prince and, as you know, [in] the aristocracy, unlike the English, all the children were aristocrats, whereas in England it's only the older one who inherits the title, which creates a problem with all these English people changing names every so often. But, he actually was a fairly short, slender guy, thinning hair, _____, light hair, looked like a clerk or a bureaucrat, smoked heavily so he often had a cigarette in his fingers – not in class, but outside, held in what I would consider the European fashion or something. A different way of holding it between his fingers, kind of nicely where _____ but you would kind of notice it and he would hold it, you know, somewhat differently than anybody else would and _____ Americans. Well he never coughed as far as I can recall, and he was pretty much low-key, he was polite, I don't recall ever seeing him really angry. And when he graded, he flunked some people. Sometimes he would look over some of the tests that we had graded. Some that I gave D's to he flunked, and some he raised, mostly he left what I had. But I noticed all three of us had different ways of grading where he graded taking as a whole – the holistic view, you might say, whereas

I sort of halfway did that but I also had my little checklist. This other kid, who was a little less advanced than I in how far he'd gotten along, as far as I could tell he had nothing but the checklist – bing bing bing bing, so he could set a whole bunch of things but you didn't really know what they were, if you'd get a good grade out of it. Whereas Loban, you got a sort of feel for him, but somehow managed to get through. And people could come around and pass to get their grades changed, and he would listen to them, although I think there was somebody, I don't know if this was in my class, somebody came in and brought a test paper and it was pretty obvious that the paper was worth a lot more than the given. And there were some notes on it, and something like that, but it was pretty clearly a forgery. Guy had taken a blue book with a different answer in it, put in a few comments on, and said "No, I at least deserve an A, not the C- I got." But they nailed him on that because it was a clumsy job.

RMM: He actually wrote the correction?

EAW: Yeah, he wrote a better answer because we were there with –

RMM: Yeah. But then he went and forged some –

EAW: I think he put, as I recall something about an orange pencil on that or something like that that nobody else was using. But he wrote some comments down, and – "No, no. The answer is over here, you didn't see where you put the comments," you know, in case you do that, don't forget – you didn't mention this is what I do. It was pretty bad. Finally after this was done, and then the grading, next semester I was a graduate assistant and didn't work with him anymore. But by that time I had started working on my dissertation and for the dissertation you needed a committee – there's a main person in charge, and then there's four from history or some secondary readers and someone in this case from political science. He was the other one. I don't know if he was around long enough to do anything much on it – I remember, it was the summer. By this time I had a job here at Northern Michigan, and I went in to talk to him about my dissertation. I had an interesting conversation, I thought – he made one thing personal, and he said, "Well, I'll have to be replaced on your committee because, since I'm 65, I am forced to retire." At that time we did have a particular date. And a little while later he looked at his watch and said, "Oh, I'll have to call this quits now. My wife is in a hospital with her baby." She had just delivered a baby and he was going to visit her. Obviously at 65 he was still fertile. This was his second wife. His first wife I guess had died. I don't think he was divorced. He married this woman who actually – he said it goes – what you think of is men and women, because the impression you had when they were separate was that she was much bigger than he was. She was a solidly built woman, and when they were together then she was about the same height – she might have been a little bit huskier than he was. But she was a lot younger. I forget how they met or what her background was. For a while they seemed very happy together. Eventually, I heard, after he'd come to Northern, then left Northern, the marriage broke up. ____ for a while this very charming lady.

RMM: So then there's offspring.

EAW: That was by the first wife. Oh yeah, there was – I'm sorry, I don't know anything about the child, but I think her name was Mary. The wife's name was Mary.

RMM: Yeah. But the child he had at 65 -

EAW: That's right. Now it hadn't occurred to me. Never knew much about it; kept his private life separate. So then he came up to Northern. As you say, perhaps he'd been up as a visiting professor in

the summer and knew something about Northern. I'd forgotten that aspect of it. So, again I'm guessing, that he perhaps said, "Well, I'm retired, but if you people don't have a retirement age I'd like to continue to teach." So he came up, and interestingly, or ironically, whichever, he was rather less popular at Northern than he was at Michigan. My guess is that, particularly in those days, Northern students were still somewhat parochial, and they were less tolerant of an accent. His accent was less than some of the people we've hired since, of which I haven't heard too much fuss about. But they did criticize him. I don't know if you know there are a couple booklets that came out, published evaluations of the various faculty. The first one was white, a little white booklet, and it was the most thorough. And that was the one where they had a lot of comments, and a number of them were negative – if you lay your hands on that, you can have a pretty good idea of what people said. That was the one incidentally, I believe, that thought McClellan was the best professor and John Smith was the second best; two people that, as you recall, were not in totally good order with various elements of the administration.

RMM: No.

EAW: And that had been done fairly thoroughly, that is, they had collected a lot of comments and published most of them, I guess. It was a relatively thick booklet, and it did give some indication of what people liked and didn't like about this – student-type people, and it also built up my theory that it wasn't the easy graders that were the most popular, but the people who seemed to be most involved with the students. Those were the ones who were popular – to be involved with the students and grade reasonably regular ____ and be popular. You could be an easy grader and very aloof and you'd get marked down. Another one came out that I think was just terser where it was just sort of numbers. It had a yellow cover on it, it was a much bigger thing – I don't know if it was the third or not, I got a feeling that it may have been. But I do recall, that certainly Lobanov has this other little surprise in given how popular he was in Michigan – how many of his students didn't really care for him up here. Of course, a lot of the students that he had, a large percentage of them were going to be in Western Civ and maybe taking the course out of some degree of duress – it was the only thing that was available and what have you, and they didn't care for him when they're _____. As a faculty member here, as I think back on it I feel a little sad that we didn't make more use of him. He was pleasant, quiet. I don't recall him speaking up; he wasn't saying, "Well, at the University of Michigan we did this," or, he might ask questions why you did certain things, but not much, just always sat there quietly, did his job, had his students, and we were kind of scattered around at this time – the offices were not that close together.

RMM: No.

EAW: And we didn't interact necessarily very much. If he was there I'd say "Hi" to him.

RMM: Let me just check this. This article was 1959 –

EAW: Yeah.

RMM: So that would've been soon after you had left.

EAW: Yeah, somewhere in '59 when I was talking to him. It was an early summer session that came back and we had our meeting either before or after he came to Northern.

RMM: He was here around 1959 or so.

EAW: Yeah. I don't recall we talked about –

[END SIDE A]

[BEGIN SIDE B]

RMM: One where he was here in '59 visiting, and then he's here in some capacity in March of '65.

EAW: Probably by that time he was a full time professor. My guess is that he was here for two years full time, and then, for some reason or other, he quit.

RMM: You don't think he went beyond 1965?

EAW: My guess is that '65 might've been his first or second year. I don't think he taught very long.

RMM: So you think he came for a number of summers?

EAW: No. He came as a full time professor in the early to middle-60s.

RMM: But that article was written in '59.

EAW: Yeah. That means a visiting professor. So he was visiting professor, and I think he went somewhere else to teach, that would let him teach after the age of 65, and then maybe get to be 70. They wouldn't let him teach anymore there, so then he applied to Northern, and we said, "Yeah, we'd be happy to have you." I don't think the criticism reflected the fact that he was doddering. He was kind of, physically, but I don't think that a sense of decline. He did have sort of a little, "Come in," Not quite exactly Charlie Chaplin-like, but again, he was not a big, forceful character coming in, dominating.

RMM: Who do you think would be around that might know more, that would be older than you that might remember him?

EAW: I guess the mostly old people, I guess. [laughs] Sonby's dead, Barnwell's dead, ____ probably is dead. I would go and look through the file and see how much you can pick up from that, because then you could be more precise in years.

RMM: So we have Lobanov taken care of. You might have done this before; I don't know if you have. I'm also trying to put together little biographies, with this idea of community, biographies of past historians. You're pretty much perceptive of a lot of these people. Who are some of the people that you could comment on, that were around when you were here? For instance: when you came in in '59, who made up the History faculty?

EAW: It was very small. There was Dick O'Dell, and Sonderegger, and me.

RMM: Three of you. You were the Europeanist?

EAW: Yeah. I got the job because I fit pretty well what was needed, replacing Harry ____ at that time. So, the Far East was also a major component. At that time, there was a single department headed by Dick O'Dell. It was called History and Social Science, or the other way around, which included history,

political science, economics, sociology, social work, and one person taught philosophy. There were only two or three people in each department, and a sub-department. Dick O'Dell was in charge. Finally, they had to split it up into the four component parts. Geography was always separate for some reason; perhaps because geography is split between social science and natural science.

RMM: When did some new people come in, then?

EAW: After a while we began adding one a year, it seemed like, and sometimes they would leave. In the early '60s, this was the time of came out entitled "____ Professorship," because people were coming in and leaving, because there were opportunities. It was in this time that we got Jim Penton, and Kurt Cowle, and then Bob McClellan. A little while after that, we doubled the size of the History department with a lot of young people who were getting involved in the McClellan and all left. So we replaced all these new guys and another wave, which I think, perhaps, you were at least on the fringes of. These people stayed much more.

RMM: Some of these people that you mentioned, Colin?

EAW: Cowle. C-O-W-L-E. And Jim Penton. Do you want a little more?

RMM: Yes.

EAW: For a while, Kurt, Jim, and I were together, and we all had the same office. We had a little office on the third floor of Kaye hall, in between the two classrooms. Kurt and Jim were rather different. Although they're both from Iowa, and eventually both went down to Lakewater, they were quite different in style. Kurt was a big, round fellow. Soft, people called him soft and big to tease him a little bit. Crammed in all the facts; a very____ sincere type. Tried very hard, was a very lovable student, but he frightened the students, because he rattled off so much detail. He got into all the emperors in the Byzantine Empire in Western Civ. When I suggested, "Don't you want to have more of it?" "Maybe I should!" Which is part of it. And when we told him _____, "Big Ed (then our president _____) has got his eye on you," he believed it actually was partially true. _____ did know an awful lot of what was going on in the school, because it was fairly small. Jim was a spoken and nice, sort of leisurely man. It was sort of interesting – if I would be in my office in between I could hear the two of them. There was Kurt going (rapid fire sound), and there was Jim going "Daaaa, dee deeee, dee deeee." Everybody was afraid of Kurt, but it turned out Kurt and Jim used some of the same questions. The difference was that Jim used a smaller proportion of what he dished out, and Kurt just shoveled all of it on the rest, and couldn't see about cutting it. He was very peripherous, and, as a matter of fact, he was a Lutheran, I believe. One time, in his class, under reprobation, someone said, "Why don't you get a real Lutheran to teach this course?" He turned out, "Well, I am." I don't remember the church. He sung in the choir in his youth. "Jesus wants me for a Sunday," _____, which was sort of funny, considering there was this guy who was – he was like Brian Cherry, only three times the size. Jim is quite different. Jim is a Canadian (I think he's still alive) and a Jehovah's Witness. Very nice guy, great sense of humor. He's the one that some of the students complained about me to. One of these students had come back – a lot of people had gotten a two-year degree here and had gone out teaching. Then word came out, "You've got to get a four year degree." So all these older women who are used to teaching the first and second grade had to come back, and here they're running into young tigers like me, fresh out of graduate school. Of course, they tended to be very nervous about the whole thing. There was one who said to Jim, "Dr. Whitehouse is the most sarcastic, cynical person that I've ever met, and rather than take another course from him, I

would take poison.” Jim thought this was a very meaningful statement, so he dashed off to tell it to President Harden. _____. [laughter]

RMM: And then these two left?

EAW: Yeah. They moved on. I don’t know whether they got more money down there in Whitewater, they wanted to be there, hard to say.

RMM: And then they were replaced by?

EAW: I forgot who precisely replaced them. We may have had a temporary or something in there.

RMM: Sometime in the future, if I were to get the list...

EAW: I probably could remember, though some of the people we had that just lasted a year or so I might not remember very much about.

RMM: These two were for more than a year?

EAW: Yeah. At that time, we did not have evaluations and such. The department head would write up things, a paragraph each, and send it on, but you didn’t see it. They were not open. There was no, “In order to earn tenure you’ve got to do the following...” This didn’t come until after the McClellan year, when they started working about these evaluation documents and they gained more of a formal process to get what we, more or less, have now. I think they both couldn’t stay. _____.

RMM: As opposed to next group that came.

EAW: Vito Perone, yeah. Actually, the next group that came mostly left on their own volition; they decided this was a cheesy place. They wouldn’t want to stay here. What happened was, you had that wave of people, including Jenkowski, and_____, and names like that. They were really glorified graduate assistants. Graduate assistants are the most arrogant and the most fearful of people, simultaneously. They’re arrogant because, after all, they’re writing a dissertation which proves everybody else was either too dumb, too ignorant to take that topic or handle it very well, and they’re looking at the professors and saying, “No, I would never be as bad as this jerk.” But they’re fearful because they’re writing their dissertation and someone could just look at it and say, “Well, I’m sorry Mr. So-and-so. This dissertation just won’t work. Why don’t you tear it up, get a better one, and then see what we can do with it.” There’s nothing you can do about it, except go someplace else. They got all these people. We had a whole bunch of them all at the same time. So to bring them in one at a time, they came in all at once, and bused the gang together, and told each other how terrible things were here. McClellan was getting fired just as they came. That made them quite upset, and they decided they didn’t want to be here. Then they started looking for jobs. They couldn’t always find them, and then they decided, “Gee, we’ve got to find a – take us back!” A little late. You quit.

RMM: So they quit before they got a job?

EAW: Yeah. They said they were going to quit, and, for example, one or two of them wanted new courses. They hadn’t submitted them, the _____ equivalent, to the correcting committee until it was too late. So they say, “We can’t do that. This is spring semester, you can’t” – at that time it was harder.

You didn't have 295s, 195s. So they got another reason to be disabused. They all got jobs. The only thing I've heard about them is one person did get a long article on the back page of the Chronicle of Higher Education which, when I showed it to the crew we had then and said, "This is one of our alumni," they sneered at it, perhaps because they didn't think he left _____. What had happened to him _____, I don't know; didn't like them. They weren't as good as they thought they were. Very interesting, but they were young and raw.

RMM: And just at that point, the mid-60s, how would you characterize the history department. Not the individuals but what was being taught, the direction of it, the students?

EAW: For a while we were adding new faculty, one a year. There was me, and then there was Cowle, and then Pentam, and so forth. And then that stopped. Meanwhile (this was by the mid-60s, so this is a steady line) the enrollment's going way up, which meant we dealt with that by putting the introductory courses of the various departments into Kaye hall. So that's where I lectured in there to most of Kaye hall, three-four hundred students – which I did take roll, or had my graduate assistant do it; took him ten, fifteen minutes. I got him to sit two, and then one vacant, two, one vacant, so it was a little easier to keep track of people. We decided to appeal to the vice-president first for more faculty. Milton Bird was vice president at the time. I think he was on the skids and on the way out. So we appealed to him and he said, "Why don't you talk to the president?" So we had a meeting set up with the President. Tony Forbes, by this time, was head of the department. Dick O'Dell had resigned in a huff. I'd taken over for a little over a year. Said I didn't want it, and by a massive majority of four to three, Tony was chosen. I think Lobanov was probably in there – it was a secret ballot, and he was in the department at the time. So Tony's in charge and we meet there with Hartby. Before the meeting – Tony tended to be sort of a fearful individual. At the same time, he was very tall, he _____ across his chest, and, when he was in a great mood, he looked very domineering and very self-confident. But that was a hollow shell. He's frightened. "What's going to happen to us?" "_____ talk to him." We got in there, and got in the conference room. Harden tells Vito Perone, who we feel is probably the most trustworthy person there – well, there's a story where I can tell you more about Vito _____ – but, it was a good choice. Vito's a pretty solid person. So, take minutes. "This is going to be a formal meeting. We want this on the record." We get in there, and the meeting goes along pretty smoothly. We had the figures that – Bob McClellan was a member of the department by that time – had drawn up the statement saying, "This is what's happening, the class is getting larger," and so forth, and so on. He looks at it, "Mhm, mhm," he didn't make any promises. But in the midst of it, it was sort of amusing, because we're going along, and everything's under control – we're saying all the right things – and then Lobanov pops up and makes some comment which we're not realizing the significance of it, which defeated all our case. McClellan came in, and immediately jumped in and very smoothly changed the subject – Bob was smooth in those days, believe it or not – and he switched the topic. I could see Harden with a sneaky little grin on his face, because Harden was pretty sharp; he knew what had happened. He wasn't going to let it pass. McClellan was there, Lobanov was there, Forbes was there, I was there, Sande was obviously there, and _____ Jones probably was there by now.

RMM: So this was about when you...?

EAW: This was just before the McClellan affair. This was '65, probably, maybe '66. While this was going on, this was where – somewhere, again I'm not quite sure on the dates here – Bird was still Vice President, but is going to leave. I think that's why he was no longer part of it. Preparing for this, I could've gone, "Use your handy-dandy book."

RMM: Harden left office '67. So it was about '66, probably.

EAW: I'd have to stop and think just how it worked out because, at that time, McClellan was not being in too bad order, as far as the President was concerned. What happened was that Bob was doing things that got the community upset. I think he preached some sermons in the Episcopalian church, for example, and also had some of his students going out and making surveys asking whether people felt they were being mistreated by being forced to move from their houses – whatever these things were. At first, particularly when it was simply irritating the people, Harden defended McClellan. Harden would defend the faculty up to a point. Cross that point and then you were shit. _____ never quite realized that – ended his workload under his time at Northern. After that, that's when McClellan started getting more and more on Harden's bad side. That's where Harden, then, probably in '66, '67, that school year. My long guess is this was the spring of '66, that meeting. It was in '66, '67, that Harden began getting more and more pissed off at Bob. Also, I think, Bob was protesting John Smith's firing, too – he may have, and making comments about things. Harden felt – reading the letters that are still in McClellan's file, if you haven't had a chance to read it, seek some of them – his temper was rising. There's one that starts off fairly straightforward, and when you get down to about the third or fourth paragraph, Harden's getting madder and madder as he writes it. What he did was – and he played it by the AAUP rule – he says, "You've got a year's notice." Gives this notice in the early summer of '67 to Bob. By the way, after the meeting was over, and Harden said, "I'll think about what you've said over the fact _____," Tony, who had – when he starts the meeting, he goes, "Dr. Harden, some of the members of the department would like to speak to you about this." It's very formal, organized, he gets out there and he says (sound of panic) – he practically collapses in our arms. "I don't have tenure! I could get fired!" This fear – this is an actor. He was playing the role, and then, after that, he almost collapsed. Then, what Harden did do was – this wasn't just History – did begin to say, "Okay." So he brought in all these young people. This is _____. So we went from about seven to fourteen people. Doubled the size, and brought in people that were from too big a mass to get easily digested. Plus, as I say, they were young and rebellious, so they were happy to go on strike. Even though one of them said, "Back where I came from, I was used to servitude." _____ naming Sande department head. And there was a fuss over that because Harden did not want him to be department head. Thought Sandi wasn't competent for it, and I think he had a point. He was not the world's best department head. Nice guy and all of that, but he didn't want to confront people, because _____. That was the other thing. We had to make Sande a temporary thing, and then promise to make a search for a new department head, and then Sande could compete. By this time Harden was gone. Of course, the department doesn't have anything to do with it. They cooperated.

RMM: By that point, '69, I came in. I think Sandi remained the next year. At some point, maybe in the 70s some time...

EAW: _____. _____ was a better department head. I was on the outside; I didn't always see what was going on. _____ was very _____. I mentioned that Jim Penton was a Jehovah's Witness?

RMM: Yeah.

EAW: Did not believe in evolution. He was cheerful about it. I showed him – he looked at my test, in which I said, "Which one doesn't belong here?" and I had Neanderthal, _____ Man, and a couple others – Cro-Magnon Man, and he's just, "Hullabaloo." [laughter] But he was cheerful about it. But he could fight with the Jehovah's Witnesses, and that actually got in the Chronicle, that he was mentioned as one

of the people who were fighting against the church. Bruce Turner, if he's still around, could tell you something about that.

RMM: This happened here in Marquette?

EAW: No, this happened after he left. He went to Whitewater, and then he went back to Canada. He was also interesting, because he was a conservative Canadian. Conservative Canadians, at least if Jim was any representative, on the one hand they're very sympathetic to the empire, and imperialism, and not too sure of the "lesser breeds" of colored people. It's not that he was particularly prejudiced against American Indians, but African, Asian coloreds. On the other hand, socially, they were very liberal. I remember one time, there was a lecture. A guy came up visiting. This was before Medicare got started, but it was in the air. It was controversial. Someone came up from the state Democratic Party to talk about it. "Why care for Medicare?" Jim got up and made a comment, said, "Well, the problem with Medicare, it doesn't go far enough! You should be like the Canadians!" (sounds of faux angry shouting, followed by laughter) Tell them to get this thing through! You didn't know what you'd get out of Jim. On the one hand, he thought the Algerians should stay part of the French Empire. On the other hand, here he was, going for socialized medicine.

RMM: Alright, I think that's it.

EAW: So, if you can pull out the stuff on the list to see when I was up here. I can't really say too much, really, about when he was up here, even with Lobanov after that. He didn't say very much at the meetings, he didn't go around telling us how to run our business. He only went and did his job; seemed to like it here, all in all.

RMM: You think, thought, in his file that's in the archives, there might be some letters that would help explain how he got here and what happened?

EAW: I think, with the fact that he taught in the summer session, I think that probably indicates it. My guess is, he may have gone to Davidson after University of Michigan. I think he was there somewhere, and I think it was after Michigan; Davidson in North Carolina; that was a school where you had a system. Every faculty had to have an open house every Sunday afternoon, where the students would come and visit. Some people – and I think Lobanov's were reasonably popular – they'd get nice crowds. Some unpopular ones, no one would show up. They weren't sure, they'd lay out the food, then they'd lined up there – they've got a whole bunch of snacky food, and they don't know what to do with it. I remember that story. I think he went down there. Then he came up here. Probably Davidson may have said, maybe, "When you get to be seventy" – wild guess – "you're past our limit." Then he got in contact, having been here before. And they say, "We'd love to have you." We had space at that time with people leaving. Exactly who replaced who is real hard to tell.

RMM: That gives me some focal point.

[AUDIO CUTS OUT, THEN RESUMES]

EAW: Lobanov was not someone at that stage you'd really want as department head. Not that forceful character. And new people. McClellan was questionable, I don't know if Jones was there or not, or who was handling _____. I said okay. He said, "Don't say anything about it." Most earliest we get people together was – that was on Sunday – it was on a Tuesday. Luther and O'Dell were there. We gathered

there, and, "What's it all about?" "No, nothing." So they sat down. "Dick is resigned, and Gene will be the acting department head." This was 8:00. Some of those people hadn't seen 8:00 for years. Finally, Jim Penton ____ was that, "Dick, does that mean that you're retired?" "Oh no, I'm still going back to teaching." And that was that. At 8:05 the meeting adjourned. "Any more questions?" "No." That was all you were ever told. But I have a feeling, something like that – I can see it coming, like Dominoes – it was Dick getting all excited over something that Bird would consider trivial. They were telling Dick that this was trivial. Dick getting a, "We stand at Armageddon, and do battle for the Lord," type of feeling. You know how well you know Dick O'Dell, to see how this fits in. And Bird saying "You're nuts!" As far as Bird was concerned, Dick was right on the thin edge.

RMM: At least, given Dick's personality, no.

EAW: And as far as I can't think of anything else they were particularly fighting on. This wasn't like, "You've got to give us more faculty." This was the year before – this was the spring of '63 – our big meeting was actually before the enrollments were really beginning to grow. I think if you look at the enrollments, they started inching upwards from about '58, the year or so before I came. They started inching upwards, and then they really started going really fast – we were adding a thousand a year, and not adding much –

[END TAPE 1 SIDE B]

END OF INTERVIEW