Personal BackgroundJarrell: It's January 16, 1987 and I'm in the Cowell Apartments with Professor Glenn Willson. This is the first interview that we're conducting in a series on early campus history. To open our interview today I would like first to get a bit of your personal background for the record. It's available, I know, on paper, but I would like to know how you were invited originally to join the UCSC endeavor.

Willson: Yes, I can be fairly specific about this. I was professor of government in the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I went there in January 1961. And on my desk when I got there was a letter from Dean McHenry, whom I had never met . . . saying that he had a sabbatical year coming up, that he would very much like to spend it in Africa, and could he come as a guest and spend it in my department at UCRN. I wrote back and said I'd be delighted. I was one man completely on my own and the prospect of having an experienced professor to help me was great. I wrote the letter and sent it off. And I heard no more for a while. And then two things happened. I'm not absolutely certain whether this was '61 or '62, but there appeared in *Time* magazine an article about a new campus of the University of California at Santa Cruz, with a picture of the new Chancellor, Dean McHenry, sitting at his desk. The picture of the desk and McHenry were superimposed on the photograph of the campus.

Jarrell: In the meadows.

Willson: In the meadows, that's right. You've probably seen it.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: And almost at the same time as seeing this in the magazine, I got another letter from Dean saying, "I'm so sorry . . . I won't be able to come because I've been appointed Chancellor of a new campus at Santa Cruz." I wrote him back . . . you know, I'd never met the man, I didn't know anything about Santa Cruz . . . and said, "Well, congratulations, and I'm so sorry you can't come but perhaps sometime we'll meet." Then I put it out of my head completely. Never thought about it. I was very busy. And then . . . I don't know when it

would be . . . '62, perhaps '63 . . . Charles Nixon, Chuck Nixon, who was then associate professor of politics at UCLA, came out on a sabbatical to spend a year with us. I'm not sure whether it was a sabbatical or a teacher exchange, but he came onto the teaching staff and did a full year of teaching. We got to know each other quite well. Halfway through the year he said to me, "Have you ever thought of working in America?" I said "No." And he said, (laughter) "Well, I think you might enjoy working on a new campus that's being set up at Santa Cruz. I know the Chancellor . . . a chap called Dean McHenry." It took off from there. The following year I had a Ford Foundation Grant to go and recruit faculty to come and help teach in Africa. I did one of those ridiculous whirlwind tours of about 30 universities in 19 days. After the first 10 days you forget where you are or what you're saying. But in the process I met Dean McHenry in Washington [D.C.] when he was also on tour recruiting staff. Chuck had put us in touch with each other. We met and had a very nice talk at half past eleven at night in a Washington hotel. And then we parted. A month or two later he wrote and offered me a job here. That was the story. (Laughter)

Jarrell: So he offered you a job as a faculty member.

Willson: As professor of politics, yes. I think in fairness, and I wouldn't know what he would say or remember about it, my own impression was that I was sold to him by Chuck rather on the basis that I might be a useful chap in a collegiate context on the administrative side, because of having been at Oxford, although not as an undergraduate. We talked a little and certainly the possibilities of administrative work in the collegiate context did come up, but it wasn't pressed. He recruited me initially as a straight professor. But it's possible he had in the back of his mind that I might have some administrative potential.

Jarrell: So what later came to be in terms of the provostship and your other administrative positions, that wasn't in the picture at all in the beginning?

Willson: Not formally. But as I say I just had a feeling. I don't think it's pure imagination . . . I think in the air there was the notion that I might be a useful sort of person in that context.

Jarrell: You had read the article in *Time* magazine and you'd talked to Chuck Nixon . . . by the very fact that you were at UCRN . . . it seems to me that's a rather pioneering spirit . . . to be in Africa putting together some kind of an academic enterprise in untraditional circumstances . . . so that UCSC, although it was part of a long traditional American system, was entirely new. What particularly was congenial to you in accepting the offer?

Academic Experience

Willson: Well, it did look an exciting prospect. I was an undergraduate only after war service and I did my first degree in the University of Manchester, which is very much an orthodox, red-brick university. Then I spent ten years in Oxford—first as a graduate student at Balliol and then as a student and later a research fellow in Nuffield College, which is a social science research place and was the first mixed college at Oxford.

Jarrell: What do you mean by "mixed?"

Willson: Mixed male and female.

Jarrell: I see.

Willson: That's right. The first coed college! But it was at the graduate level. That was an interesting experience. Then I went to Rhodesia. While I'd been at Oxford, I'd been very impressed by the college system. When Chuck talked about Santa Cruz to me and I saw the magazine and read a little bit about the collegiate idea, I felt it was a very worthwhile kind of thing to do, and that it would be fun. I don't think I could put it in any more solemn terms than that. It was an attractive job. I had done three to four years in Africa by the time this came up, and had not been really turned on to stay the rest of my life there. And nothing had tempted me back to England. And there it was. It's very hard, I think, to do oneself or the circumstances full justice a long time after the event. I'm inclined to be a little cynical about human motivation. I take the view that the best explanation for most of it is really hard self-advancement. And I think I probably was guilty of a bit of that. But I was also genuinely attracted to the idea: it seemed an excellent one. What I didn't really have any feeling about, or any knowledge of, was the degree to which Santa Cruz was to come to be regarded, and perhaps *was* regarded in those early planning stages, as something of an answer to a particular problem of American higher education—namely, the apparent neglect of undergraduate education and the lack of intimacy in the whole thing. I didn't really have that in my mind . . . I didn't go expecting that.

Jarrell: That was part of this whole constellation of ideas about what this place would be . . . the needs it would meet and it was in a reform context, I think, certainly.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: Was it an adventure of a certain kind, as well as advancing?

Willson: Yes, I think so. I'd come up through two traditional universities—Manchester was established in the middle of the 19th century, and though by American standards it was quite small, it was quite a large university by English standards, departmentally organized. Oxford was Oxford and had been there forever. And then I went to Salisbury and Southern Rhodesia, Hasare and Zimbabwe as they now are, and that was my first experience of working in a new institution in rather difficult circumstances. I really did get very much involved in that, even though I didn't warm to it to the extent of wanting to devote my whole life to it. It was at UCRN, where I first stretched any kind of academic political wings I might have had. I began to feel university administration and politics was an interesting game to be in. So the notion of going back to a very orthodox university rather paled. And I really did feel the attraction of something new again at Santa Cruz.

First Impressions of UCSC

Jarrell: That's very interesting. So you joined the faculty and you arrived, I believe, in 1965.

Willson: January '65.

Jarrell: January '65. And school opened, the campus opened in September.

Willson: September, yes.

Jarrell: So what were your impressions, if you can recall, when you first got here before the campus was formally opened?

Willson: (Laughter) Oh, we first arrived at San Francisco airport on a pouring wet day and were driven down the coast by Byron Stookey who was the Director of Academic Planning. He said, "I'll just take you up and show you the campus before we go to the house we've got for you." So we drove up Western [Drive] and around the corner onto High Street and into this little turning and there was the cookhouse, much as it now is . . . and nothing else really. (Laughter) And Byron in that very, very slow way of his said, "This is the University of California at Santa Cruz." (Laughter) And we just saw this house, this old cookhouse, and the old buildings around and a track leading up the hill and the cloud down on top of it. And we turned and went down into town, which was deserted and very wet. We went out to Pleasure Point where the McHenrys had very kindly found us a house to live in and we settled in there. I think we were both a bit traumatized by it, my wife and I . . . well, it was my wife and I, two daughters, and my mother-in-law, who is now dead, I'm afraid . .

. but she was a woman then in her sixties. I suppose we were a bit traumatized, because California to us, since we were brought up in the 20s and 30s in England, largely on Hollywood movies, was somewhere like Santa Barbara. Although I'd visited the States and Canada and been trained there during the war, I'd never got out to the West Coast. But suddenly to find ourselves in this rather quiet little town, on a very wet day in January . . . we thought is this California? (Laughter) We didn't really believe it. So we were a bit traumatized. But of course within days, once one got into the swing of what was going on and began to get around the place, the professional excitement set in very quickly. Domestically it took more time. (Laughter)

Jarrell: I can imagine. It was a strange part of the world.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: In January it's not exactly golden California.

Willson: No, no. (Laughter)

Jarrell: So you joined the faculty, the board of studies in politics . . .

Willson: Well, there was no board, but . . .

Jarrell: Let's put it in quotation marks. (Laughter)

Willson: That's right, yes. (Laughter) I joined the faculty knowing that I wasn't going to belong to Cowell College. I knew from the first that I was going to belong to Stevenson College, not to Cowell College. So I came and I believe for budgetary purposes I was even put on the planning staff for that first nine months.

Jarrell: The Stevenson planning staff.

Willson: No, no. The campus . . . because I think . . . I may be wrong about this, but I think all of us were, who arrived there in those early months. I was about the fourth member of the faculty, something like that, to be appointed. Sig Puknat was there just before me. Karl Lamb had been McHenry's assistant for some time, but he was away when I got here. And then of course Page Smith was there. But there were only about four or five of us. So it was a very cozy little outfit for a few months.

Jarrell: Yes, yes. So . . . I wasn't aware then that when you first came Stevenson College did not yet exist except in minds.

Willson: It wasn't even named.

Jarrell: That you were already on the roster of the second college.

Willson: Yes. I understood, I think I understood from the start (I really had better be a little bit cautious now that you raise this with me), but I'm pretty sure that from very early on I knew I wasn't going to be a founding member of Cowell except to the extent that everybody was a founding member of Cowell during that first year.

Jarrell: That there would be another . . .

Willson: Another college coming on line and I'd be in that.

Jarrell: Yes. So you, in that first year I imagine then, were teaching all the students who were at . . .

Willson: Yes. Well, I taught the students in politics and I taught on the Cowell core course. I think those were the two things I did during that year. In the months before the campus started I had a very pleasant time. I wasn't very much involved with campus-wide planning. I was asked to think about the politics board and so on but not much about Stevenson College because it really wasn't on line yet. Charles [H.] Page, who was the first provost at Stevenson, hadn't been appointed when I got here. So I had an interesting time and did quite a bit of my own research in Berkeley, largely by taking a university car and running up the coast. I had some time to do some of that before the heavy responsibilities of Santa Cruz set in. But once they did set in we were all pretty wrapped up and I got involved both in the politics board and in the wider campus development. Of course what dragged me into campus affairs in a very big way was being elected the first chairman of the Academic Senate here. There was a contested election; Sig Puknat and I were the two candidates and I won, I can't remember by what vote now . . . rather to my surprise. I thought it was rather remarkable to be a stranger to the country, relatively speaking, and really not knowing much about the system, and (laughter) so I was very privileged and very lucky.

Jarrell: Later on I definitely would like to talk about the Academic Senate. I haven't had a chance to go through the old original minutes of those years, but I know that people have spoken to me about your role in the Academic Senate in a very . . . as a conciliator . . . bringing dissenting groups together and that was

very important. So I will ask you about that a little later on. So you were involved in the politics board and your own research . . . it seems sort of like a honeymoon in a way. That you didn't have onerous responsibilities in terms of the whole campus right at the beginning.

Willson: Oh no. It's nice that you should put it that way. Those who had the really onerous responsibilities were the Chancellor and the Campus Architect, Jack Wagstaff, who was a very important man around the place. And the Registrar, Howard Shontz had quite a hard time in those first months getting the place organized. Kenneth Thimann came just about the same time as us.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: And he brought a group of research students with him, so he had them to keep him happy, as it were.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: He probably told you about that I suspect.

Jarrell: Well it seems like he just moved his camp right across the country in a way.

Willson: Yes. We had no camp to move and we were very much strangers in the land. And so I suppose it was a honeymoon stage, looking around us and getting used to the place.

Jarrell: Yes. And getting acquainted with this new part of the world.

Willson: Yes. That's right. We had two daughters, one of whom went to Cabrillo for a couple of terms before starting in as a student at UC Santa Cruz with the first batch. And our younger daughter was just eleven and she went to Mission Hill [Junior High School]. So they had to be fitted into the whole process.

Jarrell: A new world, yes. But they'd been in Africa before.

Willson: Oh yes, they'd been in Africa. So they weren't totally unused to moving about. But on the other hand, moving children at those ages is always a serious matter for them. And looking back, one wonders whether one did the right thing or not. One should look back and wonder that. (Laughter)

STEVENSON COLLEGE

Jarrell: Yes. Well, I'd like to ask you now about Stevenson College—the first provostship and how you later became the provost of Stevenson College. Your early role in organizing the college.

Founding Provost Charles Page

Willson: This would provoke very different stories from different people. Mine is that when Charles Page came and joined the campus he and I saw quite a bit of each other, because he knew I was going to be in his college. And he eventually . . . and I can't remember precisely when it was, but I think it was before the campus actually started work . . . he invited me to be the senior preceptor of Stevenson when it opened . . . and so from that time I was very much involved in thinking about the organization of Stevenson. Charles was very much tied up with recruiting the faculty. Looking back on those days, being the initial provost was a wonderful opportunity because there were so few people to argue with about setting up the college.

Jarrell: Just went one way, almost.

Willson: That's right. And there were no boards of studies to bother about, a few senior professors picked by the Chancellor to be the lead men in their subjects before any of the rest of them were appointed. But the provosts, the early provosts, had this wonderful chance to build a faculty. A lot of Charles' time during those first twelve months was spent doing just that. I suppose I fell into the kind of lieutenant's role of tackling the internal organization of the college in other respects. So I spent a great deal of time on setting up the college academic program and the whole of the nuts-and-bolts of college life.

Jarrell: To go back to Adlai Stevenson College . . . were you involved in the relationships and the fundraising and the politics of finding a sponsor for this college and the naming . . .

Willson: No. I wasn't involved in the naming. I never quite knew how that came about. I gather it was a very speedy thing after Stevenson's death. But it was too late, apparently, to really climb onto the Stevenson bandwagon. And fundraising efforts really never got anywhere in a big way because the Stevenson family were more interested in the Stevenson Foundation and the Chicago thing. I did get involved to the extent of going along with Dean to one or two fundraising occasions. We went down once to Los Angeles and had lunch with a group of Hollywood people and tried to raise money. But it was just the end of the year and I think they'd all made their contributions and the tax men

were after them and we didn't get anywhere. Frank Sinatra gave us $500. His name is inscribed on the library wall, you know, as one of the donors.

Jarrell: I never noticed that.

Willson: (Laughter) Oh yes, he's there. There was a group of eminent Bay Area Californian supporters of Stevenson who came around and did give some money, most of which went to the [Stevenson] library. I went to Chicago to talk to the Stevenson Foundation people there. They had that wonderful Frank Lloyd Wright house as their offices, just off the campus at Chicago. But it came to nothing. I've often wondered to what extent, if I'd had rather more nous about fundraising, whether I could have done anymore, but I've never been a good fundraiser. Charles Page had more to do with that than I had. I simply was in the background and once I became Provost I tried to try to follow up one or two of the leads, but they weren't very good. And it's never been a very easy connection.

Jarrell: Yes. I've always wondered exactly what the connection was between Adlai E. Stevenson and the heirs and the family and the Foundation and the naming of this college in the sense of a continuing relationship or support.

Willson: Very little really. We had one of the Stevenson sons, who lived in San Francisco once. And Adlai, the senator, before he was senator . . . I think he came on one occasion. And we had all sorts of people who dropped in . . . oh, the famous Tree . . . what was her name?

Jarrell: Oh. Marietta Tree?

Willson: Marietta Tree came once. We had a very pleasant meeting with her. And the Kennans . . .

Jarrell: George Kennan.

Willson: George Kennans' son came and sat in the house and talked to us. Our younger daughter had been at parties with him as a tiny, tiny child in Oxford when his father was a George Eastman professor. He was looking for a place to go to school. His sister had married the then owner of the *Sacramento Bee,* McClatchy, I think. They're divorced now. But she came out with her younger brother who was in search of a place and we sat and talked about it. And then he went to Cowell, much to my annoyance. But, we did have these odd connections and we used to get speakers . . . that's another aspect of college life, college night . . . we got a number of speakers who were pro-Stevenson, but the short answer

is that unless you've heard anything to challenge the accuracy of this . . . it's been a very weak and not a terribly productive connection.

Jarrell: But the other aspect of the name, of the naming of the college, by naming something, you definitely convey some kind of a sense of what the college is about.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: In this particular case naming it after a politician who was also I think a statesman of a certain kind . . .

Willson: Yes, yes.

Jarrell: That that has imbued Stevenson's academic side with a certain slant and emphasis which I would like to know about . . . what part you played in the shaping of this?

Willson: (Laughter) Oh dear, that you should ask me this: because this is somewhat embarrassing.

Jarrell: Okay.

Willson: Anyway, as the year went by, and we came nearer to the opening, a lot of problems moved up, and when we got started in Stevenson as a separate college . . . Charles was just increasingly unhappy. Halfway through the first term, or perhaps the second term, I rather think it was the very first term . . . he simply said he was going to throw his hand . . . he didn't want to go on being provost, but he would consider staying on as a professor. I think he and Dean probably had a lot of coming and going about it, but eventually his resignation was accepted. **Selecting Stevenson College's Second Provost: Glenn Willson**

Willson: Then came the question of who should be his successor. I think that the Chancellor said the college had better decide for itself. I don't know how much weight and authority he kept behind his back, as it were, to see what happened. But I don't think there were any other internal candidates. I don't even know what the process was by which I was nominated. I remember that I had to coach the faculty a little in how to go about electing another provost. (Laughter) Really very funny.

But I retired from the scene and said, "For God's sake, I'm not going to be around while you do this," and left them to it. Then they all apparently agreed that I should be offered the provostship and they recommended so to the Chancellor. The Chancellor approved it. Now, there may have been a lot more that I genuinely didn't know. I didn't need to play any great politics about it. I'd been in a fairly significant position to be the heir apparent if you want to put it that way. I was running everyday administration in the college, leaving Charles to do the recruitment and the more high-policy, academic things. So I was in that position. But really there didn't seem to be anybody else on the horizon who was strongly backed. I sort of drifted into it. I can't remember the details of the appointment. I think Dean just said, "Will you be provost and . . . what kind of an appointment do you want . . . do you want a 9-months or 11-months appointment?" . . . so I think I came out and said I'll have a 10-month appointment, because I wanted to be free to travel a bit in the summertime, and off we went. Charles Page did stay on but, I think rightly for himself and for the place, he didn't stay long. He took a job as professor of sociology at the University of Massachussetts at Amherst, and left Santa Cruz at the end of the fall term of the second year of Stevenson.

Charles and Leonora never lived in the provost's house because it wasn't finished. Then some more money was found to finish it; they'd run short of funds. We were the first occupants. We took over in '67, that's right. In the summer of '67 we moved in. I was formally provost from summer of '67.

The Role of Early Provosts

Jarrell: Right. And even though you took up the reins after Charles Page resigned, still it seems that the definition of provosts—their function—was very fluid and very undefined in those early years. It seems to me just looking back that since it was originally a college-based campus that campus life was to be centered in each college—which has considerably changed now. But originally it seems to me that each provost could define how he or she was going to create the job.

Willson: Yes, I think that's true. It's fascinating now: that I've been coming back here for two or three years and watching what's going on, I don't recognize the provostship at all. Absolutely not.[1]

Jarrell: I'm kind of finding it that way myself.

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[1]Professor Willson has frequently returned to UCSC as a visiting professor, teaching courses at Stevenson College—Editor.

Willson: You see the provosts before and after I became one, each had a certain degree of real authority over the faculty . . . not full authority, but considerable authority because the faculty knew that there was a personnel system which involved both the boards of studies and the colleges as supposedly equal partners. And that whatever might have been done within the college, the provost, unless he abdicated his responsibility, could say, as I always did say to the faculty, "Look, we can have committees of fellows to look at other fellows and make recommendations about promotion and so on, but I reserve the right to make confidential reports if I feel the need." I very rarely exercised that right because, frankly, we seemed to be fairly happy in that context and there were very few contentious cases. But I certainly said, "I reserve the right." And they knew I reserved the right. If the faculty is aware that the provost has the right to write confidential documents on them which might severely influence their future, then the provost's relationship to them is totally different from what it would be if he had no such right. And also, of course, at that time there was full agreement . . . it weakened, alas too quickly . . . that the colleges should be responsible for a proportion of the instruction.

Jarrell: Yes.

Early Conflict Over College-Based Versus Board-Based Teaching Programs

Willson: And of course, looking back on it all, there was a desperate weakness in the whole conception of the teaching program and in the division of the responsibility for teaching, which was never settled at the beginning. And because it wasn't settled at the beginning it disappeared by default once the boards of studies got established. Because they established the orthodox notion—the departmental notion. And so you had this strange muddled situation, in which people came to Santa Cruz because they thought it was going to be a collegiate campus. But when they got here they found that in effect there was a department, although we called it a board of studies, and that they were going to be treated by that department for career purposes as they would be anywhere else. But in addition there was this peculiar entity, the college, which also was going to have a say . . . and in which they had some responsibilities, including some academic responsibilities.

Right from the word go, except for the first year, there was this quarrel as to how much time faculty should be expected to give to the college. The fact that you could talk about giving, rather than saying, "Look, you're obligated," indicates the ambiguity. People were in a sense obligated. And yet in the last resort they weren't really obligated because it was left muddy at the edges. So what started with the thought that we really ought to teach half-and-half, so that in a five-course year, 2-1/2 courses should go to the college and 2-1/2 to the boards, soon fell away to a situation where most faculty would say, "Oh, well I'll do one course for the college, but I must do the other four for the board." And

then those who were less enthusiastic about the board or more courageous or more pro-collegiate said, "No, I'll do two." But I don't know of anybody who did more than two out of five, who ever gave more than 2/5ths of their time to collegiate teaching. And we never pushed it to any kind of "Supreme Court Ruling."

So it was a very considerable muddle. But trying to keep to your question about how the provost saw the job . . . I saw the job, on the academic side, as trying to preserve for the college as much of the faculty's time as I could persuade them to give.

Jarrell: In spite of this built-in ambiguity.

Willson: In spite of this ambiguity. And while it became clear that there were limits, strict limits, to how much you could really stick your neck out about it, it depended very much upon individuals. Some were dead keen to do work for the college. Some, unless you discouraged them, would have done all five courses for the college, while others . . . even though they said they were attracted by a collegiate system, almost from the word go didn't want to have anything to do with the college on the academic side. So you had a funny mixture. I always argued then and later, and still do, that if you're going to have that kind of mixed system, you can work it so long as you have about 70 percent of the faculty who are moderate people, who will do their fair share. You can take another 30 percent who will be divided between . . . the "Mr. Chips" types on the one hand and the pure researchers on the other hand. In other words, so long as you have the great bulk of the faculty in broad sympathy, and willing to give a couple of courses or even more to the college every year, and take part in the other aspects of college life with some enthusiasm, then you can get by. But if you start to slip down below 50 percent, then you've had it, really. During my time, I'm happy to say that never happened. But it wasn't tidy. I think, looking back, that one of the fundamental errors made in the beginning was that the allocation of responsibility between the colleges and the boards of studies was never worked through. It might have been worked through had all sorts of other circumstances allowed. The circumstances didn't allow. But that's another story.

Jarrell: So you think that this had never been thought through?

Willson: Well I can't really say that. To me, there is not a great deal in the early planning documents which shows that this had been thought through in a very thorough way. But since leaving Santa Cruz, I have had enough experience to know that Clark Kerr and Dean McHenry must have had to cope with tremendous pressures against the whole collegiate experiment. They would have had to act very strategically, shall we say, in order to get the whole thing through the Regents and onto the drawing board and to start it up. I may be being too kind, but I can just imagine the arguments that would have gone on in

the higher reaches of the University during those years of planning. These two guys said, "Let's have one campus that is totally different from anything else in the system." You can imagine the sorts of fights they must have had about it: it would be fascinating to ever see or hear what either of them say about it themselves . . . I'd be fascinated to know how much the sheer politics of the university as a system, even if they'd thought the thing through very clearly, prevented them from ever putting it down on paper and saying so. But that's being kind. If you want me to be very unkind, then all I can say is, "I didn't see very much sign of there having been very careful thought given to this particular problem."

Jarrell: No, it's really puzzled me. And I think you've just brought the UCSC experiment for its innovation in that regard and put it in the context of this very entrenched powerful, incredible UC system, systemwide, okay?

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: And also the tradition among faculty that would want to organize themselves according to already well-established canons.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: And what's a college, you know.

Willson: Right. I imagine you might want to come on to the question in an another sort of way, but that whole business of going against the tradition of the American academic profession . . .

Jarrell: Exactly.

Willson: It was an enormously courageous thing to do. But (laughter) what Dean [McHenry] and Clark [Kerr] expected would happen, privately, I don't know.

The Influence of Protest Politics on the Young Campus

Willson: But, then you come onto the other thing that I think was so terribly important about Santa Cruz in the early years—the fact that national politics swung attention away from new campus building and new ideas to other issues. (Laughter)

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: An awful lot of people came here and threw themselves wholeheartedly into building a new kind of campus: even though they didn't necessarily always agree with one another, and there were some hard fights and battles about how the place should go . . . at least it was about the place. But within two years, half of them were running campaigns against the Vietnam war or taking off for the south (and the Civil Rights Movement) to stand and accuse, to get the blacks into a better position. The whole atmosphere altered. The students became very radicalized, understandedly so: but in a sense they went overboard on a lot of the basic notions of the campus as a reflection of the big political things that were going on outside. It's hard to start a campus of an experimental nature like Santa Cruz, importing some alien notions . . . it's hard enough, even if you have a very steady and moderate external situation. But when you do it just before a storm breaks like Vietnam . . . very hard.

I remember some heartbreaking episodes . . . I remember being with Dean McHenry on one or two nights when he had to go and address multitudes of students who were willing to tear the hair out of his head. This basically very liberal man was treated as though he was a fascist. To some extent, on occasion, he reacted rather as though he was a fascist, but under the strain I couldn't blame him. And he must have thought, sometimes, as the years of that went by, what's the point of trying when you know everybody seems to be willing to do things which are going to pull the thing down around their ears. (Laughter)

College Themes and Academic Slants

Willson: Charles Page did set out to establish a Stevenson theme. I think it meant a very great deal to him. And, also, of course he came in agreement with a policy which frankly, I never agreed with from the start. It was one of the major, major differences I had with the real founding fathers. They wanted to have colleges with academic slants. I never thought this would work, and I never liked it. In fact, after I'd been provost for a while, I let it be known that Stevenson wouldn't really have a social science slant, although it would have rather more social science faculty than other places because that's the way the allocation had been made, but that we would be a liberal college of arts and sciences. I remember Dean wrote me a little note or was overheard to say to somebody that [my attitude in this matter] was a sort of unilateral declaration of independence. (Laughter) Quite frankly, although I was trained in politics of a rather old fashioned kind, I've never been a social scientist by fundamental inclination. And I am really quite opposed to the notion of dividing up undergraduates into colleges by the nature of what they're going to study. I think they're *undergraduates*, who ought to come for a liberal arts education. I think it's the end of a liberal education if you say, "Well, you're mainly scientists but you can tolerate a few of the others," or, "You're mainly social scientists but

you can have a few humanists, etc." I didn't like it. I'm not suggesting that we had any stand-up fights about it . . . we didn't.

Jarrell: Yes. But that was just your basic feeling.

Willson: Yes. And I would say that's what Stevenson [himself] would have felt, frankly. From all that I've read of his admirable speeches and statements and attitudes, I'm quite sure he would have been happier with the notion of an across-the-board college of the arts and sciences, rather than a college with a very specific slant in one disciplinary direction. So that was a point of view which I had, and I don't know how all my colleagues felt about it, but they didn't quarrel with me much. And so I take it they accepted it.

Jarrell: Because in . . . in pursuing this line of thought one person here said to me, "After Crown College the whole notion of themes seemed a rather contrived thing." . . . then Merrill opened . . . and it was like third world studies or something . . . and several of the people I've interviewed have indicated that these "themes" were artificial, contrived . . . that they didn't have any reality and . . .

Willson: Yes. I think that's true. I just think it's a pity that they started by saying, "Right, we'll have this slant idea and we'll have humanities in the first college, social sciences in the second college, sciences in the third college." I've always had a great sympathy for the scientists in this because I think it's extraordinarily difficult for laboratory scientists to merge comfortably into the concept of the undergraduate, liberal arts college. Very hard . . . if you could be working at a level where you could have tiny, small-scale laboratories and you had the money to put them in the colleges . . . but that's a dream you really can't sustain. So you have to say either well, the only science you can do is science that doesn't require any laboratory work, and that's incredibly difficult . . . or have the wretched problem of having the scientists somewhere else. At Oxford and Cambridge they suffer from this and have done for a long time, and even though the colleges are still at the core of Oxford and Cambridge, it's difficult. And then you've got the performing arts which has similar kinds of problems. So I've got a great deal of sympathy with these special cases, but I think it would have been easier, and the whole thing might have been more easily sustainable, if you'd simply said from the start, "Right, the colleges are liberal arts colleges, liberal colleges of the arts and sciences, and you'll have to work in the special subject provisions which have to, be on offer." But instead of that, they tried to merge the two things. And I think they came unstuck. At Merrill, they didn't seem to know what the slant was going to be . . . the first man who was appointed, Paul Seabury, lasted for about a year, and then went back to [UC] Berkeley. He was a political scientist. Then Phil Bell came as the first provost . . . Phil I'd known in Africa very briefly, because he was the Rockefeller Foundation officer for East and Central Africa while I was in Salisbury . . . we'd met a few

times. But he set up a Third World theme which, of course, coincided with the great outside racial concerns of the time.

Jarrell: Outside, yes.

Willson: Then you had Porter, or what is now Porter, with an arts theme—stuck out on the other side of the campus all on its own for a long time.

Jarrell: College Five.

Willson: And that College Five. And then Oakes, under . . . Herman Blake, who was something of a law unto himself, really. A remarkable man. . . and very pro-college . . . but it was really pro-college as Herman Blake saw his college . . . he wasn't particularly interested in anybody else's college. And so having themes or slants produced a very strange succession of circumstances.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: But I'm not pretending that it would have all worked out superbly and perfectly had you not had the slanting from the start: more significant things happened.

Jarrell: This is just one aspect of the whole constellation.

Willson: Just one aspect of it, yes.

Jarrell: I'd like to continue talking about Stevenson College's student and college residential life, and how you envisioned that and helped to make it real here in those early years.

Comparison of Cowell and Stevenson College Styles

Willson: Yes. Well, it might be worth saying that the two initial provosts had slightly different attitudes. I think Page Smith was more involved emotionally in the exercise than Charles Page. He had been eleven years at [UC] Los Angeles and was particularly angry about the indifference of the system towards students. So he was particularly protective and particularly, in the best sense, sentimental about the exercise. Charles Page, while he had been a Smith College man for years, struck me always as being a little more removed, a little cooler towards it—very kind and considerate, but not quite so inclined to take a paternalistic view of the attitude of the provost and the college towards its students as Page Smith was. So in the recruitment of faculty there was a

difference right from the beginning, because I think Page Smith went out, very, very enthusiastically, with his ideas about the college thing, his concept of it, looking primarily for people who shared that kind of involvement. Whereas Charles Page, while he was perfectly aware of all this, at the same time put professional, scholarly attainment of the more orthodox kind well ahead in his estimation of people. So I think he took on people perhaps without instilling into them, as it were, as much of the collegiate idea as Page Smith may have done with his faculty. It's very difficult for me to be certain of this because I wasn't involved in those processes, but retrospectively that's how it looks.

Willson's Concept of His Role as Residential College Provost

Willson: I have to say, autobiographically, that I was never a residential college student. I didn't go to university until after the second World War. I was married and had a family by the time I became a student. My undergraduate work was done at the University of Manchester, and I lived in a suburb 10 miles away and went in by bus every day. So [mine] was an urban commuting life as an undergraduate. Then when I went to Oxford after that and spent ten years there, I was at first a graduate student . . . and it's never quite the same experience. I never lived in a college while I was there. But I was close to it and I fell in love with it, as people tend to do with Oxford, even though I was never an undergraduate there. I got to appreciate the college system, which of course is small and close . . . it is not, in my view sentimental at all. I have always resisted the dreadful notion that I think tends to get tied up with arguments about the college system in Santa Cruz, that somehow the ideal college head or faculty member has a "Mr. Chips" kind of image. I never accepted this. I hope I'm kind and considerate to students, and one gets very fond of students. But the exercise is not to be a sentimental father figure to students. If you're a college tutor, or provost, or whatever, you really have to try to use the opportunity of having students in residence, having them close together, to teach them and to get them to teach themselves about the problems of living together and learning together, and about the advantages that they can get out of that situation. But not, frankly, to regard it as a highly paternalistic exercise or one in which you take the attitude of a high school teacher rather than a university faculty member.

Faculty Preceptors

Willson: And it seemed to me a highly civilized notion that you should have 50 percent of the students in residence and 50 percent out. And of course in the early years at Stevenson, they were all going to be in because we were beginning and had a year or two when we were very small and had a rich staff-student ratio . . . so the conditions from that point of view were perfect. The colleges were going to have separate residence houses with preceptors—that was Charles Page's term, actually. He took it over from Princeton and called the resident people in the houses . . .

Jarrell: The academic residents.

Willson: . . . academic residents . . . he called them preceptors. Everybody took it up and it still sticks, often to people's amazement and puzzlement. But that's where it came from. The term was Charles' introduction. In the first year or two we had full faculty members living in the houses as preceptors. That was a practice which, I regret to say, slipped away as the years went by. It is one of the problems really. The collegiate society, and I think it's both one of its strengths and one of its weaknesses in the modern world, is a reflection of monasticism. In the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, every fellow was a bachelor priest until 1870. Then they were suddenly released to the joys of matrimony, whereupon a lot of them went and built large houses outside and ceased to live in college. But there were always a number of bachelors, or spinsters later in the women's colleges, and a number of people who were prepared to spend vast amounts of time in the colleges, even though they had a domestic life outside. Their wives didn't always approve and if you project that into the 1960s, there was a problem . . . it's still a problem.

The Role of Academic Preceptors

Jarrell: One thing I would like to ask you, it's very fundamental . . . I've never read a job description of the preceptors, but how would you have described the early role and tasks of a residential preceptor at Stevenson?

Willson: Well, what I expected them to do, and I don't think I was different from any other provost basically, was that they would live in the house; they would have a sense of responsibility for good order and discipline, but that wasn't to be the overwhelming part of, or even the greatest part of their lives, because you hoped that they and the students would have enough sense of good order and discipline not to need constant attention to that aspect of life; and that they should try to enrich the lives of their students as students; that they should be on good friendly terms with them; they should be available to them for advice if they needed it; and they should do some social things, although we couldn't give them much money to help them—to put on the occasional party, and so on. Generally to be friends, good friends, good companions, good advisors, people to whom students could turn.

At the same time, preceptors should be people who had enough savvy to know when something was wrong in the house and be able perhaps to try and put their finger on it and decide what was wrong and put it right. To share that experience with the other preceptors and to work with them to create a good, sensible, community spirit and community attitudes and community activities. It wasn't easy because you always had, and I imagine you'll always have, students who didn't like residential living, who were either there because their parents said they had to be, or because they couldn't as yet find a way of escaping from it. So you always had a number of malcontents. The other thing that's astonishing is that even in a tiny community like that—there were only about fifty people in each house—you could lose students. I didn't want preceptors to have an over-sentimental, paternalistic attitude . . . and yet there were times when you got near-tragedies, and you thought, my God, perhaps having such an attitude is the only way to avoid that kind of thing happening. Because the

ability of teenagers to hide themselves away in a state of utter misery and come to grief, even in that kind of situation, is remarkable. It really shook me, once or twice, to know how much could happen. When the counseling service was set up, it probably helped to prevent such extreme cases. But it's always a problem and one was always conscious that there were people who didn't somehow fit; either they didn't want to fit, or they wanted to fit but couldn't fit. Somehow you had an irreducible minimum of sad cases of that sort.

Then of course you had the fact that most of the residential students were freshmen and sophomores. We never got the mixture as rich as we would [have] liked to have had with juniors and seniors as well . . . residents in the houses were, and I suppose always might be, predominantly freshmen and sophomores. The numbers of juniors and seniors who stayed on was always quite small. That's in some way a pity because it meant that once you'd been in the house, and then went off—either you left Santa Cruz, or, if you stayed on the campus, you went to live downtown—the temptation to let the college run out of your system, as it were, was quite great. Fortunately, students had to come back for some administrative reasons. So the college remained the focal point for a lot of them. They had friends there, so it was never too bad. But I've often thought that if the college had had more administrative, registrarial authority than it ever had, that might have helped to keep the whole student body together throughout their careers.

Jarrell: Yes. No, I see that when the students would move off campus though, that that one or two year experience that they had . . . that they were seasoned by that time and had gone through something. Instead of just transmitting it right onto the new freshmen who had come in, they would be living off-campus. So it was kind of like starting over again.

Willson: Yes. That's right.

Jarrell: Except for the continuity that you had with the preceptors and the RAs.

Willson: Yes. But we did begin to build up . . . I was here for ten years, and by the end of ten years, we had established a sufficient tradition for people's younger brothers and sisters to be coming along and wanting to come into the college. And that was touching and gave a sense of victory, you know.

Jarrell: Yes. I can imagine when you'd get a younger sister saying, "Oh, Stevenson's the only, the only college that I can go to. I don't want to be anywhere else."

Willson: That's right. That's right.

Jarrell: That kind of loyalty and feeling.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: That's a very ineffable kind of thing to . . . you can't set out to build something like that.

Willson: That's right.

Jarrell: You just hope that there is enough meaning in the experience and obviously there was if that began happening.

Willson: There was another [dilemna]—how can both the college life and one's domestic life be accommodated? How you can do it? You can hope to get young faculty members who are not married. You may get a young faculty member who is married and whose wife or husband, whichever it may be, is happy, and finds it convenient to live in a preceptorial apartment for a little while. But you're not likely to get a very long term commitment to this except in a few cases. In the beginning, though, all that worked beautifully and we had faculty living in. Therefore we had a situation in which students who came felt very much that they were being looked after by the sort of people they expected to be looked after by, and so on.

The Changing Student Culture of the 1960s and Campus Residence Rules

Jarrell: Well, what we're talking about here is in the 1960s. You had a kind of a loosening of behavioral standards, okay . . . however we want to phrase that.

Willson: Yes, yes.

Jarrell: Culturally, sexually, politically . . .

Willson: Yes, yes.

Jarrell: And how that experience was dealt with at Stevenson College. I kind of know how it was dealt with at Cowell College. And you indicated about the anti-paternalistic bias at Stevenson, so that seems pertinent.

Willson: Yes. Well, I suppose you can put it as strongly as that. I would say it was rather more a lukewarm paternalism than anti-paternalistic. But certainly it was lukewarm by comparison, I think, with Cowell as I understood it at the time. We started under regulations that were laid down from on high and which we weren't in a position to argue with. I'm not sure that anybody argued with it at the time . . . there were separate houses for men and women . . . there were even separate quads in Stevenson. The four northerly houses were for men and the four southerly ones were for women. And so not only did you have no mixing in the houses, you had no mixing between two groups of four houses. And . . . I . . . have to be a little bit careful of talking about this . . . and remind myself and you that I came from a society in which the whole student culture, the whole sexual culture, if you like, was very different. My reading of American society in this respect, and I'm very much open to correction, is that relations between the sexes have been for a very, very long time far more of, what you might call a contractual nature than I was used to, even in days when sexual

morals were probably more strictly adhered to than they have tended to be in the last twenty to thirty years. I say that because I think my reactions sometimes made my colleagues a little amused and also a little bewildered. Because I was often talking in a language which clearly they thought was either archaic or completely irrelevant to the present condition. But despite all that, I don't think my somewhat uncertain neutrality about the matter was entirely unrepresentative of the faculty. I think an awful lot of the faculty were not at all bothered by the question of whether the sexes should be mixed up . . . how much relaxation of the rules there should be. The controversy that grew up was one of those things that cropped up out of the blue, as a result of things going on outside Santa Cruz altogether. And hit Santa Cruz at the same time as UCSC was being set up.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: The ideas of a different generation. We had the Vietnam war, the racial problems . . . and along with that, a kind of sexual relaxation, Beatlemania, and all the rest of it.

Jarrell: And the drugs.

Willson: And the drugs. The drugs came, yes. I suppose the drugs were hotting up pretty much at the same time. They certainly hotted up towards the end of the '60s. (Laughter) Anyway, as the time went on, we came under a number of pressures: one was simply the pressure of students saying, "Why should we be denied, why should we have to live with these ridiculous archaic rules?" that were ordained from the center of the campus. I don't mean that they were put out unimaginatively or rigidly or unpleasantly . . . they were simply put out as orthodox, traditional instructions which we fell in with. So we had remarkable, complex visiting hours for men and women—when they should be out of each other's houses and whether you could have the door closed or opened, and all the rest of it. It seems, looking back on it, incredible. But there it was. Initially, I don't think anyone thought about it very much.

Jarrell: Questioned it.

Willson: But quite quickly we came under the pressure of all these tendencies that were crowding in upon the world and forcing us to take some notice. The students were very vocal and very argumentative. It's very interesting, really, looking back on it, to see how people began to respond. Cowell responded with their kind of paternalistic view of the situation, which meant, I think, that they tended to cover up bad cases: they used to try very, very hard to handle matters on a very individual basis. They didn't get involved, as far as possible, in great public arguments. I think Page Smith and Jasper Rose both used their considerable powers of persuasion to get people into a more relaxed frame of mind.

In Stevenson, because the faculty was a bit more volatile, a little more impatient of the total idea of worrying about students, a little less used to it . . . and a lot of

them, being social scientists, were a little more aware of the sort of sociological changes that were going on . . . and Charles Page being rather cool and a rather mischievous and highly individualistic spirit . . . all this built up both a more permissive and a more indifferent atmosphere than I think applied in Cowell. After Charles had gone, I inherited the situation. I found myself, on the whole, arguing that fundamentally you can't go against a massive movement of this kind and what you must do is to roll with the punches and give a little here and there. And I suppose the thing which made the giving hardest was, as always, the rather unpleasant extreme cases which roused the Chancellor's legitimate wrath and led to articles in the newspapers, and lots of comment in print much of which became frankly obscene and had to be jumped upon, and so on and so forth.

Either you fight the whole thing head-on and take the consequences of doing so, or you start to change the system. We started to change it . . . and I suppose the only real unpleasantness that I had was on the one hand, with a few students who were on the extreme edge and who made everybody's life miserable, not just mine; and on the other hand, with the Chancellor and his officers, whom I thought were over-rigid in their reactions, and unwilling to yield on the matter of a relaxation of the rules governing residence. So there were one or two rather unpleasant meetings at which provosts spoke our minds. We simply said that we couldn't go on like this . . . I can't remember the exact wording but it was to the effect that it was one thing for Dean to sit in the center of the campus and say what should be and quite another thing to live on the periphery and to handle a situation as it developed. That if he was going to, say, hold onto the notion of segregated housing and segregated quads and rules that were okay for the '50s, and not yield a bit, then we were going to have continuous trouble. So he yielded and the yielding helped enormously in some respects. But of course, you were pushed never to stop yielding. When I left I recalled that we had gone from unmixed quads to mixed quads, then from unmixed houses to mixed houses, then from mixed houses to mixed floors. And the eventual demand, which was my stopping point, was mixed bathrooms.

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: It was really very funny. I remember saying at the dinner they gave me, very kindly, before I left, that I had come to understand the inevitability of gradualism. (Laughter)

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: But I said, that's as far as I'm going. What you do after I'm gone . . . but I'm not yielding on this last point. And I honestly don't know what the situation became after that. I've gladly kept out of it. (Laughter) But, seriously, it was a long process of giving way strategically, while trying to hold the line against what the great majority of students as well as faculty and other people would have regarded as going beyond the limits of decent behavior.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: And so we had this continuous thing. I'm not sure whether this is just old hat to you, or not. It's . . .

Jarrell: No. No, because it hasn't been spoken about very much in the interviews I've done. Certainly that whole relaxation . . . I don't think that there was any way that it could have been thought out ahead of time because it was happening simultaneously with the campuses being built and established.

Willson: That's right.

Jarrell: So it was a merging of all of this change in the society that was being reflected very rapidly here. So it wasn't something that you could plan for.

Willson: No.

Jarrell: Or think through . . . you had to respond.

Relationship Between the Santa Cruz Police Department and UCSC

Willson: That's right. And it was exacerbated, just as student reaction across the country was exacerbated, more in the universities which attracted the brightest students than anywhere else. And we attracted bright students at that time. I mean we really were right at the top of the tree. And our students were representative of an intelligentsia which was offended by things and passed it on to their children and they really passed it on to us. (Laughter) I think the drug scene created particular problems—drugs, and drink to a far lesser extent. Some of it was quite comic, but some of it very sad. The relationship of the campus to the police outside was very tricky and sticky.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: Charles Page took rather more of it than I did because I think he was more abrasive about it. He didn't approve of any of the civil police coming onto the campus. He was quite awkward when they did. He could be very tough and he took a very strong line on the rights of the campus to police its own people. He more or less told them where to go, and they didn't particularly like him. Page Smith may have mentioned that Jasper Rose, who is *very* English and has a richly English voice, had one splendid brush with the police, when they called called up and objected to the fact that some Cowell students were having a party on the beach, at which they were drinking beer. Whereupon Jasper barked down the phone, "Well, my man, why worry me about these simple frolics. Why shouldn't they sit on the beach and drink beer?"

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: So you can imagine the kind of rather touchy relationships in those early years between the local police people and ourselves. (Laughter)

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: There was one dreadful case in which there was a big meeting at the Civic Center, one of the big protest meetings, about the war, and the Monterey Tactical Squad was ordered up, and set about the students as they came out. There were running fights through the streets and the students came back and showed us all their bruises and said how dreadful it was and how one or two of them were locked up. We had to go down and bail them out . . . it was unpleasant. Those sorts of things were unpleasant. That shouldn't give you an impression that the whole place was in a constant state of uproar and dreadful trouble. It wasn't. The greater part of the time, and in a sense the more interesting part of it, from an institutional history point of view, I would think, was the way in which one tried, everybody tried, to work out what having a residential college system meant. It was a funny, slow, and halting business, really. Because an awful lot of faculty, though they came in with the best of intentions, were quite bewildered when they found out what they were expected to do, or what people were hoping they would do . . . they found it difficult at the professional level to do the thing we were talking about last time, which was to relate their disciplinary departmentalism to the collegiate idea. And that was a complicated thing in itself—where their loyalties lay, how much time they should give to each . . . in the absence of very precise directives.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: So in a sense it depended a good deal upon the persuasiveness of the provost at the time as to how much they could get their faculty to go along. I think Page Smith and I and Kenneth Thimann managed it a bit. Kenneth had a harder time because he had a whole lot of scientists without offices in Crown. Kenneth, himself, was a famous laboratory scientist and though he always backed the college idea, did not feel quite the same about it as Page and Jasper and I did. But we were all extremely good friends . . . we met frequently, we talked frequently . . . and yet there were quite a few differences of practice between us. As for the faculty who were preceptors, some had done the job or a similar job elsewhere, like David Thomas, and so they fell into it very easily. Some were new to it, didn't altogether quite know what to make of it . . . the younger ones, I think were often so committed to freedom, the "freedom jag" as you might call it, that they weren't quite clear where they should draw the line and when they should jump on people and when they should not. So there were a number of tricky episodes. But on the whole, they did it well. And we introduced from the very start the resident assistants—students—to help out.

Jarrell: The RA's.

Willson: The RA thing . . . and that on the whole worked very well. Because you usually got very keen students who were very willing, and wanted to live on campus, even though they were juniors or even seniors, occasionally as the time went by. So you got a devoted little band of preceptors and RAs. In our case, there were eight houses, so there were eight preceptors and some of them

were married and their wives would come in on it, and then there would be sixteen RAs. So there was a group of nearly 30 or so . . .

Jarrell: A little cluster.

Willson: Quite a little group . . . and we met fairly frequently and hammered out problems and discussed things. They went after personal problems to be dealt with, and when the counseling service was set up as a separate entity I thought it was rather a pity. I always thought the counselors should be college people.

Jarrell: What did you think was a pity?

Willson: Well, I think it a pity that a lot of the student services were organized on a central basis. And at the end of my time here, I had a year as Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs and tried to do something about that, and it didn't go too well, really. (Laughter) That's another story.

College Proctors

Willson: But I think building up the faculty and student preceptorial functions of the residential college system was very important. An aspect of it that I don't think was ever thought of until we got started, and which I do think the English contingent perhaps understood a little bit better than anybody else . . . was that you can't run a collegiate institution with a 24-hour residential situation without having some college staff who are devoted to the college's interest who are neither academics nor students. Jasper Rose and I ran a long campaign to get what we now call bursars and proctors appointed, who could with sufficient decentralized power give the provost and the college as an entity some control over its essential daily functioning.

Jarrell: Do you mean to coordinate all the services and have an overview of the college?

Willson: Yes, but also to actually provide certain services. You know, there was no provision originally for anybody to be a sort of information clerk. In Oxford and Cambridge, one of the most revered members of a college even to this day, is the head porter . . . it's a term which wouldn't be acceptable in California. But nonetheless that guy has a gate house at the entrance to the college and he knows more about the college and the people in it than anybody else.

Jarrell: Like a concierge.

Willson: That's right. Like a concierge. That obviously was never thought of in the planning of this place. But while it's never been fully developed, at least we got some college staff, administrative staff, appointed, and that made the college more of an entity. We tried to alter the terms of the college/center dichotomy. We said, from the college point of view, "Look, if you want a residential college system to work, you must have these kind of entities built up around it."

Sheila Hough

Willson: You wanted me to talk a little bit about people. Charles Page started off by employing Sheila Hough as his personal assistant. I took Sheila over in that regard, and she was an enormous help in running the college from the start. As you may know, she then went on at a later stage to become part of the counseling service which she still is, 75 percent, I believe. She also got involved in a little bit of teaching. But for the first few years she was almost solidly my personal assistant. She was extremely good. She'd had experience in media; she was on the Yale Broadcasting Unit for some years, interviewing celebrities and things like that. She had lines out to the entertainment world. She was extraordinarily good at bargaining over that sort of thing.

College Night at Stevenson

Willson: The college night thing (it was Page Smith's invention, I think, and was established during the first year . . . Cowell had College Night fixed as Thursday night while we were all down in the field house and the trailers.) We took the idea over as well and we had Monday night. Charles Page took over the same tradition and I continued it. I found that College Night demanded a great deal of stamina and will power to ensure that it become an institution. Because it's just part of modern life and particularly modern California life that students are brought up with the belief that freedom of choice is the greatest good in the world and that nothing, *nothing* should interfere with their freedom of choice. Obviously I'm being a little cruel and a little unfair, but it does seem to be a predominant feeling. At the same time, while the Stevenson faculty were very much individualists, very conscious of individual freedom, they knew, as good academics, that that your freedom will be enriched if you also have a certain amount of discipline, a certain amount of structure. In the colleges these two things came into conflict all the time. I found myself saying, "Look it's surely a good thing that college people should all come together once a week and eat a meal in a little more civilized state than you normally eat meals, and sit down and be served and talk together afterwards and listen to something or watch something for half an hour." And everybody would say, "Oh yes, that's absolutely splendid." But of course if there's something else that they wanted to do more, then you were not expected to say, "Don't do it." And so this was why I say you needed a lot of stamina because the only way to overcome that fragmentation, their lack of loyalty, was to try to make the thing a tradition, which people felt a little bit worried about flouting too often, and to make it attractive enough to be worth attending.

Jarrell: Right. So it had some real meaning.

Willson: So it had to have some real meaning. So we operated on the basis of starting by having sherry for the faculty, and inviting faculty and visitors' wives to come and drink in the common room and then go down and join the students for dinner. We started with a fairly formal kind of high table situation . . . I even bought candlesticks, you see. And we used to call it "Candlestick Park."

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: I have an instinctive feeling that if you want to get a social unit to stick together, to become a social unit, you have to have some minimum of ritual. I tried not to push it too much, but on certain things I thought it was essential to have a minimum amount of ritual. So we had the College Night and we stuck to it. And getting the program brings me back to Sheila, for Sheila was extraordinarily good at getting people to come to perform at College Night.

Jarrell: Speakers . . .

Willson: Speakers and all sorts of people. Charles Page [was very involved] in the first year and he liked to invite unusual and radical people. So we had a wonderful trade unionist from the San Francisco docks and then we had a burlesque show (laughter) from one of the San Francisco nightclubs. He sailed fairly near the line in some of these things, really. But he had a good sense of what was on the kids' minds and so it went well . . . I tried very much later to encourage students and faculty to take part in College Nights because we could do a lot of it ourselves, and we only had a limited amount of money to employ professional groups. So I tried to encourage people to do one-act plays and things of this sort, and we got the faculty involved a little bit. I used to do some of it myself. One thing that we did become almost a tradition . . . it was to put on Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, which we did for each of my last five years with faculty and students taking part and me reading most of the narrative.

Jarrell: I never knew that. I love that.

Willson: It was great fun and it involved people: it got people involved.

Jarrell: Yes. That tension between individual freedom and a communal spirit and effort of coming together which is at the heart of, could be one of the main parts of the college system, but how to institutionalize that, how to actualize it.

Willson: Yes.

Stevenson "At Homes"

Willson: There was another aspect of it which concerned the purely physical accommodation. The provosts' houses were an important element. The house gave you a base from which you could, if you so chose, launch a campaign of hospitality or attempted hospitality to bring in both faculty and students. And our experience is very interesting, really, and tells you a good deal about the conditions of the society in which we were living. My wife and I started by trying to invite every week, a group of students to come and drink and talk for three-quarters of an hour. We called them "At Homes." We sent invitations out. To get through a long story, we went on doing this the whole time we were there, and we found that we would send out invitations to sixty students, knowing that not

more than twenty would turn up. That was the formula which slowly developed. It was fascinating to us . . . we didn't think we'd been brought up in a terribly formal society, but certainly in the Oxford of our time, if you invited students to come to a party to your home and they didn't come and they didn't explain why they didn't come . . .

Jarrell: No RSVP's?

Willson: That's right. There was no kind of excuse for such behavior. So it was a tremendous shock to come here to a situation where you found that people didn't respond, people turned up without having responded, people didn't turn up at all, and those who didn't turn up didn't respond. To the extent of about eighty percent of the student body that was true. You had a twenty percent group who would go through all those orthodox . . . no doubt middle-class, archaic ceremonials, but they would go through them . . . they'd been brought up to it. The rest seemed totally bewildered by it . . . they didn't know what it was about. "What's this funny business of going to talk to the provost for an hour in his house? I don't want to do that." Well! Page Smith would have a different view of it, being a native American who himself had been through all this, though in private colleges. But coming as I did, I'm reluctant to do more than simply report the experience. We found that when the students came, some of them came highly skeptical, some of them came very defiantly, as though it had been a kind of . . .

Jarrell: Command?

Willson: Command . . . some came without shoes, and, in the oldest clothes, or unwashed, and so on . . . in fact one girl I always remember coming in such a bizarre costume that Jean said to her, "How long did it take you to get into that garb?" And the girl said, "Three hours." (Laughter)

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: So in a sense we got attuned to this whole business.

Jarrell: California mannerlessness . . .

Willson: Yes. But not fundamentally.

Jarrell: It's not out of a stingy spirit or anything, it's more bewilderment, I think.

Willson: Yes, that's right. A kind of bewilderment, but also it so often concealed perfectly delightful people. Once you broke it down and once you demonstrated that you weren't there to patronize them or to lecture them or to do anything but just talk in a friendly way to them. They would come in and wander around the house and look at the furniture and go downstairs—you'd find them all over the place. Sometimes one would sit in the corner with a book while the rest of them talked. It was a fascinating experience.

Jarrell: It took a little getting used to.

Willson: That's right, yes.

Jarrell: Well, I think that's a delightful, very interesting little footnote to all this—the provost's house and this idea of extending the hospitality—it starts with the person who's head of the college.

Willson: Yes. And it's very hard work. And I must say, at the risk of sounding awfully arrogant, the plain fact is that you have to have a certain kind of temperament to do that job.

Jarrell: Yes, you do.

Willson: And it isn't really a matter of being able to be trained to do it . . . either you can do it or you can't do it.

Jarrell: You have to enjoy people.

Willson: You have to enjoy it. And you have also to have a partner who is happy to do it. My wife was very happy to do it and much better at it than I was. So we had a good team. Then we had the advantage of having Jean's mother and both our daughters around—they were both at one time or another students at the place, which they didn't appreciate at all, because they said we were a great embarrassment to them! Like all faculty children, [a] great embarrassment to them, which I think it was to some extent. But the family made it in many ways easier for us.

The Leadership Role of Provosts

Willson: But the provost's house was a very important thing and I'm devastated to hear that some provost's houses are not being used as provost's houses or have been suggested as places which the college makes use of while the provost hides in a corner, and so on, which worries me a great deal. Because a college like any institution, has to be led. It really needs some positive leadership. It's not a matter of the head of a college throwing his or her weight around . . . anybody who throws too much weight around deserves to be bumped on the head at some stage. But that's a totally different thing from giving a lead. If you don't give a lead and you don't set a pattern, or a tone, or whatever you like to call it, then ultimately the thing won't go. If you give a reasonable lead, then you get people around you who will be willing to accept that lead and make a good thing of it.

Defining the Preceptorship: Senior and Academic Preceptors at Stevenson

Willson: Now when Charles Page started the college he started it with just one officer of the college in addition to himself—the senior preceptor, and that was

me. I watched this through the first year I was there, before he went away, and came to the conclusion that there ought to be two such people. So what I did when I became provost was to divide the job between a senior preceptor, who was to be responsible, fundamentally, for good order and discipline around the place, and an academic preceptor who should look after all the academic arrangements of the college—the college courses, and the core course, advising of students, and so on. We tried very hard, everybody on the campus tried hard, to get an advising system working so that students went to somebody in their college who would give them general academic or any other kind of advice. That never in my time really worked terribly satisfactorily, and I've often wondered why. Partly it's because a lot of faculty are unhappy about advising students on anything except their own specialism.

Jarrell: Instead of looking at the students' broader academic career.

Willson: That's right. And another thing where my Englishness comes out, is that I found faculty, except the preceptors, very, very unhappy about what you might call the pastoral care of students. Now . . . it took me a long time to accept the notion of a separate band of people, called counselors, with special training . . . and the idea that you draw a line between the person you go to to talk about whether you can do your maths or whether you can't do your maths properly, and the person you go to to ask, say, "What should I do because my girlfriend's run out on me? Or because my father's died or because my sister's ill," or whatever it is that's bothering you. In the old Oxford and Cambridge system, the notion that you should have a group of professional counselors to turn to for this was totally foreign. If you were a good tutor to students, if they wanted to come to you with private problems, you were prepared to talk to them. I had to come to accept—and it was hard to do so—that in the American cultural setting, it is very difficult to get a teacher in a university to regard him or herself as having a pastoral concern for the student as well as a professional concern. In a way, the collegiate notion to some extent rests on a willingness to blur that line quite a long way, if you want college life to be really successful. I don't know how it works in the small private colleges in the States, but I can't believe that a small private college could succeed if you try to make that distinction too rigid.

Jarrell: It's interesting because as it's evolved each college has its trained counselors.

Willson: Counselors, that's right.

Jarrell: A couple of half-time people who are licensed counselors.

Willson: That's right, yes, yes.

Jarrell: And I understand that the pastoral, you know, derives from a religious context.

Willson: Yes, yes.

Jarrell: But here I think if you're talking about career development or academic advising that's something that a faculty person would be comfortable with.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: But the idea of dealing with grief or loss or pain or drugs might be very anxiety-provoking in the faculty person.

Willson: Yes.

Jarrell: So we don't have maybe that . . . that's very interesting because I think your point of view is unusual.

Willson: Oh yes, I'm sure it is. I would hate to think of trying, deliberately, to steer the whole campus in the direction of taking on cultural characteristics that are entirely foreign to the community. But I'm just reporting my own experience. And I'd go so far as to say that I don't think you can draw the distinction between these two functions too tightly if you're going to have a residential college system working properly. Of course, it's good that you have the professional counselors there, but even so it seems to me that if you're a preceptor, you are in a sense partly a counselor by virtue of being there. The student knows the preceptor is downstairs— "I'm up here in my bedroom and I'm unhappy . . . and he knows I am, or he thinks I am, or I want to go and tell him that I am." The preceptor is caught in that context.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: But nowadays few full faculty act as preceptors and you get graduate students and administrative staff, some of whom are excellent at it.

Jarrell: Yes. I think again it's as you said, that one must have a temperament for this.

Willson: That's right.

Jarrell: As provost, to be a kind of gracious host or hostess in that social and blending kind of way and I think it's true also that some of the preceptors over the years have felt very responsive and comfortable talking about very personal things with students, intimate things.

Willson: That's right. Yes, yes. Others not good.

Jarrell: And then others may be less . . .

Willson: Yes.

College Amenities

Willson: Another point about the colleges that is worth mentioning is that they were very bleak places when we started. Of course, later on, if you ever went up

to Berkeley to a meeting, they'd say, "That's not a campus, that's a country club where you all sit around under the trees and chatter while you should have been in the classrooms." You know, the kind of thing, I'm sure you've heard it.

Jarrell: Yes. Idyllic . . .

Willson: Idyllic thing. But in fact the buildings themselves were none too luxurious in the context of what you need to make a college begin to tick. The dining hall was a multi-purpose room: it still is. You use it as a lecture theater, use it as a cinema, use it as a theater, use it as an eating place . . . and like any multi-purpose room, it never comes off completely. But at the beginning, there was no stage, there were no curtains, there was nothing. So I set my mind to trying to beg, borrow, or steal the means to improve it. Gradually, year by year, sometimes grudgingly, we managed to get a little bit more done. We got a stage put in and we got curtains put in and we made the dining hall into at least a passable place where you could put on a performance and where you could draw the curtains and had some carpet on part of the floor . . . and just softened it up, really.

Jarrell: Real amenities, yes.

Willson: That's right—amenities. The biggest success of all was what is now the Stevenson Coffee House and that was very amusing. It was started as a recreation room with nothing in it at all, except some quite pleasant gay furniture . . . "gay" in the old sense. The present provost, Dennis McElrath, for some reason or other called it the "Jolly Room" and everybody thought it was a British importation and they all accused me and . . . or Jasper Rose or any other poor Englishman as imposing this anachronism of a "jolly room" on them. But it had nothing to do with us at all. To this day I don't know why Dennis called it a "Jolly Room," but he did and it stuck. But the "Jolly Room" was just a bleak, bleak place for about two years. I recall Muriel Bradbrook, a delightful woman at Cambridge . . . she's now a Dame . . . a very eminent English Literature professor, coming out for the opening of Stevenson. I shall always remember her sitting in a row of secretaries and faculty sealing envelopes the night before we started, to get messages into the student boxes. And we asked her to give a talk on what the Oxford and Cambridge colleges were like and what she thought was the essence of the system. After the lecture she came and sat in the "Jolly Room," which was atrocious . . . the place was littered, it was filthy, there were no carpets, the lighting was bleak and bare, and I said to her afterwards, "I'm so sorry this place is such an awful mess," and she said, "Oh, don't worry. Just think what those Cambridge halls were like in the old days, with all that straw and all those dogs and bones about." (Laughter) Which I thought was a fair commentary.

The Stevenson Coffee House

Willson: But then one day we had a takeover of the "Jolly Room" at one of the heights of the Vietnam War protests, and a group of students took it over and made it a sort of campaign headquarters and oh, we had all sorts of problems.

The old question came, "Well, what action do you take? How long do you sit and do nothing about this? Do you bring in the troops or what do you do?" Fortunately, just about two or three weeks before this happened, the headquarters people had brought a visiting fireman round who was a potential donor. They arrived and they looked around and I met them and walked around with them. They seemed pleasant but uncommunicative. As we were walking out of the college, I pointed out the "Jolly Room" and said we'd always wanted to turn it into a coffee house. The chap said, "Well, well." We shook hands and then I forgot about him. They were always coming around with people like that. However, just after this crisis arose (laughter), I got a call from Central Services from Gurden Mooser, I think, who said, "Remember the chap who came to Stevenson and you took him around?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, he's given you $20,000 to start the coffee house." So, how wonderful. And what we did was to bring in the workmen with pneumatic drills to start to dismantle part of the building. This brought the protesters out with headaches quite quickly. (Laughter) So we achieved two objects at once. But seriously, about the coffee house, there's a little plaque in there to commemorate my wife's contribution towards it. She was very keen on the idea and is memorialized legitimately there, I think. We both felt that what you need in a college above all things is a place that is comfortable where people can come and eat and drink and talk.

Jarrell: Absolutely.

Willson: On the whole, I think that's been fairly successful, that operation. It was a great success at the start. Again one had to impose certain kinds of rules. It was not to be a hamburger joint. You see, we had people who wanted to make it into a hamburger joint. And it was not to have loud pop music all day long. It had to have quiet music for most of the time and a mixture of music. Then of course the art people were very helpful because they said, "Oh, what a lovely place to hang pictures." And Marshall Sylvan, one of the faculty, who is a wonderful college man, personally built most of the tables in there. He's a cabinetmaker and he personally built those tables. So a lot of people were involved. We got professional people in at first to run it, but then it's been there ever since with only one professional, I think. But the point is, that without some sort of facilities of that kind it is not a college. After my time, they built the very lovely conference room they have now. Those sorts of facilities are fundamentally important in completing the things a community needs.

The Senior Common Room Idea

Willson: What didn't work out ever to my satisfaction, but worked a little bit, was the idea of a senior common room. Again, it's extraordinarily difficult to get American faculty members to relax. Their notion of relaxation is to run out and fill a mug full of hot coffee, and run back with it into their offices.

Jarrell: On the run.

Willson: On the run, really. And I was used to a system in colleges and universities, for that matter, where, at, 10 o'clock every morning, people would

drift into the common room. And they would sit around and look at the papers or talk to each other or pass political messages to each other or plot the next day's tactics, and have a cup of coffee and then wander back to their offices. This sort of common room thing seemed to me a very, very important aspect of college life. We tried—but it never worked as successfully as I'd hoped. But it did work a bit, and the common room did become a place, never where people stopped in the morning session or the afternoon session to have coffee or tea and talk, but did become a place where you could have some social gatherings—the faculty and their partners and families in the evenings . . . and some seminars and some meetings. So it began to loom a little bit, but it never came off quite as much I'd have liked.

Some Early Stevenson College Figures

Willson: People, in addition to the ones I've mentioned . . . I've mentioned Sheila Hough . . . the first Senior Preceptor under my provostship was David Kaun, who subsequently became the fourth provost . . . and Martin Kanes, in French Literature, was the first Academic Preceptor . . . and they each did a very good job indeed. Then when they'd done a spell and wanted to be off, Carlos Noreña became Senior Preceptor and Alan Kelley, a mathematician became Academic Preceptor . . . Bud Bridges, one of the physicists, became Academic Preceptor later. All the people who did the jobs of Senior and Academic Preceptors in my time did a wonderful job, I thought. They really gave their time. What I was particularly proud of was getting the scientists involved. Because as I think I mentioned last time, that's the great difficulty with a residential college system.

Jarrell: Yes, the lab scientists . . .

Willson: That's right. I deliberately chose a scientist to be deputy—that was Bruce Rosenblum, a physicist, and he was very good. Marshall Sylvan, who's a mathematician, refused to have his office with the other mathematics people and kept his office in Stevenson, as he has done till this day. Bob Garrison, who was professor of geology came rather later, and though he was never a preceptor, he took a nice interest in the college. So the scientists got dragged in as much as we could. Some of them didn't. But I've always said that if you could have a good proportion of sensibly devoted people you could afford to have some who were either not very interested or were too interested. You need a good balance in the middle, and we got it. And I was very delighted with it. The faculty people who had the residence preceptorships, as I recall, all did a good job. Marshall Sylvan was outstanding, I think, in keeping the place going and helping to develop it. And there were a host of others . . . it's not that I'm not trying to give credit where credit's due, but there were so many as the years went by, they changed, you know . . . and it's difficult to keep tabs on them all.

Jarrell: And some people have left like Kanes?

Willson: Some people have left, yes.

Jarrell: It's nice to get your sense of, who were the people that you remember, that I don't get by reading through the old catalogs.

Willson: Yes, that's right.

Jarrell: Who helped to start this all off.

Community-Building at Stevenson

Willson: You asked me what the quality is that's needed to get the thing going . . . you have to have some notion of what kind of a community you want, but you've also got to have a great deal of persistence. I think you've just got to go on and on because there were some terrible disappointments. You'd go to great trouble to set something up . . . with some visitor coming or some show that you'd put on, and then nobody came. There were times when less than ten students would turn up for your weekly drinks instead of even twenty. And you'd sometimes say, "Oh God, what's the use." But you've just got to go on and on. We went to some extreme lengths, I suppose. We spent quite a chunk of our entertainment allowance on sending a Christmas card to each student, you know. As to how much good it did, how do you measure these things?

But all those were devices to try to shape the college community. I don't think this is peculiar to being the head of Stevenson College or of any college on this campus, but to being the head of any institution anywhere . . . there're only two kinds of such people, I've found: those who like to watch the shop and those who like to use the status of the job to free them to do things in the great world outside. Frankly, I like to watch the shop. So I was always there. One of the first rules in politics is always to be there. I think it's important. I think if you went into a growing institution like a Santa Cruz college of that era, and you were an absentee provost, you're just asking for failure. It's quite true that if you become the head of an institution which has been there for a long time and which is running on wheels and has everything established, then you can afford to become a conference-goer and a public figure and use your influence outside and somebody else you know will look after the shop for you very well and nothing will fall apart. But certainly in the circumstances we were in, you have to watch the shop. So I say with unashamed lack of humility that I watched the shop, as did Page Smith. I'm not suggesting any of the others didn't, but I know Page did while he was there and later, Jasper Rose did.

I think Kenneth Thimann did to a much lesser extent. Kenneth was a very famous scientist; he was at the stage of his life when he came here when, you know, to ask him just to watch the shop would have been impractical. He brought qualities to the campus of eminence in his field and a very nice personality and a great dignity which were enormously helpful to the campus anyway and which attracted scientists of a similar ilk, which was part of the exercise. So I'm not in any way denigrating his thing, but he didn't run Crown College in the same way that Page Smith or I ran our colleges or Jasper Rose ran it. He delegated the running of it very much to his number two man, who did a good job, but it isn't quite the same thing. So I do think that a persistent presence

is important. As for getting students involved, again I don't think there's any very rational explanation of how it happened. You can kid yourself. I'm sure there are times when the students would willingly have rolled me off the roof . . .

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Willson: But on the whole we got on with them well. I very rarely had unpleasant relations with students. There were times when you had to draw a line and nobody likes the line being drawn and on one occasion, the only occasion in my life when I've actually manhandled a student—a character whose name I won't mention but who was a thorn in all our sides, marched into my office one day when there'd been a lot of trouble, leading a procession and just walked in past my secretary through the open door . . . I was in talking to somebody and my temper broke and I picked him up and threw him out through the door. Whereupon I was penned in my office for four hours. Carlos Noreña battled his way in, and having been a Jesuit priest, he comforted me for four hours. (Laughter) But it was a bizarre period. Kenneth Thimann was once visited by a girl who walked into his office in broad daylight stark naked. Did he tell you about it?

Jarrell: He didn't tell me about that. Well, somebody had told me this anecdote, but . . .

Willson: She walked in, and said she wanted to see him. So Kenneth simply got up, and took his raincoat which was hanging on a peg, and he said, "Well, do put this around yourself." (Laughter) Knowing Kenneth, you could just imagine it. But it was the crazy kind of thing that was happening, crazy. The McHenrys had people sleeping under their windows at night in protest against something or other. There were periods when one's nerves were on a ragged edge. Yet it's such a shame, in a sense, that one tells those stories just because they are the bizarre stories that stick in your mind, because they take the attention away from the much longer, slower reality.

Jarrell: The daily, slow accumulation of all of these other very ordinary and lovely things that were happening.

Willson: That's right.

Relationships with the Central Administration

Jarrell: Today I'd like to ask you about your relationship as provost and head of a college with UCSC's early central administration. Later that might evolve into a discussion of the Council of Provosts as it was established and what its functions were.

Willson: Yes. Well, it's a little difficult for me to be exact in my timing on this because I became provost only in the summer of 1967. To some extent, I suppose, my thoughts about my relations with the central administration as it concerned provosts is a bit muddled with my sense of the central administration

before I became provost. Because I was not only senior preceptor at Stevenson, I was also the lead professor in politics. I was also Academic Senate Chairman. So I'd had quite a lot of relationships with the administration. To say it was only with the college is a little difficult. It becomes easier if I think beyond the time of becoming fully established as provost, and then look at it from that point of view. I suppose there are a number of levels on which you can think about this . . . one is that there was from the very beginning, the traditional sense of "us and them" between everybody and the central administration. The difference at Santa Cruz in the early years, as it would have been anywhere, was that when the place was very small, it was not too easy to create an "us-and-them."

Jarrell: Doesn't stand up as well?

Willson: That's right. "We" outnumbered "them" anyway and we were all so close together . . . and the other thing I think one has to say is that one was aware before I became provost of a good many of the strains and stresses that by then developed between the central administration and the colleges. A lot of this was, I think, almost at the personal level between Dean McHenry and Page Smith, who didn't see eye-to-eye on a lot of matters. I think that became clear even before the place started to operate and the colleges were being set up. There were only a handful of us on the campus. But I don't honestly know any of the details of that except that Dean was unwilling to give as wide a discretion to Page as Page would have liked. Page, I think, wanted to press ahead with certain things that Dean either thought weren't important or was dubious about. Some of this showed up in the months of discussion in the Academic Senate over the grading system, for instance. In fact as soon as the faculty got here in sufficient numbers to call themselves a faculty, and the place began to operate as a teaching institution, then the "us" and "them" thing became more clear.

In personality terms also there was a little bit of a problem on the academic administrative side because Howard Shontz, who I think everybody came to realize was basically a very nice person, was a military man—he had a crew cut, and his attitudes were very, very much more "straight" than the attitudes of any of the incoming faculty. So there was some impatience and annoyance on the part of this rather free-wheeling incoming faculty towards the very existence of a registrar! But when you got it with a chap like Howard, who was by nature a bit uptight, that, I think, was a little bit of a problem too.

College and Central Administration Relations

Willson: There were problems of relationships between the colleges and the administration . . . which began before I became provost and continued on over the behavioral matters that I spoke of last week—the residence things, the drug problem, and so on . . . the disciplinary aspects of them. These in a sense also involved Howard, because he was the student services man, and McHenry. I think Dean and Howard were temperamentally rather closer than perhaps either of them were to Page and myself and Charles Page and so on. Those things existed. It's very difficult to be fair, because I'm sure that for the great majority of the time each group—the colleges and the central administration—had their

hands full with their own affairs and a massive amount of stuff on which there was really no friction of any sort. It was perfectly reasonable and routine and there were good relationships. It was only on a certain number of problems that you did begin to get irritations, and I imagine they'd have arisen whoever were the personalities involved. Now, if I try to throw my mind back to being provost and what my relationships with central administration were, I suppose it's true that we had worked out, by that time, roughly, the area in which the colleges were going to operate. By the time I became provost, the grading system, I think, had been approved . . .

Jarrell: The narrative evaluations?

Willson: The [narrative] evaluation system. The notion of college courses had been approved. The two first colleges had got their core-course work going. And so, yes, we had lots and lots of things going on inside the colleges. But the extent to which we impinged upon the central administration or they impinged upon us, was mainly in the domestic area. If there were problems which took us scurrying across to Central Services to have talks, special talks of a crisis nature, it was almost always to do with behavioral problems . . . a little later on with the very serious behavioral problems that came up out of the opposition to the Vietnam War—all sorts of demonstrations on campus and that sort of thing, which was a bit of a nightmare, looking back on it. Very often it wasn't a matter of disagreement between the center and the colleges—it was very much a matter of, "Oh, my God, what have we all got to do?" or, "How are we going to tackle this one?"

Jarrell: How to conduct yourselves in this.

Willson: That's right. There were occasional quarrels about it, but on the whole it was a central problem that we all had to deal with, and it didn't necessarily strike sparks of opposition internally. On the academic side, there were irritations, but they were irritations which were often very, very much related to the difficulties of getting a very new system going, a system in which the students were handled by the colleges as well as by the boards of studies and a system in which . . . the grading system was revolutionary.

Jarrell: Yes.

Willson: A system in which our central administration was caught between us in the colleges on the one hand, and Berkeley on the other hand breathing down their necks and saying, "Why are you doing it differently from us?" or, "Who're these chaps who are trying to modify the system?" So in a sense the administration probably got the worst of both worlds.

Jarrell: If we could just go back for one minute . . . you were talking about your pre-provost period . . .

Willson: Yes, yes.

Board of Studies in Politics: Recruiting the Faculty

Jarrell: And for instance your role in the board of studies in politics. Now I'd be interested to know how the faculty for the politics board was recruited. I think that would cast some light on this.

Willson: (Laughter) Karl Lamb was here before me and had been on the administrative staff and then reverted to his normal faculty position. He and I set about recruiting a faculty. We were more or less left alone to do it insofar as it related to the people after Cowell and Stevenson, because in Cowell and Stevenson and Crown to some extent, the first provosts had a great deal to do with the choice of their faculty. And the initial advertisement for and short listing of people in politics had been done and was done through the college rather than through us because we weren't even in existence as a board. So we were faced with interviewing and talking about the kinds of people we needed, taking into account the people who were going to come anyway. So from our point of view as board people we were looking at the discipline and saying, "What are its needs? What kind of people are we going to need?" And then we had to go through this whole period when the emphasis shifted from the college provost saying, "I'm looking for certain kinds of people in the college," to us saying, "We are looking for certain kinds of people in the board."

Jarrell: Yes, yes.

Willson: And so long as the provosts had the initiative, the board, while having its say, had less of a say really because it was taking less of an initiative.

Jarrell: Right.

Willson: Later on we began to say, "Oh, you can't . . . we must have someone in international relations, we must have someone in political theory." That, of course, restrained the provosts enormously from having a completely free hand. But in those very early days, we did recruit people, we did meet with the provosts, and we did have interview panels set up and so on in much the normal sort of fashion. I can't say that we had any particular difficulty between board and colleges at that time. The worst of that came after the first three colleges were set up. Then it began to get sticky and there were some very nasty arguments between boards and colleges and provosts.

College Versus Board Conflicts

Jarrell: Did the allocation of teaching time—the two-third to one-third ratio for board and college courses enter into this?

Willson: No, it was fifty-fifty . . . the idea at first.

Jarrell: The ideal at first was fifty-fifty?