Interview

with

Robert Chapman

University Libraries
University of South Carolina
Interviewer:

Herbert J. Hartsook

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Chapman home, Camden, S.C.

Synopsis:

Robert Chapman discusses his life and particularly his leadership in the early Republican Party in South Carolina.

Transcriber:

Benjamin Petersen
Hartsook: I’ll start off by asking you to tell me a little bit about your early days. Where you were born. . . ?

Chapman: I was born in Inman, South Carolina, which is about twelve miles above Spartanburg. It’s a little textile town. Then it became very much of a peach center. Now it’s really a bedroom community of Spartanburg. My father was superintendent of the mill there that my grandfather built in about 1901. My two older brothers and me and my next younger brother, Joe, were all born there at home in Inman. After we moved to Spartanburg in 1931, my youngest brother, Hugh, was born that next year in Spartanburg. We moved to Spartanburg in 1931. I started school in 1932 at Pine Street School. And went through all of my primary and secondary education in the public schools in Spartanburg. Graduated from Spartanburg High School in 1943. Immediately went into the Navy and the V-12 program, which was a program set up by the Navy to get naval officers. They had to interdict the supply system to the Army once the Army began to draft eighteen-year olds. The Navy had no way to get new naval officers if the Army’s going to get all the eighteen-year olds. So, the Navy came up with this thing of getting boys right out of high school and putting them into college for four semesters, and then sending them to midshipman’s school for ninety days. That’s where the word “ninety day wonder” came from. Then they were commissioned and went to sea. I went off to a little school called Emory and Henry College up in southwestern Virginia, which had a V-12 unit and about 260 boys. After I’d been there six months, they told me I had to try to get into some other program because I was going to graduate before I was nineteen and they wouldn’t give you a commission until you were nineteen. So, I took some exams and got into the ROTC program.

I was sent to the University of South Carolina, which had a ROTC program, had a V-12 program, had a V-5 program, which was the aviation, and had a pre-flight school. I graduated from the University with a degree in naval science, which is something they don’t give anymore. We had no electives and we took 25 hours a semester. Went three semesters a year. And so, you went through college in two years.

I then went out to the Pacific to the isle of Guam. About that time the war was over. Everybody just about came home. I wound up commanding a ship before I was twenty years
old. I was the only officer aboard. There were 25 enlisted men, and we carried 300 and something thousand gallons of fresh water. Ships would come into Guam, and we would go along side and pump twenty, thirty, forty thousand gallons of fresh water into them. In the spring of ’46, they were going to have the atomic bomb test down at Bikini, an atoll about halfway between Guam and Hawaii. So, I took the ship down there. When it became time to drop the bomb, they removed the service fleet, which I was a part of. And I got to come home in time to get into law school in the fall of 1946. And again, I went on this accelerated program, so I got out of law school in two years.

And then went to Spartanburg to practice law. I practiced with a firm there, Osborne, Butler, and Moore, for three years and then the Korean War started and I was recalled into the Navy. And, for some reason, I was sent right back to Guam. I was on the admiral’s staff there for two years, and then came back and started practicing law again.

Hartsook: When did you decide you wanted to be a lawyer?

Chapman: I really didn’t, until I got back [laughing]. When I saw I was going to be late getting back in ’46 because of Operation Crossroads, is what they called the atomic bomb test, I wrote my father and asked him to register me in the Clemson textile school and then the law school. My family was in the textile business. Three of my brothers went into the textile business. I came back. Still hadn’t made up my mind. Went down to Columbia for a wedding and had a real good time. I realized Clemson didn’t have any girls, and Carolina did. I thought if I were going to get an education just to be getting an education on the G.I. Bill, it didn’t cost anything; there might as well be some girls around. So that’s really the reason I went. I had no desire to be a great lawyer or to be a judge or anything else. I knew I couldn’t make a living with a degree in naval science. The law, everybody said, is a good education, whether you practice law or not. My grandfather had been to Harvard Law School. He got out of the law business when he was about 35 and went into the textile business.
So, one day I graduated from law school and had to look for a job. I found one in Spartanburg. Really there wasn’t much going on in 1949. I spent most of my time checking titles and watching good lawyers try cases. It’s unfortunate, but everybody’s in such a hurry now, young lawyers don’t have the time to watch older lawyers really perform and show them how to practice law. But, it was purely an accident that I went law school.

Hartsook: And you did not look at other law schools other than USC?

Chapman: No. I had never thought about applying to Harvard or Yale or any of those places. Now some of the boys that I went through the Navy with came back. . . . David Freeman, up in Greenville, he was in the unit. He went to Harvard. Jim Stevens, who became a state judge from Spartanburg, he went to Duke. But I was content in Columbia.

Hartsook: Looking back on it, do you think the University prepared you well for a legal career?

Chapman: They teach you theory and things like that, but how to run a law office, how to make a living, had no part in it. If you didn’t have a mentor. . . . When I started practicing law, and it’s about that way now, if you didn’t have someone to show you how, you’d starve to death. You didn’t know how to buy stationary or carbon paper in those days. Course they don’t have carbon paper any more. Typewriters or equipment. They didn’t teach you anything about making a living.

Hartsook: And who were your mentors?

Chapman: Well, the two partners that I worked for, who were as different as night and day. One of them was the mayor of Spartanburg at the time. He fooled with people all day and worked all night. The other one, Mr. Butler, was a very fine lawyer. He worked all the time. He had a law library at home. Between the two of them, I got a pretty good legal education and a practical education. Mr. Butler was one of these people that dotted every “i” twice, crossed
every “t” twice. Mr. Moore was a person that dealt more in people. It takes a little bit of both to be a good lawyer.

Hartsook: Who were some of the lawyers that you observed that you thought were good?

Chapman: The most successful prosecutor in the history of the state was a fellow named Sam Watt, from Spartanburg. He put more people in the electric chair; if that’s the way you judge success. . . . Put the first woman in the electric chair. When there was a big case in another part of the state, it wasn’t uncommon for the Attorney General to assign Mr. Watt to try it. Which usually made the local prosecutor mad, but these big cases, he wanted Mr. Watt to handle. In those days the solicitor, as he was called, was not a full time job. And, he had other clients; he represented Southern Railroad. I remember seeing him down at the Sugar Bowl on my way out to the West Coast, when I had been recalled to the Navy during the Korean War. He had been down there on the Southern Railroad pass. I told my wife, we were on our honeymoon, we had just gotten married, “Someday I’d like to represent the Southern Railroad and we can travel on a pass.” Well, about ’66 or ’67, he died, and I became the counsel for Southern Railroad in that area, but by that time nobody rode the train. Everybody rode the airplanes. But, he was a great trial lawyer.

A great friend of mine was a man named Sam Burts, who was primarily a criminal lawyer. He became chairman of the Spartanburg County Democratic Party in 1960. He and I used to wander around that part of the state in 1960 debating the presidential election. I was invited everywhere to speak because nobody had ever seen a Republican or had one say that they were going to vote for Nixon. Sam Burts and I were great friends, and he didn’t drive at night. So I’d pick him up, and we’d go over to Furman or we’d go to Clemson or we might go to Limestone, and just raise hell with one another for an hour, and then we’d get in the car and have a good laugh and drive home. That’s the way we practiced law. Now people get mad at one another, but gosh, Sam Burts and I could try cases. He was an alcoholic, so we didn’t go out and have a drink afterwards, but we had a lot of laughs afterwards. These trips we had in 1960 really did become famous in the newspapers and other places, because we’d drive together, debate the issues, get into the car, and drive home. You can’t imagine that happening now.
Hartsook: Very hard.

Chapman: Could you see Henry McMaster driving home with the head of the Democratic Party?

Hartsook: How did you first get active in politics?

Chapman: Well, the first thing I remember about politics was 1940. We’d been to a church picnic at a lake above Spartanburg. The Republican National Convention was in session, and Wendell Willkie was very much of a dark horse. While we were driving home, they started polling. I’ve forgotten what he’d got on the first ballot. Vandenburg was one of the favorites, and Bob Taft. Forgotten whether Tom Dewey started then or not. Every ballot Wendell Willkie would move up. Willkie was a businessman. He wasn’t a politician. They called him the ‘barefoot boy from Wall Street.’ He was head of either Commonwealth Edison or one of those big power companies [Commonwealth and Southern Corp.]. He got the nomination. My father was real excited about it because this fellow was a businessman and Daddy was disillusioned with Roosevelt by that time. He didn’t take an active part, but we certainly listened to him talk around the house.

We took Latin. You had to take Latin then in high school if you were going to college. Some friends and I got together in the fall of 1940. They had what they called a Classic Club, and the Latin teacher asked me to prepare a program for the Classic Club, which was everybody that took Latin. We sat down and wrote a play. The upshot was Caesar ran for a third term and that’s the reason Brutus killed him. It almost got me thrown out of high school. People said it was sacrilegious. I was making fun of Mr. Roosevelt. I didn’t have any more to do with politics. . . . I wasn’t but fourteen. I didn’t have anything to do with the election of 1948 because I was in law school that summer and fall. In 1952, I was overseas again. I had a wonderful time then.

South Carolina didn’t have an absentee ballot. After WWII they did away with it, and didn’t re-institute it for the Korean War. I wrote Governor Byrnes and told him I was paying income tax to South Carolina, to the United States, and to the Isle of Guam, and I couldn’t even vote. I got to vote a lot of people because enlisted men had to come before an officer and fill out their absentee ballot. I never tried to persuade anybody which way to vote, but most of them
knew that they wanted to vote for General Eisenhower or Adlai Stevenson. But other than that, they didn’t have any idea who their congressman was, who their senators were. I took the overseas edition of Time magazine and Colonel McCormick, who owned the Chicago Tribune, if you wrote him a letter and asked him to send you the newspaper, he’d send it to you. It came by ship, so you’d get a big stack of them at one time. He was very pro-Eisenhower. So I read the Tribune, and I knew something about the local elections in a lot of these states. When these sailors would come in and say they wanted to vote for General Eisenhower. They didn’t know a thing about the governor’s race. I said Senator So and So’s a good man. I got to vote a lot of them that way.

Then when I came back, I thought about getting into politics. I got back in ’53. The House race started in early ’54 for the legislature. It would’ve been easy to get elected as a Democrat because we had nine seats that were all elected at large. All you had to do was not make people mad and you got elected, but I got busy. The baby came. Then Brown against the Board of Education came down. I honestly didn’t know what to do with that decision if you were going to go into politics. So I just said I’d wait.

Then I really got into politics by accident in 1960. This fellow Sam Burts wanted to be county chairman of the Democratic Party. He asked me to be one of his seconders at the county convention. I said fine. It was on a Monday. On Friday night I went to Charlotte with some friends to see My Fair Lady, and we stayed up real late. These two people were talking about Barry Goldwater. He wasn’t a candidate, but the South Carolina Republicans were pushing Goldwater to try to offset Rockefeller, and keep Nixon in the middle. So, we spent the night up there and came home. After lunch, I took a nap. We had stayed up half the night. I woke up, and I realized that it was past time for the Democratic meeting. I had promised Sam Burts I’d get elected. Well, I ran down to the Methodist Church where the precinct meeting was. The Democrats had gone and I ran right into the middle of this Republican meeting. They were all so glad to see me, I just stayed.

Hartsook: Who were some of the people at that meeting?

Chapman: Mr. Milliken was there. Roger Milliken. He was a great friend of mine. There were about ten people there. That’s all. And, they clapped and shook my hand and everything,
and elected me a delegate to the Republican county convention. When I was supposed to be over there helping nominate my old buddy Sam Burts, I’m over here with the Republicans across the street. One met at the Memorial Auditorium in Spartanburg and the other one met at the old USO club. The next thing I knew I was a delegate to the state convention.

At the state convention we pledged all eight votes—that’s all we had—to Barry Goldwater. He addressed the convention. It upset him really because he wasn’t supposed to be having any votes for president. He went back to Washington and told Nixon he didn’t ask for all this. But anyway, we got all excited about Goldwater. The next thing I knew, I was a delegate to the national convention out in Chicago. Nixon, just before the convention, went up to New York one night and had a meeting with Rockefeller and compromised some of the positions that he had. That really set a lot of people on fire. They just got so damn mad that Nixon was up there talking to Rockefeller. The first thing we knew, we had half the Texas delegation, all the Arizona delegation, Alabama, Mississippi, all these people. ‘Course Barry didn’t want to upset things. But, we convinced him to let us put his name in nomination. He came over to the South Carolina delegation and thanked us for all we had done and everything. He said, “But that’s it. Let’s forget about it.”

**Hartsook:** Do you think he was sincere in not wanting to be . . . ?

**Chapman:** Yes. Not then. Mr. Milliken and I got him into a back room with his speech writer, a fellow named Steve Shadegg, who wrote a lot of his speeches. We said, “You’ve got to let us put your name in nomination.” He said, “Why?” You got prime time back in 1960. People watched those conventions. “If we put your name in nomination you have to withdraw it. Then you can say anything you want to, to the American people.” Shadegg said, “Don’t listen to these amateurs.” Barry said, “That’s a good idea.” Greg Shorey may have told you about this. Greg made one of the seconding speeches because he was chairman of our party at that time.

Goldwater got up and made, like the great speech Reagan made to the high school out there, called “the speech.” This was the speech Ronald Reagan made in the fall of 1964 during the Goldwater-Johnson race. He made “the speech.” He said that the Republican Party was the home of the conservative movement. The way to help the conservative movement was to vote for Nixon. He thanked everybody and withdrew. But, he made this great statement about
conservative principles. That’s when people first knew who Barry Goldwater was. Then Barry came to South Carolina a couple times during the campaign.

The biggest problem in 1960 in South Carolina, other than not getting a decent count, was trying to keep the independents from having a separate count or separate electors. In 1952 and 1956, Ike got more votes than Adlai Stevenson in South Carolina, both times, but his votes were split between the regular Republicans and the independents for Eisenhower, or some of them were called Democrats for Eisenhower. Eisenhower’s delegates were on the ballot twice. Most people didn’t want to vote Republican. They voted for these independents or Democrats for Eisenhower. We totaled the votes that those electors got with the votes that the Republican electors got. Ike got more votes both times, but never carried the state. Of course, Stevenson got a plurality because Ike’s votes were split. One of my jobs in 1960 was the “go between” the Democrats for Nixon and Lodge, they called themselves. Some of the press said that’s like the Confederate Veterans for Grant and Sherman. The Independents for Nixon and Lodge. There was John Adger Manning, who was a wonderful old man from Columbia, of the Manning family that’s produced so many governors. Farley Smith, whose father had been “Cotton Ed” Smith, the great senator who was before Strom came along, had the record for longevity. There was a fellow named Agnew from Anderson. There were a bunch of people [from] around the state. One of the Cokers. My job was to keep them from putting up their own slate even though they’d be pledged to Nixon. We got Goldwater to come to the state, and he’s the one that told them this is the way to go. They said, “Well, if Barry says so, we’ll do it.” That was really the first time that people felt, they might not have felt comfortable, but they didn’t feel like they were going to be assaulted when they went out and voted Republican.

In those days you didn’t have all voting machines, and people had to ask for a ballot. You asked for a Republican ballot then. They had some under the table, maybe they’d give you. The bigger counties had voting machines. It was an amazing thing. There are 1,700 precincts in South Carolina. We didn’t have more than about 200 with poll watchers. We had just all kinds of incidents. People called the sheriff out to get the poll watchers. Said they were interfering with them running the election. It was a wild and woolly day. We only lost by 10,000 votes. In Spartanburg, they set up the voting machine so you could vote for Nixon and Lodge, but not vote for the electors of Nixon and Lodge. Nixon and Lodge got 1,700 more votes than their electors got. So you double that. That’s 3,400 votes that the Democrats got, or that we lost. They got
them. We didn’t get them. It was just an amazing election. I got on the television when I saw this voting machine, the way they set it up in Spartanburg, and they wouldn’t change it. You didn’t have any judges you could go to and get anything done then. I got on television to show them, the people in Spartanburg, what the problem was. And if they wanted to vote for Nixon and Lodge, they had to go down and make sure they voted for the electors.

Well, Kennedy and Johnson were not too popular with some people. So the Democrats were passing the word in Spartanburg, vote for Nixon and Lodge, but then go down and vote for all of the Democrats because a couple of the Democrats for statewide offices were being opposed by write-ins and people like that. So they would go up on this line, pull a little switch down for Nixon and Lodge, drop down to the Democrat line and pull the levers for all the electors and all the Democrats. They intended to vote for Nixon and Lodge, but they actually voted for Kennedy and Johnson. And Democrats thought it was funny. That’s the way the game was played then.

I really did get into it by accident, but once I got into it, I said we might as well do this. I’ve always been a Republican at heart, nationally. Nobody was thinking about local politics. Then, the campaign, about the middle of September, the first of October, changed completely. There was a lawyer in Columbia named Frank Sloan who had been to law school with me. He wrote a letter to all the state office holders, members of the legislature, everybody that held elective office. He said you can sit on your behind if you want to and let Nixon carry this state, but if that happens you’re going to have opposition for the rest of your life. He motivated all of the sitting politicians, who had been neutral and didn’t want to get involved in this presidential election. Strom Thurmond got himself recalled [to active duty] and went to Germany for two months as a Major General, so he didn’t have to make a speech for Jack Kennedy. Did you know that?

Hartsook: No.

Chapman: He came home about a week before the election, and said he was too busy in his office catching up. He went to Germany for two months to make sure he didn’t have to take a position in the presidential election. Of course, he changed parties four years later, and that was really the beginning of the Republican Party in the South. I told Frank that he won the election when he wrote that letter and said you can sit around if you want to, but you’re going to have a
Republican running against you if they ever carry this state for the president. And, of course, that’s what happened in 1964. We did carry the state for Goldwater. In 1966, Strom ran for re-election as a Republican. We elected twenty-three members of the Legislature, where we’d had only two. And we didn’t have them very long. Have you talked to Charlie Boineau?

Hartsook: Yes.

Chapman: I was state chairman when Charlie got elected over in Richland County, but he couldn’t get re-elected. Charlie was elected in the summer of ’61. That winter, a fellow named Fred Worsham from Charleston was elected to the Senate. He didn’t have the same problem that Charlie had because Fred was running for one seat. He could run for re-election. He didn’t have to do anything but beat the fellow on the other side. Charlie’s problem was, there were either eight or nine members in the House from Richland County, they were all elected at large, and South Carolina had a full slate law. Every time you voted for Charlie, you had to vote against him eight times. There was no way he could get re-elected. So, we brought a lawsuit. Went to the United States Supreme Court. It said there wasn’t anything wrong with the full slate law, and we lost. Well, two years later, Congress passed the voting rights law, and one of the things that they’ve always refused to let anybody do, is require full slate laws, and wouldn’t let you single-shot elect somebody. But, old Charlie gets elected, but he can’t get re-elected because unless the electorate is smart enough to write in Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck and names like that for all those eight seats, you vote against him every time you vote for him. After the civil rights laws passed, suits went to the Supreme Court, and it knocked all that kind of stuff down. They didn’t protect the Republicans.

Hartsook: We ought to tell Mrs. Chapman [Judge Chapman’s second wife, Mary Vail St. Georges Chapman, whom he married in 2000], Charlie got in in a special election. That’s how he was able to get in in the first place.

Chapman: I’ve got the newspaper when Charlie was elected. I was state chairman at the time, but I was up in Allentown, Pennsylvania buying an organ for the church. I got a call that Charlie had won. He beat a real nice guy, Joe Berry.
Chapman: Charlie’s from Camden originally. He was a Navy pilot, very attractive. He got elected that summer, but he served a year and a half. But, he couldn’t get re-elected because of the law.

Hartsook: Can you talk in a little bit more detail about the state of the Republican Party in South Carolina when you first became active?

Chapman: The big thing that changed the Republican Party in South Carolina was when Roger Milliken moved south. He changed everything eventually in South Carolina, as you probably know. His influence in this state has just been enormous. He decided to do something about the two-party system. He wanted to be a Republican. So, he got with W.W. Wannamaker from over in Orangeburg and W.T.C. Bates from Orangeburg, and Greg Shorey. There was a man named Mr. David Dows over in Aiken, who had been an active Republican up in New York, and some other, mostly retired or Northern people who’d moved south. They decided to reorganize the Republican Party for the 1956 election. They very carefully followed exactly the state laws to how you organize the precinct, how you have the county conventions, how you have a state convention. They went through the process. Got the delegates elected. Went out to San Francisco. When they got to San Francisco, there was another group from South Carolina there. This was the way the South Carolina Republican Party had been run for a long time. There’d be two or three whites who would take some blacks as delegates out to the convention. They were pretty much available to whoever wanted them so far as the votes were concerned. That’s the way it had run for probably fifty years.

This year they decided to change that. Well, they get out there. They’ve got two competing groups of delegates. They had a big showdown before the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee seated the new group, because they had followed the statute exactly the way it was supposed to be done with the newspaper ads, everything. The others had not. That was really when everything changed. They didn’t mount a big campaign because Ike was
running and people down here were still mad about what happened in Little Rock and *Brown against the Board of Education*. A lot of people voted for Harry Byrd, who was the popular senator from Virginia, as an independent, rather than vote for Ike or Adlai Stevenson. That’s when things changed.

When I got into it in 1960, that group, Greg Shorey, and Mr. and Mrs. Dabney Barnes from Greenville, Mr. Wannamaker, and T.C. Bates. There was a lawyer named Henry Gaud from down in Charleston, who was a delegate. He represented this new group before the Credentials Committee and won that battle. They were still kind of controlling things when I came in. Some of the people didn’t want to do what we did in 1960, which was pledge the votes to Barry Goldwater, knowing he wasn’t going to get the nomination, but trying to get him and his ideas in front of the people and trying to keep Nixon from going over too far towards Rockefeller. Nixon and Goldwater had a very famous conversation. No, it was Ike and Barry had a very famous conversation. The president said, “Barry, why do you always play in right field?” Barry said, “Mr. President, I play in right field because you try to stay in center field and you got all that eastern establishment playing in left field trying to pull you over there with them. If I don’t stay in right field, you’ll be wandering over there in left field.” This was kind of the way we looked at it. If we could make Barry prominent, then people would listen to him. The president would listen to him and some of his ideas would come across.

It was funny. After the 1960 election we were pretty excited about how close we’d come. The people in the leadership positions of the party, which were really about eight, thought it was time to get a native-born state chairman. Since I had made most of the speeches for the party, television the night before the election and all, they asked me to do it. I was born in the state and all the rest of that crowd, well, Mr. Wannamaker and Mr. Bates were born in South Carolina, but they were old. . . . So, they asked me to become the state chairman. We had no budget, and no employees. It was all kind of run out of my hip pocket. That’s the reason I don’t have too much in the way of documents or anything to show you, because I used the telephone.

I’d go to these various places. I remember going down to Berkeley County. There was a guy named Tate Baggett; big old heavy fellow, lived out in the country. He always came to these state executive committee meetings. I went down to see him one time, and when I drove up and walked up on the porch, he pulled all the window shades down in the house. He didn’t want anybody to see him entertaining me in his kitchen. That’s kind of the way things were. A
lot of these people were happy to be the county chairman or the state committeeman, as long as it didn’t get out. They’d come to the meetings. If the Republicans happened to win, they might get a little patronage. But, they weren’t going to expose themselves too much.

Gosh, I went around to every little county, and I found out the smaller the town, the better the food in all the civic clubs, because the ladies of the church or some ladies club cooks the meals, rather than the Columbia Hotel or the Frances Marion in Charleston or something, where you eat rubber chicken. But, if you go some little place like Winnsboro, speak to the Rotary Club. They had quail when I was there. They were all dressed; all of them had been out shooting quail before I got there. In those days, they didn’t mind inviting somebody like me to speak because nobody had ever seen one before [a Republican]. They didn’t think it was so political as it was educational. Have you ever been to Denmark?

Hartsook: Yes. Passed through.

Chapman: Well, there’s a place called Norway right over there. There was a lady in Denmark who owned a little furniture factory. Made furniture for mobile homes. She had me over there. Golly, I had never seen such food at this little Rotary Club that they had. But, they were telling me the story about May of 1940. One Saturday, all the merchants in Denmark and Norway had the same problem. Nobody came to town. Absolutely none of them country people, none of the tenant farmers, nobody came to town. Late in the afternoon a few of these merchants got together, and they drove out in the country, and they thought that there had been some kind of plague, everybody was sick. These people had heard on the radio the Germans had taken Norway and Denmark, and they weren’t coming near those places. [laughing] That’s how things were.

In 1960, it was fun to be on the outside trying to beat your way in. Some people say Republicans have always been that way. That they are better off in opposition than they are. . . . They don’t know how to govern. I never thought in my lifetime I would see Spartanburg County majority Republican, because Olin D. Johnston lived there. He was the senator and he was former governor. We just got our brains beat out in Spartanburg County in 1960. We almost carried it in ’64. We did carry it in 1968. Now I think two or three senators are Republicans. It was fun.
Then, in 1962, Olin D. Johnston was up for re-election. If we were ever going to oppose anybody, we had to oppose him because he was a big spender. He was a New Dealer from the very beginning.

Hartsook: And a very liberal for a Southern Democrat.

Chapman: Yes. He put the unions in the post office. He was the chairman of the Post Office Committee. It was so funny. In 1964 we carried his box. He lived in a little mill town right outside of Spartanburg named Whitney. Republicans carried the Whitney box, and he closed the post office. People came to see him and said, “Senator, they closed our post office out here in Whitney. They can’t do that.” He said, “That’s a little post office. The congressman handles that.” Well, nobody’s going to close the post office in the town of the chairman of the Senate Post Office Committee. Poor Bob Ashmore, he was the congressman in Greenville, he’s catching hell from everybody in Whitney because Olin closed the post office in his own town because it had gone for Barry.

Hartsook: I have never heard that story.

Chapman: Well, he lived in the house they called “Oh, Pardon Me.” You’ve heard that story. One of the great things Strom did as governor, and people don’t know how good a governor Strom was. He got rid of the pardoning power, which was a real, real problem. A lot of governors got very rich off of the pardoning power. He did that. He cleaned up the Industrial Commission. He did a lot of things. But, I agreed to run against him [Johnston]. I didn’t know how to run against anybody. And, I was running my law practice and I was chairman of the party. . .

Hartsook: Was that something you very much wanted to do, or did they twist your arm?

Chapman: They asked me to do it and they said it’ll help the party grow. I lived next door to my mother and father. So, the night before I was going to announce, I went over to see my father and said, “I’m going to tell you what’s going to happen tomorrow. I’m going down to
Greenwood and make a speech and announce that I’m going to run for the Senate against Olin D. Johnston.” He said, “Oh my goodness. That is terrible.” I said, “I know.” He’s beat Strom, and Fritz was running against him at the time. He beat Fritz, the only time either one of them have ever lost a statewide election. I said, “Somebody has to run against him. It’s going to help the Republican Party grow.” He said, “Oh no. Olin’s an old man! And, he’s not well. If he runs against Fritz and then he runs against you, he might die. And then you’d have to serve. You don’t want to be a United States Senator. You can’t afford to live up in Washington and have a house down here. Put your children in private school. All this kind of stuff.” I said, “I really don’t think that’s a problem.”

But, I wanted to win, but I couldn’t see myself being a professional politician and asking for money all the time. Of course, back then you didn’t do it all the time like you do now. The governor’s got five million dollars in the bank. People could run for governor on $50,000, $100,000 back then because you didn’t have television.

Then a group in Richland County talked Bill Workman into running. That was a wonderful thing that happened because he much more well-known than I was. He’d written a couple of books. He was an editor of The State. He ran. The two of us had a couple of debates. I started developing an ulcer from just nothing but trying to run three jobs at one time. And so I got out. Bill Workman ran, and he got 47% of the vote. General Eisenhower came down and spoke for him. It was an exciting time, but once Bill had run, he got out. He never used his political base after that. But it was a real start. But, the big thing was Strom.

When Strom changed parties, it was considered all right to vote Republican. We had a funny group in the South. My mother kept scrapbooks. You may have heard this story. I had four brothers, and she kept scrapbooks including everything about us, about my father, about her, all of her interests. Time magazine in the summer of 1961, shortly after I had become state chairman, had a big article on the new Republican Party in the South. And they had a picture of me, and they had a picture of a guy named Bill Cobb from Morganton, North Carolina, who by the way, thinking about Augusta, he was Billy Joe Patman’s business partner. Billy Joe was the amateur that almost won Augusta [the Masters golf tournament]. Then there was a fellow named John Grenier from Alabama and a man named Wirt Yerger from Mississippi. They had all our pictures. A very nice article. My mother put it in the scrapbook. About a week later everything hit the fan. It turns out Bill Cobb has got two families, one in Morganton and one up in
Roanoke. He had a Bonanza [airplane] and he flew back and forth. He was selling lumber at each end. The people up in Roanoke see this guy Bill Cobb from Morganton, North Carolina and say, “He looks just like this fellow down the street.” My mother said, “If you’re running around with a bunch of bigamists…” and she tore that whole page out of her scrapbook. It was funny. Things like that were always happening.

In 1960 I went up to a little town called Landrum, you know where that is, right up near Tryon, to speak to some ladies’ book club. I’d go anywhere anybody wanted to hear about the election. I was leaving Landrum, and there was old fellow there thumbing. Said he wanted a ride to Spartanburg. So, I picked him up. He was going down to pick up his car at the Ford place. We were riding down the road, and we start talking about politics. He said, “You know, this fellow Kennedy. He really is the anti-Christ.” Well, I didn’t say anything. I let him talk on and on. We got down to the Ford place, and I said I sure was glad to have met him. I sure hoped he was going to vote next Tuesday. He said, “Oh yeah. I always vote Democrat.” [laughter] He got out, and I’m sure he did.

I’ve met more people like that. We were down in Charleston, and one of the television stations right across the Cooper River Bridge had an elephant. A real, live elephant walking around in the front yard. It had all this acreage out there. Mr. Milliken said, “We ought to buy that elephant.” I said, “Well, how are we going to get him to Spartanburg?” “We’ll rent a little trailer and take him up to Spartanburg.” It sounded like a good idea at the time, but you know elephants live forever. We stopped at this filling station, and said, “You know anything about that elephant over there at the TV station?” This fellow said, “Yes. Why do you want to know?” I said, “We thought we’d buy him.” He said, “Two people have bought him and tried to take him across that Cooper River Bridge and he’s kicked the truck to pieces both times. You better leave that elephant where he is.” So we did. [laughing]

These are the things that you remember about politics in those days. It was fun. Everybody now is too uptight. Same thing about practicing law. All these lawyers who practiced before me for the last thirty years, they’re just so uptight about everything. Here’s old Sam Burts, chairman of one party, me chairman of the other, just having a big time. The day after the election in 1960, there was a place there called Pete’s Lunch in Spartanburg, right near my office and near Sam’s office. We were over there having a cup of coffee and talking about the election. The big song we had, somebody wrote a song called “Dixie is No Longer in the
Bag,” in 1960. Everywhere we went there was somebody playing “Dixie is No Longer in the Bag.” Sam and I are there having a cup of coffee and the newspaper people come in and see us. Sam under the table has got this bag. He’d set this thing up. I didn’t know it. [laughing] When the newspaper came in with all these cameras, Sam pulls the bag out. “Dixie’s still in the bag,” he said. That was in all the newspapers. I didn’t take offense at it. I thought it was funny. He took advantage of the situation.

It got to the point where there was no way I could practice law and run the Republican Party, after the 1962 election. Things were beginning to roll and people wanted to run. There was just too much to do, and I had to make a living. Drake Edens had become interested in 1960 with a bunch of people. Gayle Averyt, people like that. The Edenses had sold their business. They had Edens Food Stores, which became a big part of Winn-Dixie. They sold out and Drake needed something to do. He was very interested in all this. He didn’t need a salary. It was just the perfect time for me to get out and him to come in because the party didn’t have enough money at that point to have a director that was on a salary. And so, we had Drake, who was giving 75% of his time for nothing and picking up the tab for a lot of it, like I had to do. It was just an evolutionary process for me to get out and let him come in. Drake ran it for a couple of years and by that time we’d had the Goldwater election and Strom had changed parties. We were raising money. We could afford to hire somebody on a permanent basis, like Ray Harris at one time, Harry Dent at one time.

I had a good time. It was a scary time because, my gosh, you had the Cuban Missile Crisis, and all kinds of things like that. I felt like we were doing something. I really felt that the day after I walked into that meeting by accident and stayed... I was walking home from the church. I said South Carolina is never going to get anywhere as long as one political party knows it’s always in the bag. The only way we’re going to change any of that is to have two parties. The only way you’re going to have two parties is for people who were born and raised here like me to get involved and not have-- I can’t use the Y word [Yankee], because my present wife is from New Jersey--and not have these transplanted Yankees in the forefront, like Greg and Mr. Dows and all these people. They’re wonderful, but when people look at them they say Greg is from New York, and Mr. Dows, he was sheriff of Nassau County, which is one the real political plums in New York state. But that’s the reason I stayed in.
The federal judge in Spartanburg was named C.C. Wyche. He had been Mr. Byrnes’ law partner. That’s the way he became a federal judge. As soon as I became prominent he began to give me hell thinking I was trying to take his job away from him. Of course, they’re appointed for life, I couldn’t take his job. But I said, “Judge, I can’t do what you do.” The other two judges were sick, Judge Timmerman in Columbia and Judge Williams over in Florence. They were both kind of sick and Judge Wyche was wandering all over the state. I said, “I’ve got three little boys at home. I don’t want to be a federal judge. That’s not in even the back of my mind. Just forget about it.” The next time he held court. . . . And this is how things worked. He had a bunch of bootleggers that they had caught at a still. He gave old Sam Burts one of them to defend. ‘Course we didn’t get paid anything. He gave me another one. He just wanted to be entertained. Sam had one of these bootleggers. . . . I didn’t have a chance because when mine stood up to run, he’d been sampling the stuff as it came out of the pipe, he had a tin cup and he was sampling. When the revenuers come bounding through the bushes, Sam’s runs about three hundred yards before they catch him. Mine stood up and just keeled right over. [laughter] Judge Wyche thought it was hilarious to spend a day being entertained with Sam raising hell for one of these men and me for the other one. People don’t do that anymore.

Another funny thing. The Monday after I went to the wrong meeting, Mr. Wannamaker was national committeeman, drove all the way from Orangeburg up to Spartanburg to meet me. We had lunch out at Mr. Milliken’s guesthouse. He said he wanted one thing definite, that I understood before I got involved with this thing. I said, “What’s that Mr. Wannamaker?” He said, “I’ve already promised all the federal judges for the next ten years, so don’t think you’re going to be a federal judge.” I said, “I can’t be a federal judge. I’m young. I’m inexperienced. I’ve got young children.” Of course it was ten years before I did have a chance. Everybody thought that lawyers got into the Party to be judges. But there were so few Republican lawyers I guess people had a right to think that.

Richland County, in 1960, the chairman of Richland County, I think, was Mr. I. S. Leevy, who was Leevy Johnson’s grandfather. He came to the convention in Chicago, I think as an
alternate. He was blind and he was very old. And young Leevy led him around. He was a teenager. I talked to him about it. I don’t think he was a delegate because he wouldn’t agree to vote for Barry. But old Mr. Leevy and his grandson, who is now so prominent, were on the bus every time we went out to the Cow Palace…or the stockyards it is in Chicago, the Cow Palace is out in San Francisco. He wasn’t too happy about Nixon. He was old and blind, so he really didn’t do anything that fall. When the campaign got started, Drake and Gayle and these other people, who weren’t officials, they just kind of took over the campaign. And after that Mr. Leevy resigned. That’s when Richland County started being reorganized. Most of the people in Richland County at that time were these independents. John Adger Manning and people like that, who were well known and just couldn’t bring themselves to be called Republicans. That’s when we had these things about the Confederates for Grant and Sherman. How can you be a Democrat for Nixon and Lodge? Old Mr. Leevy, he was an amazing man. You know he’s in the Business Hall of Fame. He started all kinds of businesses. He had been a Republican back before the turn of the century even.

1960 we had Nixon come to town, to Columbia. Mr. Byrnes endorsed him, which was quite a step. Well, we wanted to make sure we had a big crowd. I-26 was being built and you’d get on for ten miles, then you’d get off for ten miles, get back on for ten miles. I asked my sister-in-law up in Spartanburg to see what she could do about organizing some buses of kids to take to Columbia. She got thirty-seven busloads of school children. Then she rode the route three or four times. You get thirty-seven buses full of children, you can’t stop at one rest stop. There weren’t any state rest stops on the road. She would go to these filling stations and say, “On such and such a date in October two buses are going to stop here. They’re going to have thirty-seven children or whatever it is. You just be looking out for them.” She organized that thing like an invasion. She got all those buses down there and all those kids back. Didn’t lose a one. We had the balloon from [the film] Around the World in 80 Days parked right over there. They’d torn down a building right over by where the Supreme Court is now. The balloon was sitting there. The movie had just come out, or had been out a year or two before. Just as Nixon finished his speech, the balloon goes up in the air. Oh, he went crazy. He thought it was the greatest thing that ever happened.

Mrs. Chapman: How did you get the balloon?
Chapman: I don’t know who worked that deal out. But the balloon was there. They had a big prize if anybody could guess where it was going to come down. I don’t know where it came down.

[Tape 2, side 1 begins]

Chapman: In 1960, after we got to Chicago, Mr. Milliken and I went up together, he was a member of the platform committee, and he went up a week early, and I went with him because we wanted to do something for this Goldwater movement. The amazing thing about Mr. Milliken, he went to the Republican National Conventions as a delegate and usually went early because quite often he was on the Platform Committee, in 1956, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, and 1984. That’s eight times as a delegate. People on the Business Roundtable and things like that said, “How can you afford to give that time?” He said, “How can you afford not to give that time? If you want to help this country, how can you sit on your behind?” Here's a guy who went to eight straight national conventions. There’re not many senators or governors who have done that. Every time he was gone a week, and quite often he was gone two weeks.

But in 1960 he was on the Platform Committee. I went up, and after this meeting between Rockefeller and Nixon, things began to move. So there was a group from Arizona that was going to send an Indian band. Barry was an honorary member of some tribe, and he was tattooed. They were going to send the Indian band up to play at the convention. They had tom-toms and little flutes. Well, we get a call. The bus had broken down somewhere down in Oklahoma, and they needed $600 to get the bus fixed. Well, we get up the $600. Wire it down to the Indians. Then they get up to Chicago. They played around some of the hotel lobbies. I found out they had to have passes to get into the convention, demonstration passes. I went to see Senator Scott, who was the Minority Leader of the Senate. Hugh Scott from Pennsylvania. He had the demonstration tickets, and he wouldn’t give them to me. He said Barry Goldwater was not a legitimate candidate, and he wasn’t going to give any tickets out. He said, “Does Barry know about this?” I said, “Yes. Please call him at his suite.” Barry was over in the Blackstone Hotel. Hugh Scott calls him. I could hear Goldwater on the other end of the line saying, “My gosh, Hugh! We’re just having a little fun. Give him the tickets!” Well, Hugh Scott was a
stuffy old fellow. He finally gave me the tickets. Counted them out like they were hundred dollar bills. I thanked him profusely, and I walked to the door; I looked down at the tickets, they were last night’s tickets. He wasn’t going to let those Indians in there anyway after promising Barry. I said, “Senator, these are last night’s. We want them for tonight.” “Oh,” he said. I got them. We got them to the Indians. The Indians get out to the stockyards, and they got their tickets. The security people bring them in. And they bring them in to the back of the hall. They take them all the way down the right isle and right out the back door and nobody ever saw them. That shows you how people run the convention, who control it. Nobody heard a peep out of those Indians at the convention. It was just one of the things that we had to contend with that made it fun.

South Carolina was the same way. The way we nominated Charlie Boineau and Fred Worsham was through convention. There were three ways to nominate. You could nominate by primary vote, you could nominate by petition, or you could nominate by convention. We didn’t have enough money to have a primary because you had to pay the poll managers and people like that and print all the ballots. We didn’t have enough Republicans to get people to sign the petitions, so we had to go by county convention. After Fred Worsham was elected to the Senate and Charlie had been elected to the House, there was a senator from up in Union, named John Long. He introduced a bill in the Senate to do away with nomination by convention, so that we couldn’t nominate them. Senator Gressette was chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I called him and asked him if I could appear before the committee, and make a statement on behalf of the Republican Party. He said yes and he gave me a time. When I got there down there to testify, he had set the meeting up in the Senate Chamber. It was quite a debate. Old John Long was speaking for his bill, and they let me speak against it even though I wasn’t a senator because it was a committee hearing. It was not a meeting of the Senate itself. It never came out of Gressette’s committee. He wasn’t going to let that happen.

Hartsook: Why, do you think?

Chapman: It was so flagrant. I tried a couple of cases against Marion Gressette down in Calhoun County. I never wanted to do that again as a lawyer because he was Calhoun County. He was fair. He was like Edgar Brown. Every dealing I ever had with Edgar Brown, who was
the Finance chairman of the Senate for so long and the most powerful man in the state along with Speaker Blatt. Every time I ever had any dealings with him, they were the most pleasant and fair. I remember one time we were down at the Market Restaurant and we had dinner together. I can’t remember why I was in Columbia. We were fumbling over the check. He said, “I’m going to pay the check. I’ve got more money than you have, and the way things are going, I’ll be down here asking you for something one of these days.” That’s the type fellow he was. And Gressette was the same way. Just as pleasant as you could be. He saw exactly what this bill was intended to do. He just didn’t think it was fair. He wasn’t worried about any opposition in Calhoun County. That’s the way a lot of things did in the House.

We had a guy in Spartanburg that used to brag about how many bills he introduced. He introduced hundreds of them. None of them ever got out of committee. He never mentioned that in his runs. These old guys, they ran a pretty good state in certain ways. The Barnwell Ring as they were called. And as I say, they were always fair to me. I don’t say that we always got a fair count, but that wasn’t them. That was being done out in the counties. When I went to Columbia for anything, I always got a very polite hearing. Very prompt. Very sociable. They ran things.

Hartsook: Can I get you to go back for a minute and talk a little bit more about what you anticipated might happen when you got active in the Republican Party?

Chapman: When I got active?

Hartsook: I’m also interested too in the sacrifice because here you are building your law practice. Not only are you jeopardizing your client base by becoming a prominent Republican, but you’re taking all that time away right when . . . ?

Chapman: That’s the reason that I had stomach trouble. I realized I couldn’t continue to give up the time because all you got is the lawyer’s time. When I went into this firm, well came back from the Korean War and formed the firm with Mr. Butler, Mr. Moore had gotten sick and retired. It was about 85% litigation. We defended thirty-something insurance companies. We were always in the courtroom defending automobile accidents and products liability and malpractice. I just figured that was a terrible way to spend the rest of your life because in the
courtroom, between the plaintiff and the defendant, is kind of like a baseball game. The plaintiff has got the ball. He’s going to throw it, and you as the catcher have got to be there when its thrown to catch it. The average plaintiff’s lawyer will go into a three-week term of court and he may have two cases that he wants to try. Three at the outside. We’d have 75% of the docket. These guys may be in court three days during a three or four week term. We’re in there every day, just Mr. Butler and me. We didn’t try cases together because he was one of these people that dotted i’s twice and that made me nervous and I made him nervous, because he hunted with a shotgun, I tried to hunt with a rifle.

I had been trying all along to move it more away from dependence on insurance companies. One reason, in addition to the wear and tear on your body, we were worried about this movement back in those days of self-insurance, where you were going to have this no-fault insurance. They would take the lawyers out of the game, particularly in automobile accidents. They would all be arbitrated and everything. There wouldn’t be any legal suits brought. I was worried about that, plus I was worried about the wear and tear on your body. I was trying to move the thing over to where we represented a lot more business clients, where you weren’t in the courtroom all the time. You weren’t at the beck and call of two judges the same day, and that type thing. I did get a lot more business clients. We kept all of the insurance clients, and we got some help in to help us with it. But, I was never in the position financially to just become a candidate because the firm just wouldn’t have survived. Or, I would have had to get out and let them go on without me. And, I didn’t have enough money to do it without practicing law. It was a problem, but it worked itself out. After a year or two, nobody ever mentioned the fact that I was a Republican.

After I got out of the state chairman’s job, I became chairman of the Spartanburg County Republican Party, which I kept pretty much until, oh, about 1970. In 1968, Nixon came to Spartanburg and made a big speech at the auditorium up there, which is right next to Wofford College. ’68 was a real tumultuous year, as you know. There were all the demonstrations and everything. His advance people were very worried about college students. They weren’t particularly happy about having it there. It would hold 3,000 people upstairs and about 3,000 people downstairs. We had a director of safety in Spartanburg, who was the police chief. When the advance men came, they were talking about demonstrations. He said, “You won’t see any demonstrators.” “What do you mean?” He said, “If there are more than three of them, it’s an
illegal assembly. If they have anything on a stick, it’s a deadly weapon. You’re not going to see those people.” Fortunately, they didn’t have any trouble because if they’d started putting people in jail, then we really would’ve been in trouble.

I was trying to get a band. Now, this is the way things changed. I was trying to get a band to play at this meeting at noon, when Nixon was coming. None of the high school bands would come. I asked the principals and the band directors. Finally, there’s a big high school on the west side of Spartanburg named Dorman High School. I called the bandmaster, and he said they’d love to play. As I was talking to Nixon before, I was the MC, I told him all the problems I’d had getting a band and that this band had agreed to come. They might catch some flak from the school board people. If he would thank them, I would appreciate it. When he got up, he was profuse in his thanks of the band. He said, “When I’m elected president, you are going to walk in the parade.” Well, he was elected. They were all so excited. They were selling turkeys and fruitcakes to get the money to go to the parade. And then I got a call from John West, here in Camden. I had no idea in a couple of years I’d be living here. John West called up and said, “What is all this stuff about a band from Spartanburg playing in the inaugural parade? The Camden band is the state championship band and under the direction of all their by-laws they are the official band. They get to go up to Washington.” I said, “John, I don’t care a thing about what the band in Camden is. The band in Spartanburg has a personal invitation from the President of the United States. They’re going there. If your crowd wants to go, they can go. But you’re not going to stop this crowd from going.” And so both bands marched in the parade. They had a band director here who kind of started this state band championship. They still have it in Camden. He was insisting that his band be the official band. I said, “OK, it’s official. But this has the official invitation.” Dorman had a letter from Nixon inviting its band to come. I didn’t know that but in three years that I would be sitting here with all these band people. Funny things like that always happen.

**Hartsook:** Little things like that really do matter, don’t they?

**Chapman:** It mattered so much to all those kids in Spartanburg because the president told them they were coming. It mattered down here because the band director, Bill Basdon, was a wonderful guy. His band had won, and they were going to be the official band. Of course they
knew the next year was a presidential election. They were going to walk in the parade as the official state band they thought. You had all these kids who could be disappointed, so both of them got to go. That’s the trouble with politics. You never get away from little old things like that, that nickel and dime you to death and nitpick you to death. That’s one of the reasons I was glad to get on the court, is you get away from all of that, finally.

**Hartsook:** Isn’t that really hard though to give up? It’s been part of your lifeblood for so many years, and then all of a sudden. . . ?

**Chapman:** It really wasn’t but ten years. I was active from ’60 to ’70. I have no great urge to make a speech or stand up on the back of a truck like we used to do and talk to people and go around to these high schools and things like that. I got invited to Hammond School over in Columbia one time by my niece. I said, “What do you want me to talk about?” She said, “I don’t care. You show up, I’ll get an A.”[laughter] You get out of all that.

I remember I told this fellow, Craig Wall, Sr. You know, over in the eastern part of the state, the Walls who developed all of the Waccamaw Pottery [chain] and Canalwood and all that kind of stuff. Mr. Wall, Sr. was on the Federal Reserve Board and Bank Board up in Richmond. I told him one day that one of the best things about being a federal judge was you could not give any money to political candidates. He said, “Well, what about Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank?” I said, “I don’t know? You better ask somebody.” He told every nickel and dime politician that came to see him after that, that he was a federal official, couldn’t give them any money any more. I get a call every two days from the Republican National Committee, which I usually hang up. Sometimes I tell them I can’t give any money. Sometimes I just don’t bother and tell them not to call me back. I really haven’t missed it.

I was always wanting to try some things as a trial judge. Some things that I thought that would improve the jury’s understanding of what was going on. When I became a trial judge, I was so interested in what I was doing, reducing all the three syllable words to two syllables, taking all the Latin out, talking in terms. . . . People don’t talk about negligence, people talk about carelessness. Lawyers use these words that the average man in the street doesn’t use. I spent years trying to get the instructions down to where a six-year-old could understand them. But, I enjoyed that so much, and the give and take of the courtroom, that I didn’t miss politics.
Really, I was in politics all the time. I handled all these voting fraud cases. I reapportioned the Senate and the House, twice. I was the presiding judge on two of those panels. One in the ‘80s, one in the ‘90s. You’re really in the politics, but you’re not asking for money, and not telling people how to vote. It’s a part of the political process.

Hartsook: Going back to the law practice for a minute, what did your partner think of all the time you were taking away from the practice to . . . ?

Chapman: He never complained. We had a strange relationship. We didn’t have a partnership agreement. When I came back from the war . . . It was his practice. I had been gone two years. Of course, I hadn’t practiced but a couple of years before that. We started out on, I think, an 80-20 split. About every year or two, he would make the suggestion that we change it. In 1966, he had an operation and he got a bad infection and ran a terribly high fever. It affected his brain. He came to work, but he couldn’t really do anything. Eventually I had to figure out a way to retire him. Back in those days, you didn’t have retirement. If a guy couldn’t work, you just told him to get out. I was bringing in other lawyers to pick up the work load. I set him up on a salary. He had an office. He had a private bath. He had a private entrance. The reason he had all of that was his mother-in-law was still living with him. She was 102. He had to get out of the house. He’d come down to the office and he’d go to the coffee shop and talk to all the young lawyers. He’d never been in the coffee shop in his life. He’d never had time. But all through this twenty years that we spent together, we never argued over a fee. We never argued over a split. We never argued over how to try a case. If we had tried cases together, we would have. I realized after we tried a few together that he went at something one way, which is minute detail. I tried to pick out two or three things that I thought were important and get those home to the jury. We would have driven one another crazy if we had stayed in the courtroom together. He would take a young associate and I’d take a young associate, and we’d go to court. We handled it that way. We rarely went to court together. We never went to court together in the last ten years we practiced together. He didn’t complain. The only time that he complained, he didn’t really complain, he just had a question. By this time he was really beginning to have some problems. When it all came out in the newspaper that I was going to be appointed a judge, he came in my office one day and said, “What’s going to happen to me?” I couldn’t take him
with me. That really gave me some concern. I began to think about it. I merged my firm with another firm in Spartanburg. They had a very good corporate practice. I had a very good litigation practice. They represented one bank. I represented another. They represented Duke Power Company. I represented The Southern Railroad. They were a good mix. I said, “OK, we’ll merge the firms. I’ll give you all the unbilled time. I’ll give you the library, all the machinery. And, you have to take Mr. Butler. And, you have to pay him what I had agreed to pay him for the rest of his life,” or so many years. So they did. He only lived another year, I think, after I went on the bench. He never complained about the time I spent. He never complained about the judgeship once he found out I wasn’t going to leave him alone. It worked out very well.

**Hartsook:** How about Mrs. Chapman [the late Mary Winston Gwathmey Chapman (1928-1998)]? What did she think about all of the political activity?

**Chapman:** She was glad when it was over. She enjoyed. . . . The best publicity I ever got was one night I was supposed to speak in Orangeburg. It was on Robert E. Lee’s birthday. I had written a speech. I was so proud of it. I got the flu. So, she went down and made the speech. She was on television. She was in all the newspapers. They had a picture of me sitting in the bed at home with three little boys. The only bad thing was, I got letters from people saying, “Why have you got those little boys in the bed? You’re going to give them the flu.” [laughter] She would have made a wonderful politician’s wife, except that she just did not like anybody to say anything derogatory about me, about the family, or anything like that. Over the years, we’d meet somebody, and I’d be very friendly with them. She’d say, “How can you talk to that fellow? He voted against you. He did this against you.” I said, “But that was ten years ago.” She never forgot any of that stuff. That’s kind of, you know, you attack the nest, it’s a problem.

I didn’t want to stay in it. I didn’t want the boys in it. It was funny, the night before the Goldwater election, the big national television was in Columbia at the old auditorium there, Township Auditorium. We had all these Hollywood people and everybody in there. It was Halloween. My youngest boy, who has been living in Australia for the last fifteen years, he had on a skeleton Halloween outfit with a mask. Mr. Byrnes was there. All these people were there. Barry was there. Raymond Massey, Hollywood actor and all. Well, anyway, the whole thing
was over, and Winston said, “We got to get up early in the morning. I’m going to be on the front page of the newspaper.” [laughing] I said, “No, Mr. Goldwater’s going to be on the front page of the newspaper.” “No, I’m going to be on the front page of the newspaper.” About six o’clock in the morning, he’s tugging me. We’re at the motel. I get up and go out and buy *The State* paper. Mr. Byrnes is on the front page with Barry, but then at the bottom of the page is my son in his costume. And, he said they’d told him he was going to be on the front page. He loved all that.

We drove Strom one time from Spartanburg down to one of these political things, probably that same campaign. The boys were in the back of the station wagon. Strom and I were in the front. Strom was very nice to the boys for a while, then he said, “You mind if I go through my mail?” He had a big briefcase full of stuff, so he started reading these things and putting them away and reading things. And, he reached down in the briefcase, brings these things up, and he’s got some gooey stuff on all of them. He said, “Golly, there’s a pecan pie in there.” [laughter] In his briefcase. He said, “Oh, some lady gave me that in Baton Rouge two days ago. I just dropped it in there.” We stopped at a little old country store, got a knife, and cut the pie all up. Everybody was eating it going down the road. But he’d had it in his briefcase for two days. The children thought that was terrific. And it was fun. That was before Strom was married the second time. It was a good life, but I didn’t want to keep it up. The money part is what, asking for money. I just couldn’t go out like they have to do now. I mean, my gosh, what does a senator got to raise? $10,000 a day to run. He’s got to average about $10,000 a day to make the run at the end of his term. I just couldn’t do that.

*Hartsook:* I really feel for the House of Representatives. Two-year turn around. They’re just campaigning all of the time.

*Chapman:* I was reading a book about one of the great heroes of the War Between the States, named Chamberlain. He was the one they wrote the Gettysburg play about, *Killer Angels*. He was elected governor of Maine four times after he returned from the war. I said, my gosh, he didn’t have anything else to do. The term was one year, and that wasn’t unusual. I think John Adams, he ran for some office one time, and the term was one year. Of course, they didn’t spend any money. They didn’t make a lot of speeches.
I thought the state needed a local person, and the state needed two parties if it was ever going to amount to anything nationally again. Look at all the influence Strom has had. For twenty years he was one of the most powerful people in Washington. It wouldn’t have happened if he had stayed in the other party and we didn’t have a party.

_Tape 2, side 1 ends; side 2 is empty; tape 3 begins_

**Hartsook:** When you were active in politics did you do any candidate recruitment? Did you try to talk any Democrats into changing...?

**Chapman:** They weren’t doing that then. They really weren’t. Charlie Boineau had never run for office before. Fred Worsham had never run for office before. In 1966, when Strom ran the first time as a Republican, he wanted as many people running as he could get. He wanted the state ticket to be full. I mean, certainly the statewide offices. I talked to some people then about maybe running. Some people talked to me, but I wouldn’t run. We filled up the offices. I say we elected twenty-three people to the House and Senate that year. Strom ran, oh gosh, you’d’ve thought he was running the first time in his life. He always ran that way, like he was behind. He didn’t know what people were going to do about him being a Republican. Of course, he just blew the opposition away. The changing of parties didn’t start until after that.

**Hartsook:** Did Floyd Spence’s decision to switch, did that have any statewide impact, do you think? [A young Democratic member of the South Carolina House, in 1962, Spence announced he would run for Congress as a Republican, becoming the first prominent Democratic office holder to switch parties.]

**Chapman:** Not like Strom’s. Floyd switched, and then Albert Watson beat him as I recall. Then Albert switched. Albert switched because he came out for Goldwater, but tried to keep his
seat in Congress. He kept his seat in Congress, but when he got back to Washington, they just
didn’t put him on any committees or anything. They just ostracized him. He resigned as I recall,
and ran for re-election as a Republican and was elected. In 1970, Albert ran for governor against
John West and was defeated. That’s when Floyd went in. Floyd never ran against Albert but
once as I recall. Floyd changed parties and was elected to the state Senate. Then Albert changed
parties and stayed in Congress for another five years. Then he ran for governor. Floyd ran for
his spot. Floyd was elected. Albert wasn’t. Albert became some kind of administrative law
judge I think. He didn’t change parties until they lowered the boom on him in Washington. You
can imagine what Lyndon Johnson would’ve done to a Democrat that voted for Barry Goldwater.
He just saw to it that poor Albert didn’t have anything to do.

Hartsook: Do you think it’s fair to characterize Watson’s gubernatorial campaign as a race-
based campaign?

Chapman: I really don’t remember that much about it because I was trying. . . . I wasn’t
chairman then. I’d given up the chairmanship that year of the county party. I was really trying
to do what I could more for Jim Henderson, who was the most famous advertising man that’s
ever lived in South Carolina. Jim was a brilliant, brilliant fellow. He decided to run for
lieutenant governor. I had something to do with talking to him about running. And, I took him
around to some speaking engagements and things like that. I got very much involved with Jim,
much more so than I did with Albert. He was accused of it, but I can’t remember what he said. I
don’t remember going to too many meetings that Albert went to because. . . . I did go down to
Woodruff. I can’t remember; they let me speak for somebody who wasn’t there. This was 1970.
I can’t remember who it was. No, that was ’68, and they had a stump meeting. It was the first
time they had ever let somebody speak for the presidential candidate, certainly a Republican. I
got to speak then for Nixon and Agnew. I really don’t remember all that much about Albert’s
race and what he said. I know people accused him of that, because Albert had had something to
do with the Democrats for Nixon and Lodge back in 1960, now that I think of it. But I can’t
remember what he did. He had something to do with that organization. But, he got himself
elected, and he beat Floyd, which was a pretty good undertaking. Albert was older than Floyd,
better known than Floyd. I don’t know where he is now. I haven’t seen him in a long time.
Hartsook: Albert Watson has passed away.

Chapman: He has?

Hartsook: Yes, sir, and I think developed Alzheimer’s later in life.


Hartsook: When you stepped in as chair did you see yourself as changing that position or were you going to continue on pretty much the way Mr. Shorey had run it? Did you have goals that you set for yourself?

Chapman: Well, the goal that I set for myself was to organize every county, which I didn’t get done with a formal organization. I went around a lot of the counties and talked to people. I had friends that got involved. Boys that I had been to grammar school with got involved, because I was involved. Some of them went around to various counties. We never did get all forty-six organized. I had to organize the counties because you’ve got to have the poll watchers if you’re going to have an election with seventeen hundred polling places, back in those days anyway.

This thing that happened over in Dillon back in the ’78 election helped a great deal in the state so far as what people do and think they can get away with and found out they couldn’t get away with. That’s the one where Alan Schafer, who owned South of the Border, went to jail, and Carmichael went to jail. It was so prominent. It really didn’t involve the federal government. There happened to be a primary for Congress on the ballot. The real fight was over the sheriff over there. [Florence attorney] Nick Zeigler represented one of the sheriffs. I can’t remember which. He said there’d been some hanky-panky, and he got SLED to impound the ballot boxes before any of the ballots could be tampered with. Then, somebody said there was a congressional race going at the same time and therefore it’s a federal offense if there was an illegality. They brought in the FBI, and the FBI cracked the thing. That’s what happened. What
they had done, they had used a new absentee ballot. It didn’t require you to be out of the precinct, out of the state, or anywhere else. You could just apply for an absentee ballot. The plan was to get all these people to apply for absentee ballots. You get them to sign them and just give them to you for five dollars. Then you voted them the way you wanted to, is the way it worked. They had all these people, most of them were black, who had been selling the votes and buying the votes for Schafer’s candidate.

Jack Lindsey, who was the Senator from over there, he came to court representing twenty-two people. I told him he couldn’t represent twenty-two people, that there were bound to be conflicts of interest. Some of these people may want to cut a deal with the government; it wouldn’t be to the interest of his other client if client A wants to cut a deal and testify, client B is not going to cut a deal. Jack couldn’t be representing them both. Oh, he said, “That’s no problem.” I said, “That’s horizontal conflict of interest. You may have vertical conflict of interest. Who’s paying your fees?” “Well Senator Carmichael is paying the fees because all these are good friends of his.” I said, “There’s your vertical conflict of interest. He’s the target of this investigation.” “Oh no. He’s not a target.” Well, the federal government submitted all their files to me in camera. I looked at them. Of course, he was. He and Schafer were the real targets. I brought all of these people in one at a time and talked to them about conflict of interest and how it could affect the way a lawyer represented them. Did they want to keep the senator, or did they want a new lawyer. Twenty, I think, out of twenty-two wanted a new lawyer. I had trouble finding enough lawyers in the Pee Dee to represent twenty different people, but we got them all. They all pled guilty and testified against the other two. Plus they testified against Carmichael. Schafer pled guilty just the day before he was to go to trial. That investigation and all the publicity had a lot to do with making politics, so far as the polling place is concerned, a lot more honest than it had been. People played it – it was a game. Really, at a lot of these polling places, it was a game. Wanting to see how they could handle this thing to where people didn’t vote the way they really wanted to, but the way that the poll manager wanted them to vote.

Hartsook: I know there had been a lot of talk about whether it was best to try to build from the top down or the bottom up, and I believe I’ve seen you quoted as being a bottom up. . . ?

Chapman: You talking about candidates, or talking about the party?
Hartsook: I think I’m talking about both. It seems that people that talk about the top down...

Chapman: You’ve got to go from the top down with candidates. Well, this is what Goldwater’s theory was. You have to go from the top down with the candidates because in a one party state, people get more excited about national and international issues than they do about local issues. In a senatorial campaign you can talk about what’s going on in Israel or the Mideast or the Federal Reserve Board or Enron or this type thing. So, he said, “Beware of sheriffs.” This is what Goldwater said. They had somebody out there in Arizona, and see, it was a one party state, pretty much, when Goldwater ran the first time for the Senate. He said some guy wanted to run against the sheriff. Of course, the sheriff beat the hell out of him and everybody else on the ticket in that particular area. You’ve got to be real careful about these local candidates who have been there forever. Your grandfather voted for them. Your father voted for them. You’re going to vote for them. And he said, you’ve got to work from the President, then the Senate, and go on down that way. To build a party, you’ve got to build it from the precinct. You’ve got to have a precinct organized because people vote in precincts and you need a poll manager or two there. So, one way you’re working from the bottom up. The other way you’re working from the top down.

Hartsook: I’ve heard some people credit Workman’s ’62 campaign for creating the skeleton of the statewide organization.

Chapman: I think that’s true. We had, maybe a skeleton. He put a little meat on it. With The Citadel, Bill Workman had been president of The Citadel Men or whatever they call their alumni. I could go into a county and start trying to organize a Republican Party. Every county had so many Citadel people in it. If Bill Workman was president of The Citadel Men, and those Citadel Men are pretty loyal, and he wants to be senator…. He certainly could get some Citadel people to show up at any meeting and organize any group. It had a lot to do with the move from 1960 to 1964. A lot of those people stayed. They came in, got interested, and stayed around for ’64, ’66, and ’68. But The Citadel connection was very important.
Hartsook: I’ve also heard some people think that Marshall Parker should’ve won the ’66 Senate campaign, but for voting irregularities.

Chapman: I wouldn’t be surprised. He didn’t lose but by 10,000?

Hartsook: Yes. A very slim margin.

Chapman: He ran twice. He ran against Fritz in ’66 [following the death of Senator Olin Johnston]. Fritz beat Judge Russell in the Democratic primary. Then Marshall Parker was the Republican candidate. Marshall came very close to beating him. That was for a short term. The remainder of the term was only two years. Then Marshall ran again in ’68, but didn’t do as well. But, that first time it was very close. I don’t remember all the election problems or voting irregularity problems. But, in this state at that time, with the number of polls we had covered, if you lost by 10,000, the chances were you had won if you got a good count.

Hartsook: Why do you think Parker could mount such a successful campaign? Here he was, did not have the name recognition of Hollings. Didn’t have incumbency. Hollings had been governor. . . .

Chapman: Fritz didn’t have incumbency the first time in ’66. He had been beat in ’62 by Olin D. Johnston in the primary. Then he practiced law for four years.

Hartsook: He certainly had much greater name recognition.

Chapman: Oh, yes. He’d been governor, lieutenant governor. Marshall Parker was a very attractive person. A very handsome man. He spoke well. He had this rugged individualist, up-country look about him, as opposed to Fritz, who was a suave Charlestonian. I think that appealed to people. Fritz hadn’t been in a position to do anybody any favors at that time, certainly for four years. I thought really that he had a chance. I don’t remember a lot of voting irregularities that I saw or had anything to do with.
When I went to law school in ’46, I hadn’t been able to play any during the war. They didn’t have a golf team when I was at Carolina Navy [?] anyway. I went back. I had started playing again and was playing pretty well. Went out for the golf team. Made the golf team, and was playing number one. My picture came out in the Gamecock newspaper. The dean saw it. We had a new dean. He’d come down from up in Anderson. He didn’t like golf. I found out later why, because his law partner, old Mr. Watkins, played golf and brought in all these clients. Dean Sam Prince was supposed to help do the work. He was in there on Saturday afternoon working while Mr. Watkins was out playing golf with the textile manufacturers and bringing in the business. He found out I was playing golf and traveling with the team. And, he called me in one day and he said, “You can’t play golf. You are a law student. Law is a jealous mistress. You’re married to the law.” I said, “Dean, I can’t afford a mistress. I’m just on the G.I. Bill of Rights. I didn’t get to play during the war. I want to make a letter. I really do want to make a letter while I’m in college.” “Well you can’t do it playing golf.” I stayed on the golf team.

Some years later I went back down there to see him. I was looking for some help. They didn’t have a placement bureau then. You had to go down and find them. A good friend of mine was the Chrysler dealer in Spartanburg and the Imperial had just come out. On Saturday, we were playing golf and he wanted me to drive one. I said, “I can’t afford an Imperial.” He said, “I’m not going to sell you one. I just want you to drive it. I’m so proud of it.” I said, “OK. I’m going to Columbia Monday.” I parked that thing right in front of the law school. And, the dean was looking out of the window. When I came in he said, “That’s a fancy automobile you got. What kind is it?” It was the new model and I told him and he said, “My gosh, you must be doing all right.” I said, “Dean, I’m making so much money from people I meet on the golf course that I need some help.” [laughter] He said, “Aw, shut up.”

It was funny, right about the time I left law school. . . . I played in ’47 and ’48. As I said, we were on a very accelerated program so that’s all I got to play. I was out in two years. Old Rex Enright, who was the football coach, a very charming fellow. He went over to see the dean and he told him he wanted the dean to let Kale Alexander into law school for one semester.
Kale Alexander was a big tackle. Big being 225, 230 pounds. He had one more year of eligibility. He said he’d like to go to law school. The coach knew that they didn’t give any exams in law school until football season was over. If Kale could get in, he’d be eligible to play. The dean said, “How good of a player is he?” Rex said, “He’s the whole right side of the line.” In those days they played both ways, offensive and defensive. The dean said, “Well, we’ve got some nut around here playing golf. We might as well have a football player.” So Kale came over. He stayed three years, graduated, and became a very good lawyer in Columbia. That’s the way that it happened. Rex thought he’d just go in there for one semester. He’d have him that last year, and then he’d get out. But, Kale did very well. I didn’t know at the time why the dean was so upset by golfers, but I found out later on about Mr. Frank Watkins. I met a lot of people on the golf course and through golf contacts.

Hartsook: A lot of business done on the golf course.

Chapman: People think that there’s a lot business done with judges on the golf course. I was fortunate enough not to have to worry about that because I could play well enough to where they didn’t have to miss putts for me. [laughing] It’s just been a great sport really, and it’s a wonderful way to get away from the law. If you’ve had a bad day as a judge or a lawyer, you can go out to the golf course, just go to the driving range and hit fifty balls, and it gets the frustrations out of you, gets your mind off of it. It’s also, I find, a very therapeutic game. I’ve gone out to the golf course so many times saying, well, I’ll play three holes or four holes and play eighteen and feel like a million dollars when you get through. When you go out there, you don’t feel like you’re going to be able to play any. It’s totally diverting from your regular problems. It’s kind of like skiing.

I was trapped up in the mountains one time by a big snowstorm when I was a lawyer. Bill Rhodes, who was a wonderful state trial judge, then became a Supreme Court justice, was in Spartanburg. He was champing at the bit because I was supposed to be trying these cases and I was stuck in the mountains. I finally got down about Wednesday, because they didn’t clean the roads up there then like they do now. He calmed down. He said, “Why do you ski?” He was an enormous man. He would’ve had trouble skiing. I said, “Because when you point those skis downhill, if I think about you, or my client, or my office, or my business, I’ll break my neck.
You’ve got to keep your mind on what you’re doing.” Same thing’s true about golf. You don’t get hurt, but you don’t play well unless you keep your mind on what you’re doing.

Hartsook: Have you played often with Justice Littlejohn?

Chapman: We started that judges group together. Justice Littlejohn and Judge Simons from over in Aiken and me and Lovic Brookes, who’s a labor lawyer down in Atlanta. It was patterned after one down in Atlanta that Griffin Bell started. We had so many judges and so many lawyers. We met once a year at different places, usually down at Hilton Head. I’ve played with Bruce here and there. He didn’t take it up until late in life, so he’s not a good player, but a very enthusiastic player.

Hartsook: In promoting the party, I’m sure you emphasized the importance of a conservative government, but what were your key points that you would try to make with someone? What were the telling points. . . ?

Chapman: The telling points were that the Republicans believed first in low taxes, not in wasting money, a strong defense, leaving as much power in the hands of the people and money in the pockets of people as possible. Pretty much what they’re talking about today. The Republicans, for too much of the time, had been without good leadership on the national level. The Democrats would come up with some idea, and they [the Republicans] would just say, “That’s not too bad an idea, but let’s not spend that much money.” Instead of saying we don’t need that. I always said that anything that’s introduced you ought to look at it first, is it constitutional and second, do we need it, and third, can we afford it?

There was another thing that was going on. We get all this stuff about how popular President Kennedy was, but there were an awful lot of people that didn’t like Jack Kennedy. They didn’t like his father. They didn’t like the fact that he hired his brothers and all this kind of stuff. In 1960, ’61, ’62, there was a great many people who came into the Republican Party because they just thought that the Kennedys had taken over the Democratic Party. They didn’t like their approach, the family, the nepotism, that type thing. But basically, I was talking about local government and less spending and lower taxes, better military. Of course, the missile gap
turned out to be a hoax. One of the big things Kennedy brought out in the last days of the campaign of 1960 was this tremendous missile gap between the United States and Russia. There wasn’t one. That’s pretty well what I did and said. It’s time to let people make their own decisions if they can. Don’t do things for people that they don’t need or can do for themselves. Don’t spend the country into bankruptcy.

**Hartsook:** Did the integration of the University of Mississippi and Clemson and then USC, did that have any impact on the political scene? It would be ’61 for Mississippi, January of ’63 at Clemson, and then late in ’63 at USC.

**Chapman:** I remember Judge Russell told me, we were on the Court of Appeals together and used to fly up and back all the time, told me that when they were going to integrate Clemson, he got a call from the Attorney General, Bobby Kennedy. He wanted to know if he needed any United States Marshals, anything like that. Judge Russell said, “The people of South Carolina are going to obey the law, and I’m going to enforce the law. You don’t need to send anybody down here.” I’ll tell you who had more to do with the peaceful integration than just about anybody was John Cauthen. Did you know him?

**Hartsook:** No. I thought you going to say Chief Strom.

**Chapman:** No. John Cauthen was the executive vice-president of the South Carolina Textile Manufacturers. Very much of a political power behind the scenes in Columbia. His brother was Henry Cauthen, who was editor of the evening newspaper. John Cauthen was the uncle of the guy that ran ETV for so long. Who was Henry Cauthen. He was very much involved in that thing, behind the scenes. Of course, he had no power except the power of persuasion. The textile industry has always been very supportive of Clemson through the [J.E.] Sirrine [Textile] Foundation. John was working with these people to keep Clemson quiet. And, Judge Russell had a lot to do with it.

*[Tape 3, Side 2 Begins]*
Chapman: Matthew Perry was in the group. He went up there. He was representing Harvey Gantt, as I recall, in that suit. There were a lot of people involved. And, most responsible people wanted the thing to take place peacefully. We certainly weren’t going to have Judge Russell standing in the door to bar him, like George Wallace did. This fellow, John Cauthen, had an awful lot to do with laying the groundwork, to make the thing come off the way it did. Clemson was much more in the public eye than Carolina was, because once it happened at Clemson, then it was not as newsworthy when it happened at [the University of] South Carolina. I’d forgotten exactly the dates although I know from talking with Judge Russell it was when he was in there. He was only in there about two and a half years before he went to the Senate.

Hartsook: Did he talk at all about his decision to step down and have Governor McNair appoint him to the Senate? [Following Olin Johnston’s death in 1965, Governor Russell resigned his office and his Lt. Governor, Robert E. McNair, succeeded him and appointed Russell to fill Johnston’s seat until such time as a special election could be held.]

Chapman: Not to me. We talked about everything in the world, just about. He, by the end of his life, was a very strong Republican, the way he thought and I’m sure the way he voted. His son [John] was a Republican senator from Spartanburg. He never mentioned that because at that time, he and I were on different sides of the political fence. We only lived a block from one another in Spartanburg. But, he was the Democratic governor. I got on him publicly for having Spartanburg County declared a part of Appalachia so he could get some funds. I just didn’t think it should be in one of those Appalachia plans because we didn’t have all that unemployment and all that stuff. Just looked to me like one of these things where you get all the money you can when you can get it, which I was opposed to. He was a politician enough to know that that’s one of the things politicians do.

In all the years we sat together, and he was certainly a role model to me and very kind to me from the very day my name was mentioned for a federal appointment. . . . He couldn’t have been more supportive and nice. We swapped books back and forth. [Judge Russell was a noted bibliophile.] His son told me that I finally sent him a book he didn’t have. He died on his birthday, and it arrived the day he died. He said, “It’s the only book that you sent daddy that he didn’t have already.” I was talking to him one time about this great English historian, Paul
Johnson. We were flying up on the plane, and I had read his book called *Modern Times*, which I think is the best history of the 20th century. I said, “You ought to read this book.” He said, “I’ve already read it.” I said, “Gosh, I just thought I’d got the first copy that came to Columbia.” He said, “No, he sent me the galley proofs.” [laughter] He had already brought Paul Johnson over here for the Russell lectures at the University when I didn’t even know who he was. That’s the way he was. He’d go to London and buy books. He had a book dealer in London who’d send him these books. And, he read them, read them all.

I took him a book one time; we were flying up on the plane. It had gotten into some of the recently released English intelligence information about the [Rudolf] Hess flight. Hess was the number three man in the German hierarchy. He flew over to England, and he parachuted out up in Scotland [in May, 1941]. They kept him in prison the rest of his life. It had some new information in it. I gave the book to Judge Russell when we got to the hotel. The next morning at breakfast, he’d read it. Read the whole book. Knew everything in there. Of course, he knew a lot about it because he was in the White House the whole four years of the Second World War, with Mr. Byrnes. He could read a book that way.

He didn’t forget anything. He was in his nineties. He didn’t take any notes on the bench. I wrote things down that I wanted to remember. Then we’d go into conference. I’d write down how Judge Russell voted and maybe a note of why and how the other judge voted. He never wrote anything down. At the end of the day, he had to write a letter to the Chief Judge telling him how all the cases were decided and how the judges voted because the Chief Judge assigned who would be the author of the opinion. He did it all from memory. He held court three weeks before he died. He never got old. I mean, he never spilled food on himself. He always was immaculately dressed. He read three newspapers before he came to breakfast. That type thing. And he read them. You could talk to him about something on the third page of the *Wall Street Journal*. Already read that one. Read the editorial page of the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. He could read those without being influenced. He was an amazing man. He was very proud. When they named the courthouse for him in Spartanburg, he mentioned the conversation with
Bobby Kennedy. He told him that the people of South Carolina would obey the law.

**Hartsook:** Let me give you a few names and if you would just give me real brief comment as to what you think their importance is in South Carolina’s political history. We’ve talked about some of them a little bit. Your predecessor, Greg Shorey?

**Chapman:** Greg was a very enthusiastic person. Had a lot of ideas. Very good businessman. He had a water safety company, is what he did then, up in Greenville. I think that he was a necessary cog in the wheel. Going from the person who preceded him, who I think was Mr. Dows, over in Aiken, who was a wonderful old guy that owned trotting horses. Racing horses. Greg was very much of an advertiser. He also went in the advertising business after he got out of the water safety business. He was a good publicist. He knew how to get things in the paper. He was very dedicated to trying to build a party down here and very enthusiastic about the Goldwater movement. I think he was a very important person at that time, but I think he stepped out at the right time because as the party began to grow he and Mr. Milliken and Mr. Wannamaker and all thought that now was the time to turn it over to somebody who had more of a local image.

**Hartsook:** How about Roger Milliken?

**Chapman:** I think he’s the most important person who’s lived in South Carolina in the last fifty years. He and maybe Strom. He’s brought more things into South Carolina that people don’t know about. He’s done more to beautify the state than anybody that ever lived here. He’s 86. We were with him two weeks ago. He’s up before you are and in the bed after you are and never slows down all day long. When he came down here, there’s no question in my mind that if he hadn’t gotten interested in the Republican Party and decided to do something about it that the party never would’ve gotten off to the start that it did. This thing that happened in ’56, this showdown that happened between the old way of life and people who were really interested in the Republican Party and building the two party system. That showdown out at the ’56 convention, he was behind all of that. As I told you, he went to eight straight Republican conventions. He had a lot to do with forming the state business council. He’s been on the board
of Wofford ever since he came south. Wofford was in bad shape financially when he got interested in it. He used to spend two days a month with his top finance people, this is the first three- four years he went on the board at Wofford College, going over their records trying to figure out some way to get more for a buck. He’s just done wonders up there for independent colleges.

He brought so much industry in here that people don’t know about. People say Roger Milliken lived down there, raised his children down there, has all of his plants, not all of his plants because he’s now got them in eight countries, it’s all run right out of his office in his house. You ride by his house, you wouldn’t pay any attention to it. It’s not much bigger than this one. It’s a little office on the back. That’s where everything is run from. He doesn’t have an office in New York. He just sits down, and wherever he sits down, that’s his office. He doesn’t have an office out at research or the management information center. He never stops trying to improve anything that he gets involved in. The Day School in Spartanburg, that was his idea. It’s still going strong after forty-something years. The Wall Street Journal calls Fritz, ‘the senator for Milliken,’ because of his protectionist ideas. I just think he’s really one of the most interesting people, certainly one of the most interesting people I’ve ever known. And one of the most constructive people I’ve known. When he gets his mind on something, just like Ross Perot. I didn’t agree with him on Ross Perot. I think Ross Perot cost George Bush the election. But Roger wanted somebody that’s going to protect jobs and keep the textile business viable in this country. That’s the way he went. I just think he’s amazing. I really do. He’s planting trees, golly everywhere. Mary’s met him. She’s been impressed with him. He’s just a very unique person. Somebody in the paper wrote a big thing on him back in the fall, John Monk or somebody like that, that was very complimentary.

The Democrats used to call him Daddy Warbucks because he was a perfect target back in the days when people tried to, well, they do now, deal in envy politics. He’s there. These other people may put their money up, and you wouldn’t believe how many people put their money on both sides. When I was trying to raise money initially, people just wouldn’t give us money. Say, “I can’t upset these local politicians. My taxes on my business, on my building, on my plant, on my farm, they’re set by the local politicians, not by the President of the United States. I’ve got to stay with these local politicians. I may slip in and vote for your candidate for president, but I’m sure not going to get my name on any list.” But Roger, who had more to lose than any of them,
he was right out in front, leading the way. He was smart enough to know that he couldn’t be the spokesman. And, he never made political speeches except really in the Platform Committee of the national convention.

One funny thing about Roger [laughing], shortly after I showed up at the first precinct meeting, he called me up the next afternoon and said, “The state convention is next week and we’ve got to write a platform for the state party.” I said, “Get the platform from the last time and we’ll look at it.” He said, “We never have had a platform. Why don’t you come around here and we’ll think about writing a platform for the 1960 convention.” I went around there, and we were putting things [in] about spending and all this stuff. He said, “What can we put in here that will catch the eye of the public?” I said, “Why don’t we propose that the state sell the Santee Cooper Project to private power.” That would put I don’t know how many thousand acres of land back on the tax books, and it would pay dividends. It would pay taxes. Now, we’re not getting anything out of it. Now they pay something in lieu of taxes, but forty years ago they didn’t pay anything to the state. Roger said, “Who do you think would buy it?” I said, “Well, I think South Carolina Electric and Gas would buy it.” It was 3 o’clock, Sunday afternoon. He calls up [Silas C.] “Slick” McMeekin, who was the chairman of SCE&G, which is now SCANA. Here’s “Slick” McMeekin, rising out of a sound sleep, and Mr. Milliken’s on the phone. Well, he had met him, but he didn’t know him. He certainly waked up when he found out his wife was on the phone with Roger. He said, “Yes, Mr. Milliken, what can I do for you?” He said, “Would you like to buy Santee Cooper?” [laughter] That’s what he said. “If you can sell it, I’ll buy it,” he said. It was typical of the way he operates. Well, let’s call “Slick” McMeekin. Let’s call him up. Said, “You want to buy Santee Cooper?” “Yes sir, Mr. Milliken, if you can sell it. I’ve been trying to rent it for years.” And he had. He had made proposals that SCE&G would rent Santee Cooper and they would pay taxes on what they made off it. Santee Cooper wouldn’t listen to him. It was so funny, so we put it in the platform. That got in the paper that we were going to sell Santee Cooper to private power. That was the funniest conversation. He’s an amazing man. Been so good for the state. It’s a shame none of his children live here.

Hartsook: How about Gayle Averyt?
Chapman: Gayle’s a wonderful man. We travel on some of these golf trips together. First time we ever went to Scotland, Gayle and Peg went with us. Ireland and all around. Gayle has a wonderful mind. He was very active in the early days of the party as a money raiser. Did a real good job for Bill Workman raising money, and then he did a good job for the Republican Party after Bill left. Bill never paid much attention to the Republican Party after he ran that one time. His son did. His son was mayor of Greenville for a long time. Then he ran for something else. I never understood why Gayle sold his company, except I think the responsibility of running a family company that had gotten that big, and he didn’t have any children to bring on in a management position. I think it bothered him, and he just decided to get out when he did. I like Gayle. I think he’s been a very constructive person and a very good friend and a very important member of that early group, although very few people knew about him in the early days. He was very much in the background. Well, he was courting. He wasn’t even married back then. He’s done a good job.

Hartsook: Drake Edens?

Chapman: I liked Drake. He was a very important person because he could devote all of his energy, and he had worlds of energy, to building the party. He didn’t worry about what it cost him. I don’t know how much it cost him. I mean, he didn’t fly around in airplanes. He met a lot of people. He used invite all these big people from Washington down to shoot quail or shoot doves and things. He had several farms. He talked some people into running. He organized some counties. Drake was very important. His wife, her name was Ferrell as I recall, she had been in the Marines. Both of them died. He got ulcerative colitis or something. He was a ghost. Then he got knocked down by a wave down at the beach and drowned as I recall. She had died of cancer a little bit before that as I remember. Drake was a very, very enthusiastic Goldwater supporter. He was chairman for six years. Something like that. He was the right man at the right time.

Hartsook: How about Harry Dent?
Chapman: Harry was amazing. I tried to hire both Harry and Fred Buzhardt when they were working for Senator Thurmond; both of them were in his office. I asked each one of them if they would come down to South Carolina and practice law. Both of them turned me down. Said that as long as Strom was up there, we’re doing what he was doing, and they wanted to be a part of it. This was before he changed parties. I think Harry had more to do with talking Strom into changing parties than anybody. The last time I saw him was somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean. He was on his way to Romania with some doctors. That was his mission until he got sick. He had, for some reason, adopted Romania. He had this missionary program that took these medical doctors over there who would work for two weeks or something in an eye clinic or go over there and take out tonsils for a while or something like that. We had a long chat on the plane.

He came home in 1966 to make sure Strom got re-elected. I think that’s when he took over the party maybe from Drake, was when Strom sent him down here. He and Fred Buzhardt were both very instrumental in ’68. The first thing they had to do was keep the Senator from getting married while the election was going on. Fred Buzhardt was an amazing fellow. He knew more about what was going on than just about anybody I ever saw. At the convention down in Miami in ’68, he could tell you what was going on everywhere on the floor. He’d just kind of wander off, and then he’d come back with all this information. I liked Harry. I liked Betty. He did a great deal for the party.

People said he was too much of a cutthroat politician, but I didn’t think so. Apparently, he thought that he had not done anything illegal, but he had taken advantage of some situations politically that upset him when he got to be a full-time lay minister. I don’t remember anything he did that was underhanded certainly or against the law. They got him in the Watergate thing, and he didn’t do half of what Al Gore did. They finally got him to plead guilty to soliciting a contribution in a federal building or something. Here’s Al Gore using the telephones in the White House. Harry pled guilty to that because he said he wasn’t going to spend every cent he had on lawyers. I say you know the biggest scandal about Watergate is what the lawyers got out of some of those people, charging half a million dollars to plead guilty. Harry said he could plead guilty for nothing. He went in there, and I think he pled nolo contendere and the judge, then he put him on probation. People said, “Well, he’s one of the Watergate people.” But they
decided to nail him because he’d been so successful. He was the author of the southern strategy that elected Nixon. That was his idea. It worked.

He called me after the ’68 election. I went up to the Pierre Hotel. That’s where Nixon was putting his administration together. Harry said, “What do you want?” I said, “I want to make a living in Spartanburg. I don’t want to be in the administration. I don’t want to move to Washington. Did you have anything particular in mind?” He said, “No. But we can get you what you want.” I said, “If there’s ever a judgeship open, which I don’t think there will be because Judge Russell is living in Spartanburg, and we live very close to one another. I might like to have a judgeship, but I can’t think of anything else I’d want to do, certainly not move to Washington.” I never thought I’d be a judge, because of Judge Russell. I didn’t know they moved judges around. When I became a judge, they asked me to go to Florence. I spent so much time in Columbia trying criminal cases that I came to Camden to be halfway between the two.

But, I think Harry was a very positive person and very much involved in the growth of the party. If you look back on history, he had an awful lot to do with electing Nixon and putting Strom in the position that he was put in. Nixon felt very beholden to Strom. He put Harry in the White House and he put Fred Buzhardt as general counsel to the Defense Department. So, Strom knew everything that was going on in the Pentagon and in the White House. Harry and Fred, Barry Goldwater said they were the two best people on the Hill, and this was back long before any of this happened, when we were involved with Goldwater in ‘61, ’62. He said, “Strom’s got the two best men in Washington working for him.”

Hartsook: Last name. How about Carroll Campbell?

Chapman: I really didn’t know Carroll that well, because I was out of it. I knew him very pleasantly. His daughter-in-law was one of my last law clerks. Elizabeth Herlong Campbell, who’s married to Tumpy, his son [Carroll, III]. Very pleasant, very nice, but I couldn’t be involved. I wasn’t involved in getting him elected except voting for him. He came along, really, after I was gone. When I went on the court in ’71, I’m not sure Carroll was even in the legislature at that time. I just knew him to speak to really. He was a very good governor, I thought. He certainly put together an organization that was effective. I remember in 1980 the
Republicans had about five people running for president. We had just built the new federal courthouse up there on the hill, on Laurel Street. There was a motel over there. Everybody was staying in that motel. John Connally, and Ronald Reagan, and George Bush, and Howard Baker, and there may have been one other that was running. I’d see them come out every day to go wherever they were going. You could see Ronald Reagan. He was taller than the Secret Service. You could see Connally. You could see George Bush. But, you couldn’t even see Howard Baker. He was so little. You’d see these four guys walk out, and you knew Howard Baker was in there somewhere. And maybe John Tower. I don’t know whether he was running. Connally had Strom backing him. George Bush had Fred Dent, who had been Secretary of Commerce, backing him. I’ve forgotten who Baker had. But, Carroll Campbell and maybe Jim Edwards were Ronald Reagan men. After South Carolina the rest of them quit. It was all over after the South Carolina primary. [Reagan defeated his nearest competitor, Connally, by a 2-1 margin.] Carroll and Jim Edwards I think were running Reagan’s show. He beat them all. He got a majority in South Carolina as I recall against four candidates. That was a lot due to Carroll and to Jim Edwards. Jim was a big Reagan man in 1968. Reagan came and spoke to our group of delegates. He snowed a lot of them, I’m telling you. Strom put the quietus on that, and that’s one reason Nixon was always so beholden to Strom. They were about to have a southern runoff to Reagan. I mean, he was an attractive man. He’d just won in California. Of course, Nixon had been beat in California, been beat for governor. Strom came in after that. He went around to the other southern delegates and he said, “Look, if we run off with Ronald Reagan and leave Nixon, then you’re going to wind up with Rockefeller. That’s all the eastern establishment wants is for us to break this thing open. The South has got to go with Nixon, and Ronald Reagan’s got to wait his turn.” Jim Edwards went along. It worked out that Ronald Reagan got it eventually. Most people don’t get to be president when they’re seventy, but he did. Carroll, I thought, was a very effective governor, and very popular. It’s a tragedy what’s happened to him. But, he went to that big dinner a month or so ago, so he must be still in the early stages of Alzheimer’s.

[Interview ends]