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HAMILTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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INTERVIEW WITH  
BILL "WILLIAM" E. CRAIG, D.V.M.  
AND  
SHALOR CRAIG, M.D.

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1 (INTRODUCTION)

2 MR. EIDSON: Good afternoon. My name is  
3 Jim Eidson. I'm Chair of the Hamilton County, Texas,  
4 Historical Commission. It is June the 14th, 2018. We  
5 are joined here by Andy McMullen, members of the  
6 commission, Jane Crouch and Francis Ramsey, the court  
7 reporter, Jamie, and videographer, Jason, and we are  
8 here to interview Bill and Shalor Craig. And Bill and  
9 Shalor, father and son, Bill being the father, are  
10 lifelong Hamilton County residents. They have a long  
11 association and family history in the county. One of  
12 the things that Bill and Shalor have had an interest in  
13 and I think recognized fairly early on is that the  
14 stories related to the experiences of those who fought  
15 in World War II is being lost at a very rapid pace.  
16 These folks are beginning to age and to -- to pass on,  
17 and we're very pleased and honored to have them here  
18 today to relate the stories that they have solicited  
19 from -- from friends, some relatives, that they can  
20 share with us today.

21 One of the things about oral histories is  
22 that it captures a portion of history that is not  
23 captured within the history books. These are the  
24 experiences firsthand, sometimes secondhand stories, but

25 firsthand experiences of people who lived these historic

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1 times. So it's our pleasure to welcome Bill and Shalor

2 Craig here today. Thank you.

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1 (INTERVIEW)

2 MR. EIDSON: Well, welcome.

3 MR. BILL CRAIG: Thank you. Thank you for  
4 having us.

5 MR. EIDSON: Well, I'm so glad that you're  
6 here. Well, can you tell me something -- give me  
7 your -- your lineage, your association with Hamilton  
8 County, where your family came from, and --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: Okay. All right. Well,  
10 my father was actually born in Iredell. I think that  
11 the Craig family -- the immediate Craig family came here  
12 from Corsicana with a short stop in Iredell, and they  
13 stayed there only a year and then came to Hamilton. My  
14 father was one of eight boys and one girl.

15 MR. EIDSON: And what -- what year would  
16 that have been?

17 MR. BILL CRAIG: My father was born in  
18 1911.

19 MR. EIDSON: Okay.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. And he was  
21 along -- about in the middle. He had like three  
22 brothers younger than he was, maybe, and four older or  
23 however it came out. But, anyway, the -- my grandfather  
24 had a produce house, and he bought produce from farmers,

25 eggs and whatever, vegetables, and then he sold them to

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1 the people here in Hamilton. So it was -- I suppose  
2 back in the -- in the '20s, it would have been a grocery  
3 store of sorts, but that -- that was his profession, and  
4 he actually never learned to drive. He -- they lived  
5 out at the edge of town on 2805, and he had a horse and  
6 a wagon, and he -- he would drive to town -- drive his  
7 horse to town. So my mother was an Oglesby. The  
8 Oglesbys actually were here before the Craigs. My great  
9 grandfather was one of maybe five children, and theirs  
10 is an interesting story, I think, because his father  
11 fought in the Civil War, and then they lived in Coryell  
12 County. After the Civil War and his father came home,  
13 he was, so the story goes, on a trail drive -- his name  
14 was Willis Oglesby, and he was on a trail drive and, you  
15 know, us cowboys like to say our horse fell with us  
16 rather than bucked us off, but irregardless [sic] of  
17 what happened, he broke his leg, and it was evidently a  
18 compound fracture. So before they could get him back  
19 home to Coryell County, he developed gangrene in his --  
20 in his leg, and they lived close to Oglesby, I suppose,  
21 out of Gatesville, east of Gatesville, so they went  
22 to -- someone went to Gatesville, got the doctor, and he  
23 came out, and I think this is factual. The doctor  
24 probably had done many amputations during the Civil War,

25 you know, so there was no anesthetic, and they got him

6

1 up on the kitchen table and sawed his leg off, but he --

2 he already was septic and -- and he didn't live long

3 after that. So...

4 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: This was the one that

5 went to the Civil War or --

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: He did go to the Civil

7 War.

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Oh. When he came back,

9 he broke his leg?

10 MR. BILL CRAIG: When he came back, he was

11 on a trail drive and broke his leg. Yeah. He -- he is

12 buried in the Davidson Cemetery east of Gatesville.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And that was Ambrose's

14 father?

15 MR. BILL CRAIG: That's right. Yeah. And

16 so Brose, then -- Ambrose was the -- he was the oldest

17 man in the family of five with his mother, interestingly

18 enough, my great, great grandmother, I suppose, was

19 French, and I guess, you know, she came in from -- from

20 Beaumont or East Texas or whatever. At any rate, she --

21 she died pretty soon after his father did, and so they

22 migrated to Hamilton County. Probably my -- my great,

23 great grandfather was born in '67, around -- he was

24 around 20 years old, I think, when they came here, and

25 he was a -- I will say a very successful rancher and

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1 landowner here in Hamilton County and acquired quite a  
2 bit of land, and he was a bank director at the Perry  
3 National Bank and well respected and well thought of.  
4 So, anyway, that -- that is the story.

5           Another -- another interesting story, I  
6 think. They -- my -- my great grandmother was a  
7 Moore -- we called her Mama O -- and Ambrose had two  
8 sons and three daughters, I think. At any rate, one of  
9 the -- one of the -- both sons worked on the ranch, and  
10 one afternoon, they were -- Brose and Andy, who was the  
11 son, were going to go -- went to the pasture I think to  
12 get a mare or a mule or something and this little  
13 thunderstorm came up. They said there was one clap of  
14 thunder and it zapped Andy and killed him on his horse.  
15 So I am fortunate enough to have the saddle that he was  
16 riding when lightning killed him, but that was a big  
17 deal that was very traumatic for the family, and -- and  
18 then they -- soon after that, they moved to town.

19           MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And it has one small  
20 hole in it, right, the saddle --

21           MR. BILL CRAIG: It does.

22           MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- where the  
23 electricity went through?

24           MR. BILL CRAIG: And that supposedly is

25 where the charge went through. It hit the horse

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1 actually, I think.

2 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I have -- I have a  
3 pretty good Ambrose Oglesby story while we're talking  
4 about him. So Ambrose was a pretty big -- I mean,  
5 from -- from what we've been told, a pretty big rancher  
6 and had lots of land, and he was on the bank board --

7 MR. BILL CRAIG: Uh-huh.

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- also, Dad, here in  
9 Hamilton. And so this was actually told to me by a --  
10 by a patient/acquaintance, Joel Sellers, here in town.  
11 His dad's name was Wert Sellers, and he was a farmer,  
12 and I guess -- and I really -- I don't know what era  
13 this would have been, but maybe the '20s or '30s.

14 MR. BILL CRAIG: Probably so.

15 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: He -- he had a new  
16 tractor. He had -- he was a big -- doing a lot of  
17 farming, and he had bought a new tractor, but tractors  
18 were expensive, and I think he -- he was farming corn on  
19 the river, and his corn flooded out like two years in a  
20 row, and -- and the second year it flooded out, Ambrose  
21 had had him do some farming for him because he had  
22 never -- he didn't have a tractor like that, I guess.  
23 He wasn't as big a farmer, and he had him do some  
24 farming for him, and he did a real good job. And so

25 Ambrose came back to Wert and said, "Wow, I really" --

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1 "I really like how good that tractor did plowing these  
2 fields up. I guess I'm going to need you to do that  
3 next year." And he said, "Well" -- he said, "Sadly,  
4 I" -- "we lost our corn crop and the bank is going to  
5 get the" -- "the bank is going to get the tractor." And  
6 so Ambrose said, "Well, how about" -- "how about if I  
7 loan you the money to pay for the tractor and you" --  
8 "you do" -- I mean, "you keep doing my farming with that  
9 tractor?" And so Wert thought that was a great deal.  
10 So he said, "Well, you go to the bank and you tell this  
11 guy to get all the papers drawn up, and I'm going to be  
12 there" -- "I'll be to town here in an hour or so and  
13 we'll" -- "we'll settle it." And so Wert went in there,  
14 and as Joel described it, Wert was a country bumpkin  
15 and -- I don't know. The people at the bank, I guess,  
16 didn't -- I guess if they were wanting to take his  
17 tractor, they didn't have as much respect for him, but,  
18 anyway -- so Wert went in there and told him what to do  
19 and the bank guy told him to sit down and, you know,  
20 "Well, we'll see." And so soon after, Ambrose Oglesby  
21 comes in there and -- and he says, "All right. Wert,  
22 where do I sign?" And the guy was like, "Oh,  
23 Mr. Oglesby" -- anyway -- so the point of the story is  
24 they -- they did the deal, but when Ambrose came to

25 town, they, you know, got excited and made it happen.

10

1 But -- so, anyways, he got to keep his tractor, and --

2 and I guess did a lot of Ambrose's farming for him.

3 MR. BILL CRAIG: You know, back then, a

4 lot of the farming was done --

5 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Real small tractors.

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: Sharecroppers did a lot

7 of the farming, you know.

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And they still used a

9 mule and plows a lot --

10 MR. BILL CRAIG: Oh, yes.

11 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- back -- back in that

12 time.

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: So Brose had lots of

14 cultivated land, but he didn't do -- I don't -- as I

15 understand it, he didn't do a lot of farming himself,

16 but he would get a third of the crop because he

17 furnished the land, and then whoever -- the tenant

18 farmer or sharecroppers would get -- would get

19 two-thirds of it, and that was just the way a lot of it

20 was done back then, you know. He ran the cattle and

21 horses and mules, and they'd have a big trade day on

22 First Monday. Have y'all ever heard of First Monday?

23 MR. EIDSON: Uh-huh.

24 MR. BILL CRAIG: Okay. Okay. So that

25 would be the big trade day. They'd come in and bring

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1 mules and sell the German farmers' mules to pull their  
2 plows and everybody would -- would trade back and forth.  
3 So at any rate, that's -- that's that story.

4 MR. EIDSON: That's a great story.

5 MR. BILL CRAIG: One -- one more story  
6 that I think is interesting. When -- when Brose was  
7 very young, probably -- he died -- I mean, his father  
8 died when he was 12 years old, and his uncle, whose name  
9 was George Oglesby, whose Oglesby is named after, was  
10 like the justice of the peace or the constable or  
11 something, and back then, there were lots of characters  
12 that didn't abide by the law very well after the Civil  
13 War, and there was always a Vigilance Committee.  
14 Vigilantes would be another name. And they were just  
15 self-appointed private citizens who probably for the  
16 most part had fought in the Civil War. So guns and  
17 violence were nothing new to them. And this character  
18 who was a known horse thief came through Oglesby, and  
19 my -- I guess it would be great, great uncle knew that  
20 the Vigilance Committee was after him. So after  
21 sunup -- he came through during the night and, I guess,  
22 may have -- may have stopped and talked to George  
23 Oglesby briefly, but he and -- and Brose went down the  
24 trail, and sure enough, about a mile or so from Oglesby

25 or two or three -- I don't know exactly how far -- in a

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1 live oak thicket, they found the -- the person in  
2 question hanging from an oak tree. So George cut him  
3 down and left Brose there to keep the buzzards off of  
4 him, and he went on in to Gatesville to get the sheriff  
5 to bring him back out to investigate the crime. So --

6 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: But Ambrose wasn't very  
7 old.

8 MR. BILL CRAIG: No. He was 13 or 14 or  
9 12 or I don't know exactly how old. But, anyway --

10 MR. EIDSON: So he was left there onsite  
11 at 13 years old to supervise the corpse of a hanging  
12 man?

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: Right. That's -- that's  
14 exactly right. That's the way -- that's the way the  
15 story came down to me.

16 MR. EIDSON: We were tougher people in  
17 those days, I think.

18 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. And folks grew up  
19 a lot younger back then, too.

20 MR. EIDSON: Yeah. That's true. Yeah.

21 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Dad was talking about  
22 how his dad -- his dad, Ed Craig, was one son out of  
23 eight sons and one daughter. And is it right, five of  
24 them went to World War II, Dad?

25 MR. BILL CRAIG: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. I don't

13

1 know whether they all shipped overseas or not, but one  
2 of them might have stayed in the States. I'm not sure,  
3 but, anyway, yeah, that's correct. And they all  
4 survived it and, you know, came home.

5 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: So Ed, he had a -- I  
6 don't know where -- in what order you want to hear all  
7 of this, but --

8 MR. EIDSON: Any way it comes to you is  
9 fine.

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Ed was a CB in the  
11 Navy. He was in the construction battalion, and he was  
12 actually older when World War II started, I mean, as far  
13 as recruits. He was born in '12, and he got --

14 MR. BILL CRAIG: '11.

15 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I'm sorry, '11. So he  
16 got in --

17 MR. BILL CRAIG: He went in when he was  
18 29.

19 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Okay. So in '41, I  
20 guess he was 29, and he was already into construction  
21 doing large equipment like bulldozing and that kind of  
22 stuff. So they put him in the construction battalion  
23 building airstrips and bases and probably port- --  
24 helping with the ports. And so he was in the South

25 Pacific and they were on some little island, and they

14

1 did have -- each have a gun, because he said  
2 occasionally people would fire at them from the jungle  
3 while they were trying to build the landing strips. And  
4 they were unloading at some port, and he said they were  
5 unloading his gun and dropped it into the ocean. I  
6 mean, and, you know, this huge ship and this huge port,  
7 there was no way they could get it. And so he was  
8 without a gun for a long time. And he said that he ran  
9 into one of his brothers on another island, and his  
10 brother was a higher ranking officer, and when he found  
11 out his little brother was going around without a --

12 without a weapon, he got him a .45 magnum --

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: A .45 pistol.

14 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: --a .45 pistol, and Dad  
15 still has -- still has the pistol.

16 MR. EIDSON: How about that.

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I guess maybe since it  
18 was got by not -- it wasn't issued, so he got to make  
19 off with it. I don't know.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah, I don't know how  
21 that worked either. But, yeah, John gave him that.  
22 John was -- he was an A&M graduate. So he got -- he got  
23 rank when he went into the military, and he was two  
24 siblings older than Ed. But, anyway, he commanded a PT

1 PT boats in -- in one -- one of those islands in the  
2 South Pacific near, I guess, at one time where -- where  
3 Ed was stationed. So he -- I know on one or two  
4 occasions because he got the .45 Colt from -- from John.  
5 So I know he saw him once, anyway.

6 But, yeah, he was going down the netting  
7 on the side of a ship to land on one of these islands,  
8 and they tied his M-1 off, and when they let it down --  
9 well, he was actually going to board a smaller boat and  
10 go in to shore. And I don't mean there was a lot of  
11 fighting going on or anything, but that's just the way  
12 you -- he was -- that's the way they landed people a lot  
13 of times. And so, anyway, the -- the M-1 came untied  
14 and it went in the drink, and there was his protection  
15 against the Japanese Army, you know. So...

16 MR. EIDSON: Wow.

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I think it's incredible  
18 these guys -- I mean, like, when I remember hearing  
19 these stories from my granddad, you know -- and it's  
20 still terrible, but nowadays when people are in the  
21 military and they have to deploy -- you know, like a  
22 tour in Vietnam was a year, and the guys in Iraq, they  
23 have -- or Afghanistan now have to go for a year  
24 sometimes, but Ed -- he got in at the very beginning of

25 the war, and he was gone for 27 months --

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1 MR. BILL CRAIG: Twenty-six months.

2 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- 26 months before he  
3 came home the first -- he was already married. He had  
4 just gotten married, and he came home once for a week or  
5 two, and then they shipped him back out until the end of  
6 the war, which was almost two more years.

7 MR. EIDSON: Good heavens.

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: So in like four years,  
9 he came home once, and his wife was still there when he  
10 came back.

11 MR. EIDSON: Much credit to her.

12 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yeah.

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, she was from good  
14 stock.

15 MR. MCMULLEN: She was.

16 MR. EIDSON: She was, indeed.

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And Ed said that he got  
18 stuck on -- he was on -- the island of Guadalcanal  
19 during the battle of Guadalcanal, and -- and they had  
20 them trapped and they ran out of supplies and they ran  
21 out of food, and he was about the size of my dad when he  
22 was -- I mean, he was not a big man, but he was  
23 five-ten, and when he was later, he was a little bit  
24 chunky, but he probably weighed 150, 160 pounds during

25 his younger days, and he got down to like 100 pounds on

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1 that island because they just didn't have anything to  
2 eat. They had Japanese rice, and he said, "If you" --  
3 "it was full of bugs, but if you picked all the bugs  
4 out, there was nothing left to eat."

5 MR. BILL CRAIG: Now, that was --

6 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I don't know.

7 MR. BILL CRAIG: -- his story. Yeah, it  
8 had -- the rice had weevils in it, and us kids said --  
9 we'd say, "Well, didn't you separate the weevils out?"  
10 He said, "Well, you wouldn't have anything to eat if you  
11 did that." So that was kind of the joke. But, yeah, he  
12 was on -- he was on Guadalcanal. That was actually the  
13 first offensive campaign I understand that the U.S. had  
14 during -- or embarked on during World War II. He went  
15 in in -- he signed up in March. The Japanese bombed in  
16 December of '41, and it is kind of interesting. They --  
17 several of the brothers were out at my grandmother and  
18 grandfather's house on the edge of town, and they were  
19 listening to the radio, and, you know, it came on the  
20 radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, and  
21 everybody was -- was obviously very upset because all of  
22 these sons were of draftable age, and they -- they knew  
23 that a lot of them would have to go, you know, and, in  
24 fact, Ed shipped out in May of '42. So...

25 MR. EIDSON: Wow.

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1 MR. BILL CRAIG: And he was gone for  
2 26 months and then came home, and then he deployed again  
3 and was in the battle of Okinawa, and then -- and then  
4 he came home after -- after Hiroshima and all of that,  
5 you know.

6 MR. EIDSON: Wow.

7 MR. BILL CRAIG: But, yeah, that was very  
8 typical. I mean, you know, he -- his service was no  
9 more intense than most that -- that went, you know, and  
10 they -- he did not -- actually was not in combat, per  
11 say. They would take artillery fire at night.  
12 Henderson Field -- I don't know whether you've ever  
13 heard of Henderson Field, but that was on Guadalcanal,  
14 and the reason it was so important was because it --  
15 the -- the bombers could strike from Henderson Field to  
16 a lot of these other islands. I don't know that they  
17 could make it to Japan, but it enabled them to bomb the  
18 Japanese on -- on islands 7- or 800 miles away. The  
19 Japanese were on one side of the island and the, you  
20 know, U.S. troops were on the other side of the island.  
21 It was a -- the island was maybe 30 miles long. I don't  
22 know. And lots of jungle and mountains in between. So  
23 they fought -- the Marines and the Japanese would --  
24 would fight mostly, Ed said, at night. And then they

25 were shelling one another, and the Japanese artillery

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1 was coming in on Henderson Field to try to disrupt  
2 Henderson Field so these B17 bombers couldn't land. So  
3 then they'd get out during the day and patch up  
4 Henderson Field, you know, so -- so these planes could  
5 come in, and then the artillery would come in at night.  
6 And he -- he lost I don't know how many from his  
7 company. I can remember -- they took lots of pictures  
8 of the -- of the grave of one particular person that I  
9 guess was friends -- a friend of his that -- you know,  
10 if -- they'd go to their foxholes, but a direct  
11 artillery hit in the foxhole would obviously be fatal,  
12 you know. So, anyway, that was his, more or less, war  
13 experience, I guess.

14 MR. EIDSON: Well, that is a heck of an  
15 experience. Thank you for sharing that.

16 MR. BILL CRAIG: Everyone here knows  
17 Milton Harelik, I'm sure, and Milton was just -- I'll  
18 get a little becleft [sic] when I tell this story, but  
19 Milton was a great guy, everybody loved him, and he was  
20 Jewish, and he had two other brothers, and they were all  
21 three in the military during the war. And I won't go  
22 into the Harelik history, but Milton was -- I think he  
23 was the bombardier and nose gunner on a B25 bomber,  
24 which is a medium-range bomber. So the big B17s and

25 B24s, you know, you did your 25 trips and got to come

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1 home, but the short-range bombers, it -- it required  
2 more missions or shorties or whatever. So we were at an  
3 event not too long before Milton died, and -- and I knew  
4 Milton was in the flight crew of this B25 bomber. So I  
5 asked him -- I said -- "Milton," I said "how many combat  
6 missions did you fly," and I can't remember whether he  
7 told me 54 or 55, but he knew just like that how many he  
8 had been in, you know. And I said -- "Milton," I said  
9 "you are a hero," and I could tell it kind of  
10 embarrassed him, you know, and he said, "No." He said,  
11 "I wasn't a hero." He said, "I just tried to do my  
12 job." And that's the way they were, you know. And  
13 there was no notoriety for those guys. I mean,  
14 they're -- you know, they went to war and they came home  
15 and a lot of people didn't even know they had been gone,  
16 you know. One guy, Ollie Olson -- I don't know whether  
17 y'all remember old Ollie Olson, a big, tall -- my mother  
18 used to say drink of water kind of guy -- and I don't --  
19 I was going to talk to Mickey Kinsey -- Mickey and Ollie  
20 I think are kin, but I don't really know even where  
21 Ollie served, but he was in some pretty hot conflicts  
22 I'm going to guess in Europe, and he -- you know, lots  
23 of fire fights, that sort of thing, and he made it home  
24 just a big old 20-year-old kid or how old -- however old

25 he was, didn't have a job, and so somebody had suggested

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1 maybe that he go to Lone Star Gas and see if they had  
2 anything. So he went over there to talk to them, and  
3 they -- you know, I don't know of anything. They said  
4 "Now, there's one thing" -- they said "We've been  
5 talking about putting in a pipeline from Hamilton" --  
6 "from the town of Hamilton out where we have gas coming  
7 in to town out to Littleville," and they said, "I guess  
8 if" -- "if you wanted to dig that ditch to Littleville,  
9 then I guess you could do that." You know, and it's, I  
10 don't know, a mile or something like that, you know.  
11 Old Ollie, he had been digging foxholes, you know, for  
12 two or three years, so that was right down his alley,  
13 and he went out there probably with a pick and a shovel  
14 and a sledgehammer, and he dug a ditch from -- I'm going  
15 to guess it was the station right off of 281 -- the pump  
16 station was probably how far out they were, or maybe it  
17 wasn't even that close. I don't know. But he got his  
18 ditch dug to -- to Littleville, you know.

19 MR. EIDSON: Oh, wow.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: And that was a lot better  
21 environment than he had been in.

22 Go ahead, Shalor. You're next.

23 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, I don't know if  
24 Jim wants us to ask -- ask -- if he wants to ask any

25 questions. We're kind of just --

22

1 MR. EIDSON: Or you're doing fine.

2 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I mean, is this mainly  
3 about World War II that you're wanting to hear about  
4 or --

5 MR. EIDSON: World War I, all of the  
6 Veterans. I think the -- you know, World War II, we're  
7 kind of losing those Veterans, but --

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Right.

9 MR. EIDSON: -- if you've got stories --

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Sure.

11 MR. EIDSON: -- let us have them.

12 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I had this -- this is  
13 kind of a funny story. I had this -- well, Dad and I,  
14 when I was a kid, we had a neighbor, and he -- his name  
15 was Luke Hack, and he wasn't from Hamilton originally  
16 but he moved here when I was probably, I don't know, 12  
17 or 13 and was our neighbor and was an older gentleman  
18 that -- but he -- he could still get around then, and he  
19 liked to go fishing, and he would go fishing with us  
20 some -- with my brother and I sometimes. If we didn't  
21 have anybody to go with us, he'd take us. And so,  
22 anyways, Luke apparently in his younger days was a --  
23 was a big athletic guy, and during World War II, I guess  
24 he was -- he was in the Navy, but he was a boxer, and he

25 said that once they figured out he could box, that he

23

1 never did fight. That all -- all he -- he went around  
2 and did boxing matches for the troops. He did boxing  
3 matches for the troops, and so he said for -- and I  
4 think he got in at the end of the -- I mean, about the  
5 end of the war. And so he -- he was -- he had multiple  
6 pictures of him boxing, you know -- and, you know, he  
7 would have the U.S. Navy on -- on his uniform. But the  
8 funny story he told me about World War II was when it  
9 was over in the Pacific, he was in -- he was in  
10 Hawaii -- he was stationed in Hawaii, and so he got  
11 orders that he got to come home, and so there was -- he  
12 was supposed to be on a ship sailing from Hawaii  
13 probably back to San Diego -- I can't remember -- but  
14 back to California, and so they were -- him and his  
15 friend were all excited and, you know, happy to be going  
16 home, and he was -- he was married also, and, you know,  
17 he had already called his wife or written to his wife  
18 and said he was coming home. And, well, they got a  
19 little too excited the night before and were out a  
20 little too late probably drinking a little too much in  
21 celebration and they overslept and they missed the ship  
22 going back to San Diego. He got to stay two more  
23 months.

24 MR. EIDSON: Oh, my.

25 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: He stayed two more

24

1 months until they could get him a ship back. But I  
2 said, "I bet you were on that one." He goes, "I was  
3 there." And I said, "And I bet you didn't explain  
4 exactly how you didn't get your ride back to your wife."  
5 He goes "No, not exactly," which makes me think of  
6 another kind of related story.

7 Dad, what's the Peters guy's name that's  
8 still alive? Is it --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: Ernest. No. No. I'm  
10 sorry. Albert Peters.

11 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Albert Peters.

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: Ernest is alive, too, I  
13 think, but Albert is the one that -- that I think  
14 you're --

15 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Albert is still alive,  
16 I think.

17 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah, I think he is, too.

18 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: So Albert Peters is  
19 a -- is a -- he was a veteran of World War II, and he  
20 was kind of the same way. He was in at the very end.  
21 In fact, I kind of think he told me that combat was  
22 basically -- was ending when he got there, because he  
23 was almost too young for the war. And he lives out  
24 around Pottsville, Dad?

25 MR. BILL CRAIG: Uh-huh.

25

1 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Anyways, he's been a  
2 patient that I've seen off and on. I'm not his primary  
3 doctor. But, anyways, I would also ask him stories  
4 whenever -- whenever I got the chance -- or ask him  
5 about stories when I got the chance. And so he was  
6 there when -- when it winded down in Germany, and  
7 they -- they -- Hitler's -- Hitler's bunker, the  
8 Crow's -- or Eagle's Nest --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: Eagle's Nest, yeah.

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- he was there, I  
11 believe, when they --

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: It was -- it was kind of  
13 a resort up in the Bavarian Alps.

14 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yeah. When they  
15 liberated the Eagle's Nest -- or they captured the  
16 Eagle's Nest -- and he told me about that, and I guess I  
17 was asking him about -- about that again at another  
18 visit, and he said "Yeah" -- he goes, "We did" -- "we  
19 did that." He goes -- "But I tell you what," he goes,  
20 "We liberated many a truck full of French cognac. We  
21 liberated that." And he was telling me how they had a  
22 base, and I want to say it was in Austria. He was on a  
23 base in Austria right after the war was over, and they  
24 were -- I mean, they needed people to just cook and do

25 laundry and -- and office jobs, and so they were trying

26

1 to hire the Austrian women to come do that, and they  
2 were having, you know, trouble getting -- getting these  
3 women hired or agreeing, and they were like "Well, are  
4 we not paying them enough" or -- and one of the Austrian  
5 ladies told them, you know, "If you soldiers would quit  
6 chasing around every woman that" -- you know, "every  
7 woman that could walk, y'all could probably" -- that  
8 wasn't exactly how he put it, but "y'all could probably  
9 get some people hired to work around here." Of course,  
10 you know, the men were probably dead or a lot of them  
11 were.

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: The Germans were.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yeah. So, anyways,  
14 that's -- that's a couple of stories I can think of off  
15 the top of my head that are --

16 MR. EIDSON: They're great ones.

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- relatively  
18 entertaining.

19 I have a lot of Korean Veterans that I --  
20 I see also. There's a gentleman -- he's still alive.  
21 His name is Richard Young, and he's not native to  
22 Hamilton either but a really, really neat guy, and he's  
23 probably like 88 now. And he told me about how, you  
24 know, during the Korean War that he -- he and his troops

25 were under the impression that a whole lot of the people

27

1 they were fighting were actually Chinese and that they  
2 were in Chinese uniforms, and he said that, you know,  
3 they would have just an open field and just big  
4 50-caliber machine guns where there just wasn't any way  
5 those guys were going to overtake them and that they  
6 just mowed them down and stacked them up by the  
7 truckloads, and that there were just truckloads of dead  
8 Chinese soldiers, you know, all over the field when that  
9 was over. And he's one of the other guys who told me  
10 how cold it was in Korea, and that, you know, he got  
11 frostbite on his foot, and he was -- he was in the sick  
12 bay for I can't remember how long, several months with  
13 the frostbite, and then finally he got to go back -- go  
14 back to active duty, but I think a lot of those guys got  
15 frostbite in --

16 MR. BILL CRAIG: You know, the Battle of  
17 the Bulge was -- began, like, in December right before  
18 Christmas, and it was evidently unusually cold even  
19 for -- even for Germany and Belgium and the places where  
20 they were fighting. So there -- there was -- frostbite  
21 was very common. A fellow that's still alive, Leamon  
22 Wagner, was an ambulance driver during the Battle of the  
23 Bulge, and he said they got a call to go pick up some  
24 soldiers that actually had frostbite and take them back

25 to the whatever they call the MASH unit, whatever it

28

1 was, and so they were in a farmhouse or barn or -- maybe  
2 it was a barn/farmhouse combination, these soldiers were  
3 that they -- that they were supposed to pick up and did  
4 pick up, and as they were loading them in the ambulance,  
5 I think there was maybe even a German soldier with them  
6 that had been seriously wounded, he said a mortar round  
7 hit the ambulance, and they had already loaded several  
8 of these people in there, and he said -- this is pretty  
9 graphic, but he said the shrapnel from this mortar had  
10 just all but taken this one guy's face off, and he said  
11 as his heart beat, you know, the blood would squirt out  
12 of his -- what used to be his face, and he didn't live  
13 very much longer, you know, and he said one -- one of  
14 the guys was up under -- I guess the -- the explosion  
15 blew him kind of up under some blankets and all in the  
16 ambulance, and he -- he didn't even know he was there,  
17 but he -- you know, he was dead. But he -- he commented  
18 on how -- I mean, you know, his deal was kind of like  
19 Shalor was saying about Korea -- was how -- how bitterly  
20 cold it was when they were fighting the Battle of the  
21 Bulge. And that was part of the problem because they  
22 couldn't get air support in. The weather was -- the  
23 clouds were low and the weather was such that the Air  
24 Force couldn't fly, and so they -- they were fighting --

25 fighting without air support.

29

1           O.R. Brown -- everybody remembers Doc  
2 Brown, don't they? He -- I don't really have any  
3 stor- -- I have lots of stories about Doc Brown but not  
4 much that relates to the war, but he actually was in the  
5 Normandy Invasion, and his landing craft, whatever they  
6 called them, the Higgins boat or whatever, was --  
7 artillery fire hit it, and it sank and he floated around  
8 out in the English Channel, and he was picked up, and  
9 the -- the news group that was covering it interviewed  
10 him. So a lot of people heard him on the radio, you  
11 know, telling his experience, and he -- you know, he  
12 lived through the war. I'm sure he fought through  
13 France and Belgium and wherever he was dispatched and  
14 made it back to Hamilton cattle -- Hamilton County and  
15 hauled many loads of cattle while he was here in  
16 Hamilton County. All the cattle went to -- most all the  
17 cattle -- the terminal market back then was Fort Worth.  
18 So they would ultimately end up in Fort Worth. And so  
19 all these guys -- my daddy was -- hauled cattle when  
20 he -- before -- actually before the war started, and,  
21 you know, their little trucks they haul the cattle on  
22 only haul 7,000 pounds, and he said it took him -- the  
23 roads were mostly caliche dirt roads. He said you could  
24 make it to Fort Worth in six hours --

25 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: God.

30

1 MR. EIDSON: Wow.

2 MS. CROUCH: Wow, six hours.

3 MR. BILL CRAIG: -- with your 7,000 pounds  
4 of cattle.

5 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: This is not on the  
6 subject of World War II but Hamilton history, and I  
7 don't have very good information on it, but my granddad,  
8 Ed Craig, I -- I remember him telling this story, and  
9 Dad remembers it well. He claims -- and I've tried to  
10 look this up in weather history, and I can't find  
11 anything to back it up, but he wasn't -- he wasn't the  
12 kind of guy that just made stuff up or he -- I don't  
13 think he did. He -- he claims that one year we had a  
14 real cool summer and that we were getting cold fronts in  
15 the early summer and it had gotten cold several  
16 weekends, and -- and he claimed that it snowed on the  
17 4th of -- right about the 4th -- and it didn't stick --  
18 have you heard of that before?

19 MR. EIDSON: Yes. We just had that story.

20 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Oh, really?

21 MR. EIDSON: 19- -- July 4th, 1919.

22 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Say it again.

23 MR. EIDSON: July 4, 1919, according to  
24 our last interview.

25 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Really?

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1 MR. MCMULLEN: He would have been eight  
2 years old.

3 MR. BILL CRAIG: So he could have  
4 remembered that.

5 MR. MCMULLEN: I'm sorry.

6 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: It had to be true.  
7 What?

8 MR. MCMULLEN: It was Dick Keeter that  
9 told us.

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, my granddad may  
11 have told him. I don't know. But Dick said he knew the  
12 year --

13 MR. MCMULLEN: Yes.

14 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- or had his --  
15 because he's not that -- I mean --

16 MR. BILL CRAIG: No.

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: But his father --

18 MR. MCMULLEN: He quoted a lady.

19 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Oh, okay.

20 MR. MCMULLEN: And we're making it really  
21 difficult on the court reporter, but -- but he quoted  
22 her and he -- he gave her name. She was, I think, 12 or  
23 14 when it occurred, and then he said --

24 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: 1919?

25 MR. MCMULLEN: Yeah. It was in 1919, and

32

1 so next year will be the 100th anniversary. And it was  
2 out at the Fair Park.

3 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah, that's what Ed  
4 said.

5 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I mean, where it --  
6 where it snowed?

7 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. Uh-huh. I mean, I  
8 guess it snowed several different places, but they were  
9 having horse races out there or buggy, sulky races or  
10 something out --

11 MR. MCMULLEN: It was a four-day event he  
12 said.

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: Oh, really?

14 MR. MCMULLEN: Yeah.

15 MR. EIDSON: It was reported it was  
16 100 degrees in town, but up on the fairground...

17 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I don't think we're  
18 going to get our 4th of July snow this year. Those days  
19 are probably over.

20 MR. MCMULLEN: My apologies to the court  
21 reporter.

22 MR. EIDSON: Bill, on the way over today,  
23 you were mentioning the story of the poppies in town.

24 MR. BILL CRAIG: Right. That's --

25 MR. EIDSON: Can you relate that story?

33

1 MR. BILL CRAIG: You know, someone is  
2 going to have to help me on this, but I -- I told you  
3 that a fellow, a super guy, Roland Wiliford's brother,  
4 Jack Wiliford was actually in World War I, and he used  
5 to ride with me on vet calls. He was the Church of  
6 Christ and Dr. Talbert, whom I worked with, was -- they  
7 were friends in the church, and so Jack would hang  
8 around the clinic and he would go with me, but I never  
9 asked him one question about World War I, and I -- I  
10 wish I had. But his brother, Roland, who was probably  
11 15 years younger than he was, was in World War II, and  
12 the story is he brought poppy seeds back from Flanders  
13 Fields, and they planted poppy seeds in front of the  
14 Episcopal church, perhaps, and then they kind of spread  
15 up and down the right-of-way. So in the spring,  
16 oftentimes you can see the poppies growing along the  
17 side of Highway 36. And that's the -- that's the way  
18 the poppy story was told to me.

19 MS. CROUCH: Well, that's -- I've heard  
20 that one, too.

21 MR. BILL CRAIG: Okay.

22 MR. EIDSON: Pretty close.

23 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah, but that's --  
24 that's interesting to know.

25 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Have y'all gotten many

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1 stories about prohibition in Hamilton County during --

2 MR. EIDSON: No.

3 MS. CROUCH: Go for it.

4 MR. EIDSON: Please tell us.

5 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, I don't know

6 much, but my -- I can remember my granddad, Ed Craig,

7 talking about how during the Great Depression when

8 the -- when it was prohibition, that him and his

9 brothers, they -- they decided they were going to brew

10 some beer, and -- and they bottled a bunch of beer that

11 was too -- too green.

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: He said it was too green.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And it all exploded

14 under their house.

15 MR. BILL CRAIG: They had a machine to cap

16 it, you know -- and put a cap on top of it, and it was

17 still fermenting, I guess, and producing CO<sub>2</sub>. So it

18 got -- the pressure got too great and the bottles

19 started blowing up and --

20 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, they -- surely

21 y'all have gotten some stories about the -- the still

22 that was out there close to the Old Edson Lake.

23 MR. EIDSON: Never.

24 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, Dad knows that

1 MR. BILL CRAIG: Bart Oaks. Bart Oaks had  
2 that still.

3 MR. EIDSON: Oh. Tell it.

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: And his brother, Art  
5 Oaks -- Francis knew Art. They -- they bought part of  
6 his property, but Art got to spend a little time, I  
7 think, in the Federal penitentiary, but they never did  
8 catch Bart. And David Massengill had a still down on  
9 the -- on the bridge crossing -- 2805 crossing the  
10 river, and these guys would -- the cedar breaks down  
11 there, you know, were -- were their hiding place, and  
12 they -- they'd just have a tent or something up, and  
13 they'd move these stills around so that -- Mack Morgan  
14 was the pres- -- was the pres- -- was the sheriff at  
15 that time, and, you know, the -- Mack would get the Feds  
16 in and they'd try to catch these guys moonshining, but I  
17 think that they were pretty successful at evading the  
18 authorities, except for Art. Art got a little too  
19 brave, and I think he set his still up in his garage,  
20 and he got tired of going out in the cedar breaks to  
21 take care of it, you know. So he -- he was running  
22 it -- he was firing it with kerosene so that it -- you  
23 know, it wouldn't have the wood smell and everything.  
24 And, anyway, the -- the Feds or Mack Morgan or someone

25 got on to him, and there was actually -- there was a

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1 shoot-out at -- at one of these stills and -- and  
2 several people got killed, and it was -- it was -- part  
3 of them were the Cropper family. If you-all have ever  
4 heard Lenny Cropper --

5 MS. FRANCIS RAMSEY: Yes.

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: -- Jacky Cropper --

7 MS. FRANCIS RAMSEY: Yes.

8 MR. BILL CRAIG: Okay. All right. And it  
9 wasn't the Feds. I think they fell out amongst  
10 themselves and started -- started shooting at one  
11 another, and not everybody came out of that alive, as  
12 I've been told, but that's all I know about it. I  
13 don't --

14 MR. MCMULLEN: Bill, this is a unique  
15 opportunity, and if you would rather have it in a  
16 separate -- but I think it is so critical -- I think one  
17 of the most historic events that has occurred, say,  
18 within the last 50 years in Hamilton is the saving of  
19 the hospital, and you were so involved in that.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Oh, wow.

21 MR. MCMULLEN: And I surely -- I surely  
22 would like -- if you feel up to it, because I know it  
23 was -- it was a -- it took a toll on everybody involved,  
24 it would be fair to say.

25 MR. BILL CRAIG: How long do you have?

37

1 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I got to go in about  
2 20 minutes.

3 MR. MCMULLEN: Okay. And --

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: I would be glad to do  
5 that, Andy. I mean, if -- if time permits for the rest  
6 of you, but I'll --

7 MR. MCMULLEN: Well, maybe we would ask  
8 Shalor his --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: If you have any --

10 MR. MCMULLEN: -- his impression of things  
11 because I know how old Shalor was when all that was  
12 going on.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Right.

14 MR. MCMULLEN: And then -- then -- I'd  
15 like to get Shalor's input on what -- what he saw, and  
16 we're not trying to go back and put salt in old  
17 wounds --

18 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Right.

19 MR. MCMULLEN: -- but we are trying to  
20 document how it occurred because it was a stunning  
21 accomplishment for the -- and for the future of  
22 Hamilton, I think it's probably the most significant  
23 event.

24 MS. CROUCH: I do, too.

25 MR. MCMULLEN: I really do.

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1 MS. CROUCH: I do, too.

2 MR. EIDSON: Thank goodness.

3 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Well, I can give y'all  
4 my memory of it, and then Dad can give you what actually  
5 happened probably.

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah.

7 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And then if y'all have  
8 any other --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: I'll correct you.

10 MR. MCMULLEN: And we're not trying to --

11 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I know.

12 MR. MCMULLEN: -- be critical of anybody.  
13 There were two sides.

14 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: But if y'all have any  
15 more questions for me about anything else, I got to go  
16 here in like 20 minutes.

17 MR. MCMULLEN: Okay. Well, let's --

18 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: But I'll tell you what  
19 I remember about the -- I remember -- so Andy's -- Andy  
20 is referencing when Dad and the hospital board and the  
21 town were for it -- the part of the town that was for it  
22 were working towards getting the hospital reopened  
23 because Harris had closed our hospital, and they were  
24 trying to create a hospital district to -- to have

1 open. And so I was 11 years old, the best I remember,  
2 and one of the reasons I can remember is because I was  
3 playing a Little League baseball game that night, and  
4 they had a -- when they -- they had a meeting to discuss  
5 this, and I think there was one meeting in particular  
6 that got relatively hostile, and -- I mean, nobody got  
7 hurt, but there was lots of -- lots of ill words said,  
8 and I -- I remember after that baseball game, my mom was  
9 crying and upset and I didn't understand why, and -- and  
10 she explained -- you know, she explained to me, the best  
11 she could to an 11-year-old. And then I also remember  
12 not long after that meeting that people -- or someone  
13 told my mom that they had seen my brother and I walking  
14 around town and that we better be careful because  
15 somebody might just -- something might just happen to  
16 one of those Craig boys.

17 MR. MCMULLEN: Oh, wow.

18 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: You know, one of them  
19 might just get run over.

20 MS. CROUCH: Wow.

21 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: So these guys thought  
22 they were pretty tough.

23 MR. MCMULLEN: Well, but it was a divisive  
24 time.

1 luckily I've lived long enough to -- to come back here  
2 and be a physician in Hamilton years and years later,  
3 and the hospital is still open and doing well, and  
4 ironically many of those people that were against it  
5 spend time in our facility --

6 MR. MCMULLEN: That's right.

7 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- and need our -- need  
8 our help.

9 MS. CROUCH: Of course they do.

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: We don't talk -- I  
11 don't, you know, say, "Weren't you there" -- "if my  
12 dad's story is right, you were there, and you really  
13 didn't want this to be here. So I'm glad y'all worked  
14 it out like it did."

15 MR. MCMULLEN: Yes, and I think the public  
16 is thankful to have it, and it -- and I hate to think  
17 what Hamilton would be if we didn't have it --

18 MS. CROUCH: I agree.

19 MR. MCMULLEN: -- is probably the bottom  
20 line -- is the bottom line.

21 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Do you guys -- this is  
22 not Hamilton County, but it's so interesting. Has  
23 anybody -- or y'all talked to anybody about Brian  
24 Degraphenreid from Goldthwaite?

25 MR. MCMULLEN: I don't even know what

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1 you're talking about.

2 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Okay. Well, he was a  
3 patient -- he's actually a patient of Dr. Rudolf's, who  
4 just passed away in the last -- in the last year, but  
5 he -- he was in -- let me think about this. So he  
6 was -- he -- golly, now, I'm going to get this -- I  
7 think he was in the Army, and he was a photographer --  
8 he was a photographer before the war started, and so  
9 they figured out that he was a photographer, and so he  
10 got to -- he got to work as a photographer in the  
11 military here in the United States. And so that's what  
12 they had him doing, and I guess -- I mean, this guy was  
13 a really intelligent guy. I'm sure they did IQ scores  
14 on him and realized that he was a really intelligent  
15 guy. And so they actually -- he -- he became part of  
16 what would become the CIA. What did they call it, the  
17 secrets.

18 MR. BILL CRAIG: The OS.

19 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: The OS.

20 MS. RAMSEY: OSS.

21 MR. BILL CRAIG: OSS.

22 MR. MCMULLEN: OSS.

23 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And this guy actually  
24 wrote a book, and -- about his service, and they -- they

25 had something to do with, you know, trying to get the

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1 bomb to Japan to drop -- to drop the nuclear bomb on --

2 MR. EIDSON: Goodness.

3 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- Japan, but a really,

4 really interesting guy, and he -- he told me -- you

5 know, he told me all about it, and he -- he lived to be

6 90-something, and he was still smoking.

7 MR. BILL CRAIG: Smoked his way to heaven.

8 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yeah, but he -- heck,

9 he lived to be 90. Like, it doesn't -- it doesn't kill

10 everybody apparently. So, anyway, he was a really -- a

11 really interesting guy, and he passed away just -- just

12 in the last year but was really sharp into his 90s.

13 That's when he wrote the book. He said he was too

14 afraid to write the book until he was like 90 because he

15 was afraid they'd put him in prison. And he said once

16 he was 90 -- he was like, "Well, what are they going to

17 want with an old man to put me in prison?"

18 MR. MCMULLEN: He waited until Julia Child

19 died. She was in the OSS, too.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Oh, really?

21 MR. EIDSON: Uh-huh. Yes.

22 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Golly, Dad. And he --

23 MR. MCMULLEN: Well, Shalor, before --

24 before you have to go, I would like to ask you to --

25 for -- because a major target is going to be the

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1 students that are in school and that will be in school

2 in years to come so that they would know what it was

3 like --

4 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Right.

5 MR. MCMULLEN: -- in Hamilton. I mean,

6 this is how they're going to have actual history of

7 people that lived here, and I was just wondering if you

8 wanted to share with us your recollections of growing

9 up, what was your impressions of growing up here?

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Right. And maybe,

11 like, how school has changed or --

12 MR. MCMULLEN: Yeah.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yeah. So I guess -- so

14 I was born in 1977, and so I guess I would have been

15 school age starting in the early '80s, and then I

16 graduated from high school in 1996, just one year after

17 Andy's oldest son, and I guess the biggest thing was

18 that -- you know, when I started school, there was

19 basically no computers or we may have just had the very

20 first -- the very first old Apples, and I can remember

21 when we got a computer lab at the -- at the school, and

22 that was -- that was a big deal. You know, we had 15 --

23 or we had enough for a whole classroom to go in there

24 and use it, and they were really old, probably Apples.

25 I don't know. But, you know, I think that's kind of --

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1 and then, you know, today, the kids do all kinds of -- I  
2 mean -- but as I got through school, I mean, the  
3 computers were -- you know, by the time -- '96, when I  
4 graduated, you know, we had multiple computers in every  
5 room, and the Internet had actually just started. I can  
6 remember getting e-mail my last year in high school, and  
7 I was like, "This" -- "what is this Internet thing?"  
8 This" -- "this isn't going to take off. This isn't  
9 going to" -- "this isn't going to be a big thing."  
10 Yeah.

11 Well, anyways -- you know, I mean, it was  
12 an excellent school. I mean, I think my -- my education  
13 as compared to people from, you know, North Richland  
14 Hills or Highland Park -- when I went to -- I went to  
15 college at Texas Tech before -- and then I went to  
16 medical school at UT Houston. I didn't feel  
17 disadvantaged, you know, at all when I got to Texas Tech  
18 as compared to, you know, the people who had been in  
19 much larger schools, and -- I don't know -- I was in a  
20 class with I think an unusually -- an unusually large  
21 percentage of really high IQ, high-achieving people, and  
22 so, you know, when I was in a classroom with all these  
23 really smart people in high school -- and then to go to  
24 college, I didn't -- I didn't really -- I didn't feel

25 like it was a disadvantage.

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1 MR. MCMULLEN: Okay.

2 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: And we had, you know,  
3 really some excellent teachers that -- you know, I don't  
4 know -- I'm digressing here, but I wish we could pay our  
5 teachers more because I don't know that we get the kind  
6 of people that -- that I had. Like, Donna Anglin was  
7 one of my high school -- she was my high school GT and  
8 English teacher, and she was, you know, excellent, very  
9 intelligent. You know, you were not going to slip  
10 anything past Donna Anglin, you're not going to pull a  
11 fast one.

12 MR. EIDSON: It's still that way.

13 MS. CROUCH: Still true.

14 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yep. Yep. But, I  
15 mean, she was just so knowledgeable and, I mean, an  
16 excellent teacher. Dr. Lee's mom, Linda Lee, was -- was  
17 a GT teacher when I was in elementary, and she was  
18 excellent, too. I mean, I think -- I think probably  
19 when I was in school, GT, or gifted and talented, was  
20 kind of first being recognized and maybe the program was  
21 kind of early on, but she was -- she was excellent -- an  
22 excellent teacher. And Jean Crimpin taught us different  
23 math classes and computer classes, but we were one of  
24 the first classes to have calculus in high school, and

25 she taught us calculus and was -- was really excellent.

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1 But, you know, I just -- I felt like I had a very good  
2 education here, and, you know, it -- the school has  
3 changed so much over the -- and it's still an excellent  
4 school, but it's -- you know, technology is just so  
5 different now that -- you know, nobody had -- they  
6 didn't have to worry about us having cell phones in  
7 the -- in the classroom or -- I mean, there was -- I  
8 remember when Dad first got his -- got his little  
9 carry-in-a-bag phone to take out to the ranch in case --  
10 now, we could only use it if it was an emergency  
11 because --

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: It charged by the minute.

13 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: -- we -- we only got 30  
14 minutes a month.

15 MR. MCMULLEN: And so the last question  
16 is, aside from school and growing up in Hamilton, do you  
17 think that was an advantage to you?

18 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: I mean, I think that --  
19 I think for me it probably was. I mean, I think there  
20 were, you know, things that would have been different in  
21 a -- in a larger town or a larger school. Some of them  
22 would have been good, some of them would have been bad.  
23 You know, I grew up working with Dad out on the -- out  
24 on the ranch or on places that he farmed and ranched.

25 MR. BILL CRAIG: Going on vet calls.

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1 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Going on vet calls, and  
2 I can say that inspired me to go to medical school and  
3 not to veterinary school.

4 MS. CROUCH: Were you ever tempted to go  
5 someplace else to practice?

6 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: You know, I guess by  
7 the time I had decided to become a doctor, I knew the  
8 physicians here, and -- and I really liked them and  
9 wanted to be a part of their group. So, I mean, I was  
10 tempted to do -- I didn't really want to be a doctor  
11 until I got into -- well into college, and I had to  
12 change majors. But, no, I guess not really. I mean, I  
13 was tempted to just do something else. You know, I  
14 thought I was going to be a lawyer. I was going to -- I  
15 was going to get a degree in environmental engineering  
16 and go to law school, and then -- but I was not good at  
17 engineer- -- I was good at math but not engi- -- I  
18 couldn't build -- I couldn't build anything, and I just  
19 decided I didn't want to be a lawyer, and so I got to  
20 know the physicians here, and they were like, "Well, you  
21 ought to" -- "I bet you could get into medical school if  
22 you tried it." So -- so I decided that's what I would  
23 do and so I worked at it real hard and got it -- got to  
24 go to medical school.

25 MS. CROUCH: So it was the medical staff

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1 here that really pointed you in the direction of medical  
2 school and returning to Hamilton?

3 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: Yes, ma'am. I would  
4 say definitely. I was -- yes. They had just gotten  
5 here about my second year of college. They had --

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: '97.

7 MR. MCMULLEN: Okay. Well, Shalor I know  
8 you have to go, and thank you so very much for your  
9 time.

10 MR. SHALOR CRAIG: All right.

11 MR. MCMULLEN: I would like to maybe take  
12 a break so the court reporter could get circulation back  
13 into her arms, and then Dr. Craig, if -- Bill --

14 MR. BILL CRAIG: Be glad to stay.

15 MR. MCMULLEN: -- if you would -- and I --  
16 and here again --

17 MR. EIDSON: Could I get your John Hancock  
18 on this?

19 MR. MCMULLEN: It's okay. So I'm ready to  
20 go off the record for a recess, and then we'll get  
21 Dr. Craig, Bill Craig, to kind of get his thoughts  
22 together, and I think it's just an opportunity we can't  
23 pass up.

24 (RECESS FROM 3:13 p.m. - 3:28 p.m.)

1 anything -- any lead-ins or --

2 MR. EIDSON: Well, we took a little break  
3 here. We're resuming after a 30-minute break to catch  
4 our breaths, and you had some other thoughts about  
5 Veterans; is that correct?

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. I wanted to  
7 mention a few people before we -- before we got off of  
8 that just -- just so that they would have a -- perhaps  
9 an opportunity to be remembered. After the movie  
10 Memphis Bell came out -- and this has been well over  
11 20 years ago -- my youngest son and I -- I got called  
12 out on a vet call to Lamkin, and Chandler went with me,  
13 and it happened to be to the ranch of a fellow named  
14 Carlton Adams, and Carlton had seen the movie, and he  
15 had flown in a B17 bomber in Europe during World War II.  
16 And he was a little guy, so he was the belly gunner.  
17 He -- he manned the lower turret of a B17, and he -- he  
18 got started on -- on these stories about missions that  
19 he went on, and it was very intriguing. One of them  
20 that I -- that I remember specifically, they were flying  
21 out of England. So their base was just adjacent to the  
22 English Channel, and they were flying into various parts  
23 of Belgium and France and I guess perhaps all the way to  
24 Germany, and he said they got into a lot of

25 ground-to-air missiles, shrapnel, and they lost the fuel

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1 out of one of their wing tanks. They lost a significant  
2 amount of aviation fluid. So they had trained -- this  
3 is kind of interesting, too -- in I believe he told me  
4 Marathon, Texas. There was an airstrip there, and they  
5 trained these guys to fly B17s and perhaps other  
6 aircraft. I don't know. But this -- this flight crew  
7 had begun together, so they were a very close-knit group  
8 of people, and they all knew each other real well, and  
9 the pilot told them -- you know, he said "I think we  
10 have enough fuel to make it to" -- "to the base" -- "to  
11 the airstrip, but I don't know that. So if any of you  
12 want to bail out, I've" -- "I've radioed ahead and the  
13 boats are going to come out and" -- "and you can jump  
14 into the English Channel and take your chances there,"  
15 you know, parachute out, or -- he said, "I'm going to  
16 stay with the plane because I think I can make it back."  
17 So he said immediately they all said "Well, we're  
18 staying with you," but they threw everything that --  
19 that wasn't tied down, their -- their machine guns,  
20 their big .50 calibers and their .30 calibers and maybe  
21 even parachutes -- I don't know -- but to lighten the  
22 plane up as much as they could, and he said they -- they  
23 made it in to the airstrip but they had to call a  
24 tractor to drag the plane back to the runway because it

1 MR. EIDSON: Any fuel.

2 MR. BILL CRAIG: -- fuel left.

3 MS. CROUCH: Wow.

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: He was just high enough  
5 that he got in a glide pattern, I guess, and he glided  
6 his plane into the -- the airstrip. So I thought that  
7 was an interesting story. And he said -- he said they  
8 went through eight aircraft before he got his 25  
9 missions. And, you know, they got hit a lot of -- they  
10 crashed a time or two. He said one time they -- they  
11 crashed in I think he said Belgium, and he thought --  
12 they thought they were going to be behind enemy lines,  
13 but, in fact, the allies had advanced the -- the line  
14 far enough that they were behind the lines when they --  
15 when they -- their aircraft went in. So they were good.

16 Another quick story. A very good friend  
17 of mine, Butch Williams, some of you remember, his --  
18 his uncle was on a B17, and -- and he actually bailed  
19 out over Germany, and he -- he said when -- when he was  
20 going down, they all had a military issue .45 automatic  
21 pistol, and he said he threw his away because he didn't  
22 want to land in Germany with that pistol and, you know,  
23 be considered a combatant, and when he -- he said when  
24 he first jumped out, he was over a lake, and he -- "I'm

25 going to hit in this lake," and he said when he hit the

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1 ground, he wasn't anywhere near it. And when he hit the  
2 ground, civilians -- of course, they hated airmen  
3 because they were bombing Ber- -- it was actually close  
4 to Berlin, and they -- they hated the airmen. So  
5 civilians took him in, and he thought they were fixing  
6 to kill him, and then the military -- the soldiers came  
7 in, and he spent the rest of the war in a prison camp.

8           But, anyway -- and last -- the last person  
9 I'd like to mention is Deloy Wilson, lived in Pottsville  
10 for many years, and his -- one of his daughters lives  
11 out at Fairy, a very good friend of mine. But Deloy  
12 Wilson was -- was a little guy. I bet he didn't weigh  
13 130 pounds, but he was in the 82nd Airborne. And, of  
14 course, he -- the 82nd Airborne parachuted into France  
15 on the night before June the 6th, D Day, and Deloy's --  
16 Mike Haynes, his son-in-law, told me that after they  
17 regrouped a month or so later, they just had to  
18 completely rebuild his company because they had so many  
19 casualties. He landed in Sainte-Mere-Eglise, and my  
20 wife and I had the opportunity to visit  
21 Sainte-Mere-Eglise several years ago in France, and it  
22 was -- it was a very -- a very good trip and very  
23 informative. Deloy went through the entire campaign  
24 across France, and he -- when I knew Deloy, he had a

25 disfigured arm. I can't remember which one it was, but

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1 he basically just had one arm, and the other one was  
2 more or less paralyzed. And so Mike Haynes told me that  
3 he went through that whole 12 months or whatever it took  
4 for them to go from Normandy to -- to Berlin  
5 basically -- and right at the very end -- I don't know  
6 whether it was rifle fire or what that took his arm out,  
7 but he just -- he nearly made it through, but, now, it  
8 didn't slow Deloy down because he was a live wire. He  
9 had the Pottsville mill, and he was -- he was a funny  
10 guy and a lot of fun to be around. So I just wanted to  
11 mention those. So...

12 MR. EIDSON: Thank you.

13 MR. BILL CRAIG: If you want to go into  
14 the hospital, well, that will be fine -- I mean, the  
15 hospital history, not specifically go into the hospital.

16 MR. EIDSON: I don't need it today. Thank  
17 you. But those are wonderful stories, and I appreciate  
18 your interest in having collected stories about  
19 Veterans --

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Just memories.

21 MR. EIDSON: -- in our community.

22 So if you would like to tell us the --

23 some of the history about the hospital --

24 MR. BILL CRAIG: Okay. Sure.

1 travails.

2 MR. BILL CRAIG: Jane may have to help me  
3 with some of these dates I don't know because she was  
4 instrumental in it also, but my father and Frank Johnson  
5 and I don't know others, George Golightly, whomever,  
6 were on hospital boards through the years, and a  
7 hospital -- the first hospital in Hamilton, I suppose,  
8 was the one that -- that's over on 36, the sanitarium,  
9 which is not standing any longer, but it -- it closed I  
10 think in 1957, and the -- at that time, it was run by  
11 and owned by physicians, and when it -- when it closed,  
12 there was a time when there wasn't a hospital, and my  
13 father told me they tried to -- that several of them --  
14 several of the business people around organized an  
15 election for a district, but that failed. And so then  
16 they decided they'd sell shares in -- in a hospital, and  
17 that would just be some -- I don't know. It might have  
18 been a tax advantage. I don't know what it was, but  
19 people bought shares to raise the money to build this  
20 first hospital that was built up where the new  
21 hospital -- I say, "New." It's not new anymore, but  
22 where the hospital stands now, and it was in a location  
23 where the old East Ward elementary school had been. So  
24 the rock wall that still stands around part of it goes

1 Ward was in operation. But, anyway, they -- the  
2 hospital was built from donations from this stock that  
3 had been raised, and it opened soon -- pretty soon after  
4 the other hospital closed, and that -- that hospital  
5 stayed in operation for 30 years or close to it. And I  
6 think the thing that probably closed the hospital was  
7 converting from -- like, initially it -- reimbursements  
8 from Medicare, which makes up about 50 percent of the --  
9 of the patient base at the hospital was -- was cost  
10 based. If you kept a person in the hospital 20 days,  
11 you got -- the hospital got paid for 20 days, but in the  
12 mid '80s, it went to a system called DRGs, and whatever  
13 your diagnosis was, you -- the hospital got paid X  
14 number of dollars for that diagnosis, and when the money  
15 was gone, if the patient wasn't ready to come home,  
16 there was no more money, so doctors being prudent, if  
17 they were -- if they wanted their patients to stay  
18 longer, the hospital then lost money on it. So the  
19 hospital board at that time could only see its way clear  
20 to keep the hospital open by going out and recruiting a  
21 larger entity -- a larger business to operate the  
22 hospital, and so they got Harris Methodist to agree to  
23 do that, and Harris Methodist operated the hospital for  
24 several years, I suppose, and then it became obvious

25 that they couldn't make it work either without a

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1 hospital district. So they attempted a countywide  
2 district, which had already been attempted previously,  
3 20 years prior to that, I guess, and -- and that  
4 election also failed. So then Harris -- Harris pulled  
5 out, and the -- and the hospital closed in '87, I  
6 believe. And Andy McMullen was -- was part of the group  
7 that -- you were on -- were you on the board at the  
8 time?

9 MR. MCMULLEN: Interim.

10 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. Okay. So then  
11 everyone was trying to kind of figure out whether --  
12 what we needed to do, if we could do anything to reopen  
13 the hospital, and many people felt like with the new  
14 reimbursements from Medicare and all the changes that  
15 were coming down, that the hospital from a financial  
16 standpoint couldn't -- could not operate, but the  
17 feeling among a lot of people I think at that time was  
18 that we needed to at least give it a chance, and if it  
19 failed, then we -- we had done diligence to try to keep  
20 it open. So a fund-raising project was initiated,  
21 and -- and it -- it was very well received by the  
22 community, and at that time, you know, a lot of, like,  
23 the banks were -- were home owned banks and the electric  
24 company had a lot of community public service or

25 whatever, and Lone Star Gas, they -- they had a lot of

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1 interest in the community. So I think maybe -- I mean,  
2 eventually close to \$400,000 was raised, and it reopened  
3 on a wing and a prayer, you know. And I don't know  
4 how -- I will say -- I say I don't know how it stayed  
5 open for the first few years, but we had some physicians  
6 who were very dedicated to trying to see that the  
7 hospital survived. Dr. Crouch and Dr. Ton, and they  
8 would go to the emergency room and -- and just work the  
9 emergency room for whatever that paid and weren't  
10 subsidized, and they -- they received -- should receive  
11 a lot of credit for -- for it surviving, but eventually  
12 it became pretty obvious that we were going to have to  
13 have a hospital district if we were to -- going to  
14 survive. So that was really when the controversy really  
15 began because people, I think, felt like -- a lot of  
16 people felt like they were being forced to support  
17 something that they didn't have any faith in. So there  
18 was -- there was lots of hard feelings and lots of ill  
19 will about the district. But, honestly, without the  
20 district, we wouldn't have a hospital because it -- it  
21 took several years even after we established -- after  
22 the district -- I say "we" -- after the district was  
23 established, it -- it took several years to -- before we  
24 became comfortable with the fact that perhaps the

25 hospital was going to survive.

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1 MS. CROUCH: You might mention that one of  
2 the keys to passing that district was changing the lines  
3 at the --

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: And that -- that was very  
5 controversial also.

6 MS. CROUCH: Absolutely it was. You know,  
7 the idea of the County doing the hospital made perfect  
8 sense to some of us --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: Right.

10 MS. CROUCH: -- but to those that had a  
11 hospital already north of us --

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: Right.

13 MS. CROUCH: -- it didn't make sense --

14 MR. BILL CRAIG: Right.

15 MS. CROUCH: -- and that was part of the  
16 battle.

17 MR. BILL CRAIG: So the town of Hico, plus  
18 the precinct that surrounded Hico was excluded from the  
19 hospital district. So with the four commissioners  
20 precincts, only one -- one, two, and four, I guess, were  
21 included in the district, and three was excluded because  
22 Hico already had a hospital, and Hico understandably was  
23 not interested in paying taxes to a hospital district  
24 when they already had a hospital. So that's the reason

25 the district was excluded. And the election passed by

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1 39 votes, and it was -- I don't know what the percentage  
2 of people that voted -- but it was high, you know. In  
3 other words, the voter turnout was excellent for the  
4 election because it was such a controversial issue, and  
5 it -- and it passed by 39 votes. So actually if 20  
6 people had changed their vote, it would have failed.

7           And then after it passed, it was -- it was  
8 really difficult to -- to persuade people that maybe the  
9 hospital was not a bad thing. In other words, there was  
10 lots -- lots of controversy, lots of really heated  
11 meetings, and every time you had a regular monthly  
12 hospital meeting, it was very well attended, and it  
13 was -- it was a sad time in a way, I guess. I don't  
14 know any other way to put it. People --

15           MS. CROUCH: I agree with that.

16           MR. BILL CRAIG: A lot of my clients -- I  
17 was a young veterinarian trying to start a -- my  
18 practice, and I was, of course, one of the ones that  
19 was -- I was on the board, and part of the time I was  
20 the president of the board, and so I was kind of singled  
21 out, and a lot of people informed me that they'd never  
22 do business with me again, you know, which is fine.  
23 But, anyway, it was a very divisive time. But I guess  
24 it was worthwhile -- or I know -- I know it was

25 worthwhile, but it -- it did cause some hard feelings,

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1 which I think for the most part, 20 years, 30 years  
2 later -- actually, the hospital has been reopened  
3 since '88. So we're working on -- I guess it reopened  
4 in September I think of '88. So in -- in September of  
5 this year, it will have been in operation for 30 years.  
6 And we had a -- it was contested in the court system,  
7 and we had -- we had a trial right up here in the  
8 Hamilton courthouse that lasted all day, and -- and it  
9 wasn't a jury trial, the judge decided it, and he  
10 decided in the hospital's favor. The problem was that  
11 someone figured out we should have posted the election  
12 I'm going to say three weeks prior or 30 days prior to  
13 the election, and we didn't officially post the election  
14 until 25 days prior to the election or something.  
15 There -- there was a glitch, and, of course, it was --  
16 it had -- the news of the hospital and the news of the  
17 election had been in the newspaper for several months  
18 prior to the election, but there had not been an  
19 official posting of the election to the letter of the  
20 law, and that -- that was the -- that was the  
21 information that was used to try to overthrow the  
22 district. But the district was not overthrown but it  
23 went to the appeals courts -- state appeals court, I  
24 suppose, and it -- it received one -- I mean, there was

25 one of the judges on a panel of three, I think, that --

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1 that sided in favor of overturning the district. So

2 then it went to the State Supreme Court.

3 MR. EIDSON: Oh, my goodness.

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: And they -- they wouldn't

5 hear it. They chose not to hear it I believe is right.

6 But, anyway, we're -- we're still alive today.

7 MS. CROUCH: And all of that has built the

8 entity that is our largest employer.

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: I know it.

10 MS. CROUCH: A couple of years ago, it was  
11 287 employees. The school next at 130 whatever. But, I  
12 mean, without the hospital, our community wouldn't be  
13 what it is now.

14 MR. BILL CRAIG: And it -- the medical  
15 health care business is -- is tough for rural  
16 communities --

17 MS. CROUCH: Sure it is.

18 MR. BILL CRAIG: With such a limited  
19 patient base. You know, our -- our primary service area  
20 and our secondary service -- combined service area,  
21 which is -- which is for the most part Hamilton and  
22 Mills County probably isn't over 17- or 18,000 people,  
23 and to keep all of those departments and all of those  
24 employees supported with the revenue necessary to

25 support the system, it's a scary thing, I mean, because

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1 the hospital is so important to the health -- both  
2 physical and economically the health of this community  
3 that it's scary to think that some day it might close  
4 again. And I'll be honest with you when I say this, I  
5 hope I'm not alive if that day ever comes.

6 MS. CROUCH: Me, too. And one of the  
7 factors that's kept it open is this ongoing young crew  
8 of docs that keep coming in --

9 MR. BILL CRAIG: We have an --

10 MS. CROUCH: -- Shalor included.

11 MR. BILL CRAIG: We have an amazing  
12 medical staff, and I think a lot of that is due to the  
13 fact that, just like Shalor said earlier, the doctors --  
14 the youngest doctors have watched the older doctors go  
15 through the process of college and medical school and  
16 residency, and they -- they realize they can do it, too,  
17 you know. I mean, when I -- when I was in the process  
18 of choosing my profession, there really weren't any role  
19 models. I mean, you know what I'm saying? There wasn't  
20 anyone that you related well to that had -- had  
21 succeeded in receiving their degree and everything.  
22 So -- so, you know, you thought "Well, you know, being a  
23 doctor is out of the question," but having all of these  
24 homegrown doctors that -- that the younger doctors had

25 known when they -- when they were -- back when the --

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1 everyone was in school together makes it a lot easier,  
2 and -- for them to decide that they want -- want to be a  
3 doctor also. And we- -- we've got two on the Chandler  
4 Craig Scholarship at Texas Tech University right now,  
5 Emily Wagner and Riley Rich, that are -- are just super  
6 people, and they're -- Emily has finished her education  
7 and been accepted to the Tech medical school, and Riley  
8 is a year behind, and he's kicking at a 4.- nearly every  
9 semester, you know. So he's -- he's just right around  
10 the corner going to medical school. And that's --  
11 that's a neat thing when we can -- when we can produce  
12 the kind of students that -- that aspire to do something  
13 like that, because it's a huge commitment and it's a  
14 lifetime commitment.

15 MS. CROUCH: And your family has been huge  
16 in that. I think we need to mention that scholarship  
17 is -- is your family thing.

18 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well --

19 MS. CROUCH: The Craigs were part of that  
20 deal.

21 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. Yeah. That was  
22 Chandler's scholarship.

23 MS. CROUCH: Yeah.

24 MR. EIDSON: There you go.

1 the community supports the hospital and the hospital  
2 continues to make good decisions -- they're not all  
3 going to be good, but for the most part makes good  
4 decisions, we -- we should have a hospital for the  
5 future. But it really is scary that -- that our area is  
6 not growing populationwise, and it makes it -- it makes  
7 it hard to -- to grow your hospital demographically if  
8 you're in an area that's not increasing in population.  
9 It makes it tough.

10 MR. EIDSON: But on the other hand, the  
11 population is increasing in age.

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: That's -- that's true,  
13 too, and that is, in fact, a plus.

14 I want to close with one story that I  
15 wasn't privy to personally, but I think it happened this  
16 way. Harris Methodist is an affiliate of the Methodist  
17 Church, and the -- the building up there was somewhat in  
18 conflict as far as whether Harris owned the building or  
19 the hospital district owned the building, and a letter  
20 was presented, as I understand it, that -- that stated,  
21 in effect, that if -- that if Harris ever ceased to  
22 operate at that location on Brown Street as a hospital,  
23 that the district -- or the building and the  
24 infrastructure would return to the community.

25           Andy, is that not correct?

65

1           MR. MCMULLEN: (Nods head.)

2           MR. BILL CRAIG: So that -- that was still  
3 a point of contention, and one of our attorneys here in  
4 town attended a Methodist general convention or what --  
5 what was it called?

6           MR. MCMULLEN: It's an annual conference.

7           MR. BILL CRAIG: Yeah. Yeah. And that --  
8 that subject came up, as I understand it, and so Andy  
9 McMullen actually had a copy of the letter, and he -- he  
10 read it to the -- to everyone there at the general  
11 convention, and that's the main reason we retained  
12 the -- the building itself. And if we hadn't have had  
13 the building -- it wasn't a good building. It was a --  
14 it was built, you know, cheaply and it had lots of  
15 problems as far as a hospital building is concerned, but  
16 we -- we had to have some place to call a hospital, and  
17 that's the only place we had. We built another one, you  
18 know, as soon as we could, but we -- we operated for  
19 15 years on all of these waivers like the hall wasn't  
20 wide enough or it was a pier and beam building, so it  
21 didn't have a slab underneath it, and I can't remember  
22 what the other waivers were. So the building wasn't  
23 great, but if we hadn't have had it, we couldn't have  
24 had a hospital. So I want to thank everyone, and that

25 includes so many people that -- I wouldn't even begin to

66

1 try to name them all, but it was definitely a community

2 effort.

3 MR. EIDSON: Bill --

4 MR. BILL CRAIG: Yes.

5 MR. EIDSON: -- thank you.

6 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, thank you for

7 listening for to me for two hours.

8 MR. EIDSON: A wonderful slice of Hamilton

9 County history and some really great insights that I

10 think only you can have.

11 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, you know, I love

12 this town and I love this hospital, and those are my --

13 I mean, my family, obviously, is the most important

14 thing to me, but aside from that, those -- those are

15 my -- my two entities, two loves that I am totally

16 committed to, and I just want to -- I want to do what's

17 best for the community, and the community is so closely

18 tied into the hospital that you really can't talk about

19 one without the other. So...

20 MR. EIDSON: Well, we appreciate -- we

21 appreciate your efforts and --

22 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, my efforts

23 aren't -- are not any -- any more intense than many

24 people that made big sacrifices to make the hospital and

25 the community work, you know.

67

1 MS. CROUCH: But you --

2 MR. BILL CRAIG: I'm just one of many.

3 MS. CROUCH: But, Bill, the difference

4 is -- yes, there are a lot of people, but you took a

5 leadership role, and it took a lot of courage to do

6 that.

7 MR. MCMULLEN: That's true.

8 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, I guess, or

9 ignorance, one...

10 MS. CROUCH: I think courage is the right

11 word.

12 MR. BILL CRAIG: I think that would be a

13 better description.

14 MR. EIDSON: Well, we thank you very much,

15 and we're proud to be members of your community.

16 MR. BILL CRAIG: Well, we're all members

17 together, you know.

18 MR. EIDSON: Right. Great. Well, thank

19 you-all.

20 MR. BILL CRAIG: Anyway -- well, that was

21 fun. I appreciate it.

22 (INTERVIEW CONCLUDED)

23

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## 1           REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

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3           I, Jamie Cooley, Certified Shorthand

4 Reporter for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that

5 the above and foregoing interview contains a true and

6 correct transcription of all portions of the

7 proceedings, all of which were reported by me.

8           IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness my hand on

9 this the 22nd day of March, 2019.

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