

**CONNECTICUT 20TH CENTURY AGRICULTURAL HISTORY PROJECT  
ORAL HISTORIES**

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Name of Person Interviewed: John Brand, Interview #1  
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LL: ...2001, Luane Lange interviewing John Brand at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. John has been a faculty member and administrator within the college and retired. John, would you start by talking please about where did you attend college?

JB: I did my undergraduate work at Cornell University, and then went to Purdue and received my masters and PhD there.

LL: What were your majors?

JB: At Cornell, I was an Extension Education major and at Purdue an Agricultural Economics major with specialization in Marketing.

LL: What were your first connections to Agriculture?

JB: Agriculture, as we know it today, my first connection was my father made homemade ice cream and chocolate confectionaries in a little ice cream parlor in New York City and then later lived in a boarding house. My folks ran a boarding house. We had poultry, some cows, and purchased a dairy farm.

LL: Where was the boarding house?

JB: The boarding house was in a little town called [Unintelligible], New York, just on the outskirts of Narrowsburg, New York, near the Delaware River New York-Pennsylvania border, about 130 miles from New York City.

LL: Okay and then the farm?

JB: Then, the farm was 10 miles away from there in a town called Coxsackie, New York. Probably when I left to go to Cornell, maybe we're milking 40 cows and had a number of heifers that we raised on land that we rented but when I left, my parents found it difficult to maintain the operation. It was mountainous. It's in the foothills of the Catskills and it was not the most profitable environment for dairy.

LL: How old were you when you moved to the farm?

JB: When I moved to the farm, I think I was 12 years old, 12 or 13 years old.

LL: Has your father or mother had any experience?

JB: My mother and father came from Germany and they were farm reared. My father was an interim butcher in Germany and my mother worked on a big Northern Germany farm. So, both had an agricultural background and they both came here. My father came here in 1926 and I think he asked my mother to marry him by May in 1932.

LL: How old would he had been when he came here possibly?

JB: Twenty-one. He was 21 years old when he came here.

LL: When you were at Cornell, when did you decide what [Unintelligible] to go into education?

JB: Well, when I was at Cornell, the Korean War broke out. So, I thought about going back to the farm as one possibility, but during the time when I was at Cornell, my parents decided they couldn't operate the farm any longer and my uncle persuaded them that they ought to go into the bar business. So, they purchased their roadside bar in Narrowsburg. They had a bar and a dance hall. The drinking age then at the time was 18 in New York State, Pennsylvania was 21. Saturday nights, we had square dancing and we had four bar tenders working on Saturday night. Kids would come from Pennsylvania as far away as Scranton 60 miles away to dance at our place which was called the "Deer Head Inn." So, during those summers, I worked as a bar tender at my place, at the Deer Head Inn. There were fights almost every Saturday night. It was a rough place but we served great hamburgers. My mother made the hamburgers in the kitchen. I lived in the backroom of the bar on a living room couch. I was used to that because when

we had the ice cream parlors in New York City, we never had more than a three-room apartment and I slept on the couch there as well.

LL: Do you have brothers and sisters?

JB: No, I'm a solo sibling, no other siblings.

LL: Now, when you were at Cornell then?

JB: So, when I was at Cornell between my junior and senior year, I became an assistant county agent for the summer in Greene County, New York and I worked five days a week plus Saturday mornings. Then, every other week, the county agent had me do the radio program on Saturday noon from Hudson, New York. That was quite an experience for me to do that. I had my first realization that you could be talking but you never knew if anyone was out there listening. So, I did that and then I thought that might not be a bad thing to do. Then, in my senior year when I graduated, I tried to get a job and I couldn't get a job. There was a time because the Korean War was just ending and everyone was 1-A at the time. If you were 1-A, it was very difficult to get a job because you were competing with veterans coming back. So, I looked at a few jobs and they all told me to come back after I had completed my military obligation. That summer, I worked back in Greene County again as assistant agent, so I had two summers as assistant agent.

LL: What did you do as a summer agent?

JB: Everything. I prepared Farm Bureau News which was published each month for whatever period, I handled calls. He'd send me out on various roads in Greene County and I'd stop at every farm. I just stopped at every farm, introduced myself, asked if there were any problems, tell them about extension, and then go on to the next, solving some problems, sending materials, and finding out answers. We relied heavily on Ithaca faculty coming in periodically but in comparison with Connecticut, you might see a fruit specialist every other year, perhaps once a year, or a dairy specialist maybe once a year. Maybe more often but during the days when they came, you went to every trouble spot that you had.

LL: You went across the board from dairy, to fruit, to crops, or everything.

JB: I did everything. Yes, everything across the board. If you didn't know the answers, you try to find the answers. I think the one thing that bothered me the most at the time, and this was after World War II and then after the Korean War, there were many people that left New York City after World War II, sort of like my own parents in a way, who put their entire savings into a small farm, farms that were no longer economically viable. The problems all these families had were economic problems. They simply were not

producing enough or at a low enough cost to survive as a family unit and they were older people. So, there was not the option of going into another job, a part-time job. This was one of the first groups that left. So, I felt sorry for many of the people I was dealing with. You'd almost want to tell them to stop farming, live on the farm, and get a job in town at the five and ten cents store or any job that would give them a living.

LL: Now, their children were leaving?

JB: The children had already left.

LL: They left, yes.

JB: These were basically people in their late 50s or early 60s, but there are a great number of those people that I met. Then, you had many of the traditional dairy farms and poultry farms that were also finding it difficult to continue their operations at a profitable level. This is in the Catskills. This is very mountainous. This is not the best farming environment to begin with. So, at the time I thought, "Jeez, all the problems are economic. If I'm going to be the best county agent there is, I need to get more agricultural economics, more economics." So, I thought that's what I needed to do, but because I couldn't get a job, I called up the draft board and I said, "Draft me." Within a month, I was drafted in September of 1955. September of '55, I went in the army and served two years in the army. Then, when I was in the army, I visited once when I was home on leave. I think I visited Cornell and I spoke to a couple of faculty members that I thought would remember me. One was a Professor Dara who taught Marketing and Ag Economics, and the other was a Professor Peabody who taught speech. I had taken his speech course two semesters; one was parliamentary procedure and the other was various kinds of talks. I had a great funny story with Peabody and I knew he'd remember me. One talk was to give a demonstration and I just wasn't prepared for it. So, I went in that morning with a mixer, an electric mixer, a bowl, flour, eggs, and milk, and I gave this demonstration, "This is how you make a cake. This is how my mother made her pound cake." I put the eggs in, the milk, the flour, and then took the mixer, and started the mixer, and the entire material, the eggs, the milk, and the flour, went flying out into the audience right over Peabody.

[Laughter] Everyone had a great laugh out of that. At the end of the semester, Peabody got up and said, "I have a prize to give to the most outstanding presentation." He had this little package all wrapped up with beautiful paper, and he awarded it to me. He had me open it up and it was a package of cake mix in the box. [Laughter] I had Peabody and Dara write letters. I wrote to Michigan State, Purdue, and maybe a couple of other places that people said these were good ag economics places. Purdue responded in less than a week and said, "We'd love to have you and we can give you an assistantship." So, they impressed me. I wrote back immediately and said, "I'm ready to come." By that time, I was married.

LL: Now, where was your wife from?

JB: My wife was from Amsterdam, New York, near Amsterdam, New York.

LL: You had met her?

JB: I met her at Cornell. She was in the two-year program at Cornell. At the time, Cornell had a two-year program. So, when I was in the army, I was in the only regimental combat team from Virginia to Maine and I was convinced that at one point we had gone through the Suez Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution but we were convinced the whole regimental combat team had been brought up to full strength. They were going to close Fort Devens down and -

LL: Fort Devens was where?

JB: Massachusetts. They were going to close it down and I thought we were going to go to Germany. So, I told my wife, "We're going to go to Germany. Let's get married now." So, I got married on a three-day pass and then honeymooned in New York City. I just looked at the receipt at the hotel. I think we stayed in Hotel Victoria and the room was \$9.00 a night. I thought that was [Laughter] - at the time when you were a private in the army, you weren't making a lot of money, but it was a three-day pass and I took my wife to the Bronx Zoo where I used to spend a lot of time when I was in the Bronx. We went to the Bronx Zoo in the middle of winter and that was our honeymoon. Then she got on the bus, I shipped her home, and I went back. Right after that, we were on an extended camping march in the army. We ended up sleeping uncovered in the snow without any pup tents, so you were just sleeping the snow one night.

LL: With sleeping bags?

JB: With sleeping bags, right, in the snow, but for some reason, they didn't have us sleeping in pup tents. So, there we were and we woke up with snow all over us. It was one of - I seem to remember a 20-mile march or whatever. At the end of it, I was deadly sick. They put me in the hospital and I was hospitalized for over a week. I called up Elaine and said, "I'm sick. I'm in the hospital. Can you come down?" So, she got on a bus and got down to Fort Dix. A friend of mine from Cornell was an officer in the army at Fort Dix at the time. I remember he picked her up and got her. I was just being released from the hospital. So, they went to the hospital, I went to the bus station and we missed one another, but then we go together and were together. That was how I met [Crosstalk].

LL: Now, did you ever go to Germany?

JB: Never went to Germany.

LL: You never went?

JB: They increased the strength of this regimental combat team to full strength and stayed there for the two years. When I finished up my two years, I was sergeant but then I had a two-year commitment in active reserve, so it was a two-year commitment. During the time when I was at Purdue, I still had to go summers. They put me in an anti-aircraft group and we used to go to Sheboygan, Wisconsin to shoot drones out of the sky with anti-aircraft guns, but the army treated me well. Some of the sergeants that I worked with, I became company clerk, but the first sergeant that I was with used to be a jeep driver for Patton. He had many experiences and we became great friends. So, that's how I got into extension, but then when I was at Purdue, I got my master's degree. I saw everybody's PhDs and such in the faculty and decided that these are the guys that have the good life, the faculty members. They're making all the money. So, I finished my master's and said, "Well, I'm going to get a doctorate degree. This master's was relatively easy and I'll get a doctorate." That was my first misconception or my first false premise because getting a PhD was a heck of a lot more difficult than a master's. When I received my PhD final, we had two children but we lost one. That was probably a blow in my whole pursuit. When I was through, I interviewed for a job with the USDA where someone there really wanted me to go there. When I went down to visit them, they actually had me come in, when I walked down those long halls of room after room, I've said, "No, this is not for me." Then, I had an interview with Rutgers for an extension job. I arrived there, went to the department head's office and said, "Here I am. I'm John Brand," and he said, "Who?" He had completely screwed up and did not have me as an appointment. So, they went scrambling about and by that afternoon, there was the task force of extension people. I told them afterwards that I didn't think I had been grilled so intensely since I did my orals for my doctorate degree. I thought it was an in-depth review of my thoughts of becoming an extension person, what I believe and it was a long afternoon. I decided that was not where I wanted to be. It was too grown up and too urban. They had the three different campuses. They had two and were starting a third, and I just thought this was too much of a city. I had enough of city life when I left the Bronx. So, the other was at the University of Maine. They picked me up at the airport and I was immediately impressed that the guy had snow shoes in the back of the station wagon. I can't remember, we landed at the Air Force base that's closed now, I think. I'm not quite certain where we landed but it was all the Air Force barracks. At the service desk, you had to tell them where you were going so they could call up in case your flight was cancelled on the way out. On the way to Arnold, they pointed out a bald eagle to me and I thought, "Boy, this is real country," but the people, I have never forgotten the people in that department. They were the friendliest, most sincere, and outgoing department I had ever encountered. I thought, "These are real people." They were trying - they

had very low salaries and the Department of Ag-Ec was trying to raise the salaries that they offered faculty and they had a special meeting. I met with the president there, Libby, who resided -

LL: Libby?

JB: Libby, who was one of their favorite presidents. He was loved by everyone. They did offer a very high salary. They hired more. They offered me more than Connecticut did which was my next stop for a possible job. The department head was Win Pullen at the time in Ag Economics. Later on, Win became the associate dean at the University of Maine and we were close friends throughout all that time. He was one of my favorite deans and I...

LL: How do you spell his last name?

JB: P-U-L-L-E-N.

LL: Thank you.

JB: His first name was Winthrop, Winthrop Pullen. They were very, very friendly people and throughout the years, you can meet a lot of people but the people that were there at the time would always be very cordial when they'd meet you. I always thought that's the way everyone should treat everyone when people come in for a job. Connecticut offered me less money but it was within 3 1/2 hours of where my parents lived and three hours from where Elaine's parents lived. That was important to us. So, when Connecticut offered me a job, an extension research job, I took it. Maybe I did some teaching too and teaching also. Yes, I was a triple threat and that was not always the best type of appointment to have because you finally begin to realize that you're spread pretty thin over a number of areas. I took that job in 1962 on the 15th of August for \$8,510.00. I think that was the amount.

LL: Now, you came in as an ag economist?

JB: As an ag economist.

LL: What was the department like?

JB: The department was small, hardworking. A lot of the "big guns" that they had had left the department. The department was nationally known as an outstanding Agricultural Economics Department but it had lost people to other institutions. Some had gone to California. I think Hal Pro went to Illinois. Some of those that were big names in the late 50's had moved on to their second positions. The department head was Paul Putnam at the time. You had people like Stanley Sever, who I now share a room with, who was one of the real hotshots that were here. You had people like Barbara Dewey who was

involved in policy activities. Steve Johnson was still involved in dairy extension activities. Earl Fellows was here and he was making quite a name at the time in farmland preservation activities. You had a number of younger people, most of whom had left. They did not stay at Connecticut. They went on to the next institution, which was quite common during the 60's. The faculty came and left. Some did not acquire tenure and they left or were encouraged to leave, but the old timers were Sever, Fellows, Johnson, Dewey, and that group.

LL: What was agriculture...?

JB: Agriculture?

LL: What was it like then?

JB: It was feeling the first pinch of a changing agriculture. The broiler industry was having difficulties. The poultry industry, the egg industry was declining. Dairy was beginning to have its difficulties, but agriculture was still viable. I had come in, I replaced – I was never quite sure if I replaced Dana Darwinkel or if I replaced Mildred Smith. The job I had was a combination of those two. There were federal moneys, agricultural marketing moneys that I think by legislation had to encompass 20% of the extension funds in at least ag economics at the time. So, my responsibilities were to deal with extension marketing problems and we spent time with the apple industry. The apple industry was attempting to find new markets for its apples to somehow get chains to purchase apples directly from Connecticut producers rather than from larger producers: State of Washington and New York State. I think most of the problems were the need for the productive units to grow larger and the reluctance of farmers that were in those production activities to grow larger or the inability to grow larger because they were constrained by numbers of acres that they possessed or because their children had left home. Agriculture was beginning to grow less in size. Not as visible as the 80's presented but I think the zenith had been reached and I think Connecticut was not growing the way it had during the 50's. The broiler industry because of freight rate changes, we lost that almost overnight.

LL: What was that?

JB: It gave the Delmarva region an economic advantage in the cost of feeds as compared to Connecticut. Then you had people like Stan Sever attempting to get freight rate changes. He was successful to a limited extent but a competitive advantage was still held by the Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia area.

LL: I came across something about the orchards too. It's a history, a little red book by the Technology Association.

JB: Yes.

LL: I noticed that a lot of those orchards had changed hands in the 60's. When you see it, there was the 100-year history of whatever [Crosstalk]. It gave all the dates and it was like there was a trend there that a lot of things changed during the 60's.

JB: Yes. I think that happened not only in the apple industry. I think it happened in the bedding plant industry. I mean, the whole vegetable industry at the time was being transformed into a bedding plant industry.

LL: Describe a bedding plant industry.

JB: A bedding plant industry, the people that grew vegetable crops that were earlier traditionally Italians or a great number of Italians, those same lands, they were not of a sufficient size to grow broccoli that would supply Stop & Shop. Because of the increasing urbanization in the Northeast and in Connecticut, there was a need for plants for beautification. People wanted impatiens, they wanted petunias, and they wanted marigolds.

LL: So, this started way back in the late 60's, this transfer?

JB: Yes, I think so.

LL: Interesting, okay.

JB: So, they started growing these bedding plants in coop houses on the same land where they had grown vegetable crops. Where they had started their cauliflower plants, and their cabbage plants, they now started growing bedding plants. Then in the spring, they would sell those either on roadside markets, hardware stores, or any of the other multiple outlets for these plants. Then, some grew very large and supplied regional outlets throughout the region. That became a major industry in the state of Connecticut. I think smaller dairy farms that were once able to handle 35 dairy cows or 40 dairy cows, the barns were constructed to have 40 stanchions. When it became necessary to be competitive to have 60 cows, or 75 cows and 80 up to 100 or more, those barns were not able to be enlarged. You had to build new structures and new housing facilities. They needed more land. So, a number of farms that continued operations started leasing land. They were purchasing additional nearby acreage to enlarge their operations. Many farmers, if they were in their 60's, decided it was simply time to get out of the farming business. So, you see a decline from, I don't know if it started in the 60's but you see a decline in the number of dairy farms operating in the state of Connecticut. What was once 1,200 dairy farms went down to 400, and now I think it's in the 300 range.

LL: How long were you in that position?

JB: Four years.

LL: Four years. Then, when did you make the transfer to Ratcliffe Hicks?

JB: Maybe less, maybe for 3 1/2, four years. Albert Mann who had been the assistant dean and the director of the Ratcliffe Hicks School retired, he either retired or went to Zambia on a sabbatical or on leave where it was part of one of our international programs, but he went to Zambia and Ted Kersting was named the assistant dean and director of the school. Then, Dean Young retired. Dean Kersting had been a very outgoing, well-known extension veterinarian. He got to know the state very quickly, spent a lot of time out in the state, and even when Ed was the assistant dean, many people thought that he might be the next dean when Dean Young finally retired. Well, Dean Young did retire. Ted became, was named, and was selected as dean to replace him. So, Ted became dean and there was nobody as assistant dean. So, they searched for an assistant dean and I think they had a number of candidates. They had at least one who I got to know very well later on. He became the associate dean at Purdue. Later on, when I was associate dean, he used to tell me about his visit to the University of Connecticut and why he decided not to come, but Purdue offered him greater opportunities than I think the University of Connecticut could at the time. They probably had two or maybe three people that they asked to become assistant dean and they were turned down. One day, Steve Johnson came to see me, I think he headed up the search committee and he said, "Your name has been suggested as someone to become assistant dean. Would you be interested?" Well, at the time, I was flabbergasted. I don't think I had any idea of what an assistant dean really did. I know that Lillian Picket was over there as the secretary and when I was teaching over there in the Ratcliffe Hicks School, I was afraid to face her. I had heard all these stories about how tough she was. So, I said, "I don't know. I have to think about it." Steve said, "Well, the one thing is if you're asked, if we were to ask you, you cannot say no. You have to accept if you tell us it's okay to go ask you." I said, "Fine. Let me go talk with my wife." So, I talked with and Elaine and said, "Jeez, they want me to be assistant dean." I always thought assistant deans went to somebody who was full professor and a renowned scientist or teacher. Elaine said, "Whatever you want to do, do it." So, I went back and told Steve, "Yes, I think I'd like to be the assistant dean. I don't know. What do I do then? What happens with my job here?" He said, "Well, you'd still have a job here but that would be your job for a few years." I said, "Okay." So, my name was presented and then I had an interview with Ted Kersting. He asked me where I was born, what did I do, and what did I want to do and such. Then he said, "If you get this job, I'll always back you if you'll always back me." I said, "That's fine. That sounds good to me." We shook hands and that was it. I tried after that to support him as best I could and I always felt that he supported

me as well as anyone could have. Four years after I came here, I think it was less than four years, I became assistant dean. Then later on, when they couldn't give me a salary increase or they couldn't promote me, they said, "We're going to name you associate dean." So, I became the associate dean. It was also during the Ken Wilson period when he was running things. Ken really made a point of the philosophy. This was also at a time when my colleagues, whether it was Henry Hanson at the time, George Weigum, or Anne Riddell, they always felt they should be associate deans. Bill Kendrick had some of those same feelings, Lou Pierro. I think at times, I felt like their barbs were aimed at me, "What the devil? Who do I think I was being associate dean and they couldn't have that title?" I said, "It's not my doing," but Ken Wilson told Kersting. Kersting tried to get them named associate deans. I said, "I don't care what you're called. I just want to know what my responsibilities are." Ken Wilson made quite a point that there would only be one associate dean in each school or college, and that associate dean was to be the person who would represent the dean, who would basically handle all problems that came up if in fact he or she were not available. There was one associate dean. So, that basically, Ted used me, well, they all did really across the board, if extension basically was concerned with extension. The experiment station was primary concerned with the experiment station, but I always felt that my overview and what the deans were asking me was a more overview, whether it came because of the length of time I was here or the way they viewed my responsibilities but I became the associate dean at some point during that time. It was only until Dean [Unintelligible] came and the present administration let the current administrators hold the title also of associate dean.

LL: The whole structure [Crosstalk].

JB: Apparently, the whole structure has changed but the structure changed even from – Jorgensen hired me. He was the one who signed my letter. Jorgensen was gone, Beveridge and I came in together basically, Beveridge after me by a few months, but in September, it was the Beveridge era and all of that worked out.

LL: What year would that have been?

JB: '62.

LL: [Unintelligible]?

JB: Yes. He came in '62 in September. So, Kersting was the first dean. That was followed by Knox, then Hugo John. Do I have that correct? Then Hugo John, then – no.

LL: No. Knox came after Hugo John.

JB: Right, Knox. It was Kersting, John, and Knox. Yes, I felt that was wrong, right. Then, on two or three occasions, I was either acting dean or interim dean. The last period I was interim dean was probably the most taxing period of my life because I really felt all the reviewers of that Hartley review when the School of Nursing and Allied Health was going to be closed down, that whole thing was really aimed at the College of Ag. If I did anything that I feel paid for my salary, I personally think my being on that committee helped when having the college named as one of the units to be eliminated because I think we might not have been one that would have [Audio Gap] at the time. I enjoyed all the deans I worked for and enjoyed all the colleagues. I think that's been one of the strengths of the college and Connecticut agriculture. I think the experiment station director was always Will Kennard. Joe Lucas was in there for a period of time. He died during that period. We had Henry Hansen and George with him, and then Anne Riddell. Lou Pierro as the experiment station director following Kennard, but they were all very able individuals. Sometimes I think internally people don't see these but those ladies and gentlemen on the national scene always were part of the national fabric that made up agricultural federal government relationships. They were key individuals. They were part of all the major committees in the NASULGC, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. They were always key people. That was one of the things I tried to do when I became the associate dean was to maintain that visibility that we were part of that agricultural scene as well as in New York, Indiana, or Texas. That we could also be the chairpersons, that we could also be the ones that generated policy that would affect all of our programs. I think that's very important. That's important. I think if we move away from that, it would be a great mistake.

LL: As long as we go back to that, we've gotten off on that on time. What did Connecticut's mindset bring to that national scene?

JB: I think the thing we brought was our realization that we were at the forefront of change. We experienced change before New York did, before Indiana did, before Oklahoma did, probably at the same time as California, but even California did not experience the change we were feeling. The change we were feeling was one of a limited funding by state governments for our programs and the fact that with reduced federal funds and with reduced state funds, we were finding it difficult to maintain all the programs we have.

LL: Also, our agriculture was already going to change faster...

JB: Agriculture, faster.

LL: ...or earlier.

JB: Earlier, right. Earlier and faster, I think. The demise of the broiler industry. If anyone in 1950 had said that 10 years later, there'd be no broiler industry left in Connecticut, I think very few people would have believed that. One time, we had the county with the greatest number of broilers in the United States and within a decade, that had disappeared. The change came quickly and the change came early. As a result of the change and change is coming in Washington. We were changing and having to cut back on programs. We reduced the number of forage agents and we, especially in those last years, I felt I took so much flak from everybody complaining about, "Why are you cutting back on the home demonstration agents? Why are you cutting back on the forage agents?" We used to have four county agents in this program and now, there's none. Well, the problem is, that the pot of gold kept shrinking and you had to change and modify, but the thing was to maintain programs as best you could and be innovative to establish new programs, to establish new spearheads so that when money did come along, maybe changes could be made. One of the things I'm sort of proud of, this biotech building that we recently dedicated. Lou Pierro was heavily involved in the biotech thing. That's when I was interim dean and it was 1993 maybe. Lou was part of the university biotech committee, a council, or whatever it was and he felt strongly with the college to have a biotech presence. I personally believed that we did. I thought the rewards that the whole science that's wrapped up in biotechnology offers the promise of so many benefits to all the people that this was a science and a field that we had to participate in. It was not something you could turn your back on. You had to be involved. The longer you delay this involvement, the greater penalty you would pay. Well, there were funds available and I don't remember exactly the source of the funds. I know Representative DeLauro was heavily involved and our UConn lobbyist was heavily involved. Funds became available but we had to agree to proceed to accept the funds to start a biotech program, to agree to build biotech laboratories, the structure that is there. Many, many people in the college and outside of it - apply and tell. Let me know that this is not where we should be going because my god, we haven't even filled those forage positions. Why were we even thinking of beginning a biotech program? Cornell was already a decade ahead of us. Leave it up to Cornell, the Purdues, and the North Carolinas to get into biotechnology. We should stay in areas that we have facilities and resources. I felt we just had to go. One of my concerns was I knew I was not going to be the dean. I was going to retire. I had been in administration since 1964. Three decades later, I'm still in administration but here I was making a decision that would affect the next dean. He'd basically be tied into pursuing biotech. That's not the kind of actions I try to take in other areas during those years when I was there. I try to give the incoming dean as much flexibility as possible but in the case of biotech, we basically were making that commitment that we were going forward.

LL: How did this work on campus because there are traditions and then the other scientists across the road as people talk about it, what was the campus politics about this?

JB: I think the campus politics, they were probably fearful. Fearful in the sense that biology, I think, has always been concerned about whether agricultural or biological science would step on their toes or within their turf, step on their turf. I think there were always lines drawn that that's our turf and you shouldn't be getting into that area. I think the university administration Tighe is provost at the time.

LL: It's spelled T-I-G-H-E?

JB: T-I-G-H-E and there's another story there on Tighe but Tighe basically felt we should go into biotech. I think he was supportive even though he heard some of the same arguments. I think the university – because these were Federal funds coming into the building. I think the university always saw this as a facility that the university, regardless of whether agriculture is in its current form or another reorganized form would still benefit from having a new biotechnology laboratory teaching facility. I think there was not a strong – I never heard anything from the administration that would indicate this would not be supported.

LL: As long as we're talking about administration, you were in that position and also as acting dean several times through several administrations.

JB: Yes.

LL: Do you want to spend some time talking about what you saw as either the changing attitude on campus about land grant or about people's attitude toward agriculture in a central administration?

JB: Yes. Let me go back. Let me tell you about Mr. Tighe and how...

LL: He was academic dean?

JB: Provost.

LL: Provost under who? Who is he under?

JB: Under, no.

LL: Under? The one who called you?

JB: Under the last pres. Who's president now?

LL: Dr. Hartley was the one that...

JB: Hartley.

LL: Hartley?

JB: Hartley. He was under Hartley. Harry Hartley who sometimes you hear disparaging remarks about Harry Hartley.

LL: He was mentoring a candidate from the Business Department?

JB: In the School of Education.

LL: School of Education. It seems...

JB: He taught Business Education but Harry Hartley...

LL: Cost-benefit? He did...

JB: Cost-benefit analysis of – right.

LL: You used to have [Crosstalk]. [Laughter]

JB: Right but Harry Hartley in my own mind, sometimes I think everyone is born at a certain time to do a certain job in life and I think Harry Hartley was probably the right person for the University of Connecticut during the years he served as president. I've always liked Harry. I used to chuckle when he wears sweat suits to greet parents of students coming in but that was Harry. When Harry was on his horse,

that was Harry but Harry was committed and dedicated to the university. I always felt that he did not have favors, that he treated every unit of the university as an equal and gave you an opportunity to present your needs and your position. I think he was...

LL: Along it's zero-based budgets, that's what he promoted.

JB: Right. I think he was successful in bringing about the financial support that the university is now the benefactor of. I think you cannot look at the growth and the development that's taking place at the university now without recognizing the role that Harry played in acquiring those funds. I knew Harry as the president and the dean before that but as the one who lived through all the years and we had no money. From the time I became assistant dean in '62 until the time I retired, life for every dean was there is not enough money. The legislature is not giving us enough money. The legislature is not giving us what we ask for. Tough it out. Funds became although they may not have diminished, with inflation, et cetera, we had less money every year I think from the time I started. To see a new building that has now materialized is quite an achievement for the university and to see all the change taking place, some of which I find perplexing but it's the kind that growth and development that when you go to other institutions during the years when I was involved in administration, you'd say, "God, I wish I had the building taking place at Kentucky or the building taking place at Texas or the building taking place at Cornell." We never experienced that building while those other places were growing and developing and attracting students and yet we went through a period when I was administrating as dean where our student numbers quadrupled, et cetera. During the times when I served as dean, more students received degrees and certificates during the period I was there than all the years before that during the existence of the university and its precedence school's politics, et cetera, in the agriculture in the Ratcliffe Hicks School, so that...

LL: Ratcliffe Hicks became certified while you were...

JB: Well, no. Actually, the final thing came with Bob Lenny. It had started years ago. For many years, there's a lot of money with Ratcliffe Hicks. I don't know how much money they took in in the past 10 years during the golden age of the stock market but they must have acquired a tremendous amount of money. No one's ever told me but those funds where what kept the college and the school alive because...

LL: There's a separate fund from a family like a foundation?

JB: It's the bequest of Ratcliffe Hicks. When Elizabeth Hicks died, that residual that had been going to her changed to the university.

LL: Who was Ratcliffe Hicks?

JB: Ratcliffe Hicks was a Connecticut legislator philanthropist, legislator, and a businessman who left funds bequest in his will that a two-year school of agriculture be built in Connecticut, one that was not baccalaureate level. Those he gave \$200,000.00 in the beginning which was used for the construction of the front part of the building who offers still not the back part is what I understand.

LL: Where the arena is.

JB: Where the arena. It's not the arena. Ratcliffe Hicks died and he had expensed her daughter by his marriage, lived in Tolland. Upon her death, whatever funds were supporting her from a certain trust, the income from that which is now controlled by Fleet Bank goes to the university annual to be used for Ratcliffe Hicks as long as it exists. When the three-year program no longer exists, the funds will either go to YALE or my hope they'll go to the Hicks-Stearns Museum which is another part of the will of which I am now president.

LL: Where is Hicks-Stearns Museum?

JB: In Tolland. The Hicks-Stearns Family Museum which is in Tolland, Connecticut on the Green. You've never been there? You will have to go at Christmas time. There's a special Christmas opening. It will open up soon in May for the season, but anyway, what was I saying about Hicks? Yes. So, the funds. When I was using the funds because funds were so scarce and we had so many students, 1,200 students. In the beginning, when we reached the 1,200, I had one secretary and had no assistant. Slowly as the student numbers increased, I think, went up to maybe 800 or so, I think I had my first assistant. Then since then, there has been an assistant who's an assistant dean or an associate dean. I think Pat Jefferson's title was still assistant to the associate or whatever the title is but they have not made that a full-pledged assistant dean position.

LL: He's still the academic associate dean?

JB: Right, who is now the academic...

LL: Associate.

JB: Right. I try to use the funds in those activities so that if we were buying – we needed new microscopes in the soils lab or in the forage props lab, we needed new microscopes in plants science actually, I try to put those funds in materials that would be utilized by both the baccalaureate program and the two-year program. We would hire part-time assistants to help that could also teach two-year as well as four whereas supplement to funds we receive from the state so that an assistantship might be provided by Ratcliffe-Hicks to spread out the limited funds we have so we could keep some of these tremendous groups. We had a tremendous increase. This is during the Vietnam War. You had the influx of students because of the war coming in but at the same time, you had this tremendous movement and a concern about the environment, about environmental quality, about Earth Day is starting up. I used to tell people we have big increase in natural resources. What was then, it was a program within plants science that later became its own department but we had so many students in natural resources.

LL: You mentioned – I can't remember now which president wanted this to become a part of natural resources.

JB: Cyrus Babbage. I'll tell you about that. We had so many women also coming in that if you went into one of the dormitory rooms especially of the women, you would feel like you were going into a jungle because they had so many green plants. It was a phenomena that they loved the earth and it was for many of these city kids because increasingly, we probably had less than 5% that were farm-grown kids that came from farms. They were urban kids. They were town kids. Many of them had no real relationship with the earth or with living things and this was an eye-opener to many of them. They fell in love with plants and animals. We had a tremendous increase in animal science at the time when dairy farms were diminishing. You had the influx of the horse. Everybody loved the horse. You had all the women coming in where you never had women because they wanted to ride those horses and the horse programs, the voluntary program were going every night into the evening, one learning group teaching group after another. You asked about Babbage. When Babbage came, he used to have one of these walking cows that when you put them on a slant, the cow would walk down. He had that on his desk but I don't think Dr. Babbage was enamored with the College of Agriculture as it existed. He came from Washington. I think he was led to believe that agriculture was on its last legs and I think he was convinced that it needed to change. I think there were many changes that were necessary but he established or set up a committee, a

college-wide committee, studied the college and how it should be organized, what should happen with the college without finding the report. I don't know the exact words but it was, "Take a look at the college. See what changes need to be done. People like Bob Guttay, former head of Applied Science Department is one of the key people on the committee. I think Stan Siever was..."

LL: G-U-T-T-A-Y?

JB: G-U-T-T-A-Y, right. Those individuals, all of the department heads, all the key senior faculty were involved in what should happen to the College of Agriculture. There were many people. During that time, I was on some committees. I don't know. I can't remember which ones but I remembered some of my discussions with other faculty. I was a strong believer in the land-grant college concept. That made us unique. I don't think Dr. Babbage fully embraced that concept.

LL: He's in the liberal arts background?

JB: From a YALE liberal arts background. As a result of the study, et cetera, I remember at least one faculty member arguing with me, saying, "Twenty years from now, there won't be a Department of Animal Science," just adamant. I can't remember who said that but it's clear in my mind someone saying, "In 20 years, there won't be a Department of Animal Science." At the time that we called it animal industries, there won't be a Department of Animal Industries. I remember 20 years later telling whoever was dean at the time, "Twenty years ago, they said this department would be gone." There were probably times when I thought they might be on the right track because it was constantly threatened but as a result, the proposal was to establish a school, not a college but a school of environmental studies. I'm not sure that's the title but it was a school of environment, I think environmental studies. I'm not sure what the title is but environment and that was basically the proposal. The whole ag community just went berserk at that time and I think it called for a reorganization of the college. The agricultural components that we've had, I think the proposal was to put them in the Department of Agriculture. We did not want to lose that Department of Agriculture relationship to Washington because without having agriculture...

LL: As a college.

JB: ...as a college of some kind, as a program, you threatened the loss of funds from Washington. You had to maintain that agricultural relationship somehow but I think there was going to be a Department of Agriculture, perhaps a Department of Horticulture in which all horticulture were to reside.

It was basically there already. At the time, we still had poultry science and animal industries and I think that all would have been in under agriculture. Then, it would have been some kind of environmental biology but the rest of the package, I think in part, was tied in with units of liberal arts and sciences but there would be a new organization of structure. Well, the agricultural community was beside itself. There was a frenzy of activity. I think individuals and I think Dr. Collin was very heavily involved in retaining the College of Agriculture. If anyone went out like far over these to all the commodities groups and not just animals. He went to plant groups. He went to everyone if I remembered correctly, but he spread the word about what was going to happen to the College of Agriculture. I think the commissioner of agriculture, Joe Gill, G-I-L-L, was also although not at the forefront was concerned about retaining a College of Agriculture. I think that was taking place. Ted Kersting was caught in the middle. Dean Young had - I think Dr. Babbage had made it known to Dean Young that he was not going to follow the policies and the recommendations of Dean Young. One of the first things Dean Young that I remember, his sidewalks out here. You see they're concrete sidewalks now. When I came here, they were rough macadam. The rest of the university had concrete sidewalks but the College of Agriculture had this rough macadam. Dean Young, year after year, I understand asked for funds to repair these sidewalks and to put in concrete sidewalks. Babbage never came up with the money. Then one day, all of a sudden, Dean Young came up with the funds. I'm not sure how he got them but one day, we had concrete sidewalks the same as everyone else on campus. There was one meeting, a major meeting. I don't know if I was at the old CL&P auditorium but there was a major meeting. When Babbage went to these meetings, he always had Ken Wilson with him. I was not at the meeting but Ted Kersting was caught in the middle between Babbage.

LL: He was the dean at that? He came in as dean?

JB: He was the dean at the time and he came in. He was caught in between what Babbage wanted to do and his plans had been approved by the faculty of his college. This was a proposal that have had recommendations from the faculty. This was not something strictly from up above. This was still collegial coming from the bottom up. Even though the suggestion had come from the top down, the meeting I think that just the fact that the president and Ken Wilson with a vengeance. This is what I'm told.

LL: Who would that be?

JB: All. Anyone who was interested in agriculture. Commodity people, extension people, forage, and markers.

LL: They must've presented this plan.

JB: It was basically for Babbage to respond to questions from the people that agriculture needed to change that environmental quality is of great concern and this was our pathway to the future. Well, it didn't happen. The meeting was so clear-cut that I think the president recognized that he was probably 10 years ahead of his time or 20 years ahead but it was not the time to change at that point. The plans dropped at that program. Yet certain changes kept coming about and although you can always work by your administration and stick your tongue out at them, they are the ones who finally controlled the budget. If it's any lesson to be learned is that you have to live with these people and unless you have other sources with funding and other options that's going to the legislation, you're basically going to live with funds that they give. For years, our equipment budget was miniscule. We received just a drop in the bucket each year for funding for equipment. You couldn't replace the tractor. You couldn't replace microscopes. The funds were just not there. That's why at times, we buy a tractor. The tractor takes money just so we would have that tractor but I could always rationalize that we needed that for teaching purposes, et cetera. You talked about reports and without having all the reports, I really think we have had a report about the College of Agriculture probably about an average of every five years maybe with every new president. With every new administration, you get new plans for the university landscape, the environment, where roads would go, and which part should be for agriculture.

If you looked at all the past plans that go way back into the 1920s, they even had plans then of how the university would look. You always see one or two aspects of it, but there are other parts that were never built, never constructed, and roads that have been obliterated, et cetera. Every administration takes a look at the architecture of the environment and they come up with a master plan. Every administration studies with College of Agriculture. Every time they ask for a study of the College of Agriculture, the faculty and its clientele react into the threat is to kill off the College of Agriculture. As a result of that first study, the Babbage study, one of the major activities I was involved in at the time, we thought of something like maybe 60 or 100-level agriculture, 40. Maybe that's an exaggeration. Maybe it was 40 but a great number. Every department had a number of 100 level courses refreshed. Many of them were duplicative of one another, the marketing of dairy products and the marketing of horticultural products. They covered the same scientific principles but in different formats. The marketing, the culture, the propagation of hardwood, the propagation of softwood, but there were multiple courses that cut across. They were courses that were taken by students before they had the basic introductory chemistry course, before they had completed the introductory biology course and yet before they took the introductory economics

course. Yet we were offering all these 100-level courses and students would begin their first year with 24 or 30 credits of 100-level courses and then taking the introductory biology as part of that or the introductory chemistry but a lot of 100. One of the recommendations of the Babbage report was to eliminate those. We were to have three 100-level courses of one in animals, one in plants, and one in natural resources. That was a big fight to get the faculty to vote those courses out because this is what people had taught through 30 years, 20 years, and 10 years. It was their babies and we were taking that away from them.

What we did away, it was, I think, maybe 30 courses. We got away with 30 courses. Theoretically, we would have three courses left. Man and His Environment: Animals, Man and His Environment: Plants, Man and His Environment: Natural Resources. One group, every department wanted to be represented somehow. Ag-ec wasn't represented. We let them keep the 100-level course as an introduction to ag economics but maybe that was brought in later. I think we were successful and the only 100-level course was an introduction to ag engineering because it didn't seem to fit in anywhere else. We kept that and we made the adjustments and the student numbers increased and the president was happy because he wanted to have a more scientific background among all students so that there was the growth. He was a believer. One of the papers he used to comment upon is one of a theory, a procedure. He wanted us to be able to measure the growth in the students, the progress that we've made from beginning to end. I don't think anyone has ever been successful in truly measuring that but they keep trying. The kids' educators have been to get concerned about but I think what has happened, however, over the years is we've seen a resurgence of 100-level courses. I don't know exactly how many they are now but we do have more than the original three. I think we've changed the names. So, man is not in the title. Maybe it was a non-gender type one.

LL: I see, yes. [Laughter]

JB: The man, I think, was eliminated. Yes, go ahead.

LL: I have another tactic. Of all the things you've experienced, what do you think in your professional career, what has given you the most benefit? You mentioned it was raising a problem, yes.

JB: Right. The most satisfaction, I think greatest satisfaction I had was teaching. The one thing I missed after I became administrator and for a few years after that, I still continued teaching one course. I never have been a believer of these presidents and provosts that say, "I'm going to continue teaching and

I'm going to offer the seminar." I think it's a great idea but I think as administrators, you don't control your life and your schedules are so shared with so many other people and so many other problems that even if you intend to hold that seminar on Friday at 3:00, there's always something that comes up and then the first thing you see is, "Well, the president couldn't make it today but the provost will be here." Then the next time is, "The provost couldn't be here. So, we're sending the dean of students to meet with you." Little by little, it degrades. I finally decided I could no longer teach and I stopped, but I miss the students. Even though you see a lot of students as the associate thing, if you're responsible for teaching, you don't see enough of the good students, the great achievers. You see some of those when they receive an award and such but the average good student, you don't encounter them as much as the ones with problems, the ones that have problems, and all kinds of problems: personal problems, problems with academic matters. It just is one problem after another that you're dealing with and how to deal with that and try to get them help. One of the great satisfactions stemming from that in the beginning when there was very little money and the university was changing. The organization was changing. The university was growing. When I came, there were 8,200 students on campus. Suddenly, it started diverging in the '60s, in the '70s, but the university itself hadn't really developed an infrastructure to take care of all these and things like registration that kids were just standing in line forever. There was a guy by the name of John Manning who was an associate provost. He said, "Well, there's a need to get the deans didn't know a damn thing." Deans really didn't know how to handle these things because it was all handled by associate teams and assistant teams. He thought we ought to get the associate and assistant deans together and maybe we could file things together. John Manning was the – no, he wasn't the associate provost at the time. John Manning was the assistant to the dean of students and Robert Hewes, H-E-W-E-S, was the dean of students and...

(End of interview)