

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Interview One - May 4, 2000

Place: Houston, Texas
Interviewer: Louis J. Marchiafava

Chapter 00A ***Interview Identifier***

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Today is May 4, 2000, and I am interviewing Mr. Thomas Dunaway Anderson. The interview is sponsored by the Texas Medical Center and by the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. I am very happy to be here with you, sir.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, I am very glad we can talk together.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Thank you.

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Chapter 01

About Monroe Dunaway Anderson

B: Key MD Anderson Figures;

Codes

C: Portraits;

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

C: This is MD Anderson;

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

M. D. Anderson . . . had the full name of Monroe Dunaway Anderson. I suppose the Monroe came from President Monroe, but the Dunaway was the name of his mother's family -- a string of people who migrated from Virginia down into western Tennessee, and the one called Mary Ellen Dunaway married James Wisdom Anderson, and they had eight children. I think Monroe, who was born in 1873, was the sixth child. There were two younger than he - a sister, his only sister, and a younger brother who died young. They settled in Jackson, Tennessee, probably because it was a growing commercial center, and as the Civil War ended, James Wisdom Anderson, my grandfather, had been the prisoner of war of the Yankees, but he was released and returned to Jackson and established (this from friends), the First National Bank of Jackson, Tennessee, and was its first president until he died quite young -- I think somewhere around 1880.

Monroe received his early education in Jackson, and I think had a little bit of college but I never have found the record. He went to work then. There were two banks in Jackson, and he went to work for the other bank. It turns out that was operated by some relatives also. His outstanding characteristics, I suppose, instilled in his childhood and by the conditions in the south that followed the end of the war, imbued in with some of his more outstanding qualities -- thrift and frugality being notable among them. Some people just said that he was as tight as paper on the wall! On the other hand, most of the wealthy people I have known are tight. And so, it was perhaps characteristic of people of means to be that way. The term "tight," you don't hear much anymore and it doesn't mean the same as stingy, because he certainly was not that.

He never married. I think part of the family lore is that he was in love with a girl in Jackson and she sorrowfully turned him down and he just never did get his interest going again, marking another of his qualities which was shyness. He absolutely did not promote himself. He never sought the limelight. He enjoyed his friends, and having no children of his own, he greatly enjoyed being around my brothers and me who were the six sons of his older brother, Frank.

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Chapter 02

Memories of Monroe Dunaway Anderson

B: Key MD Anderson Figures;

Codes

A: Personal Background;

C: Portraits;

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

We first became acquainted with him - I did - when the Frank Anderson family lived in Oklahoma City. And M. D. Anderson, in the meantime, had transferred to Houston mainly because his cotton company, Anderson Clayton and Company, needed the larger banking facilities that Houston offered, and he was a banker.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

What year was that approximately?

About 1907. I was born in 1912, and I guess one of my very early recollections is for him to come out and have a meal at our house and play with me and the other younger children in the family before catching his train to come on to Houston again. Train service between Oklahoma City and Houston was frequent and very good for that period.

These people were all Scotch-Irish in origin. I've got a book on the Scotch-Irish movement, which I won't recite here, but they came from Northern Ireland as a part of the great migration from that area which is still having its problems, as we know, and settled along the eastern seaboard. And then, as lands opened up for public settlement, many of them migrated to the west. That is certainly what my ancestors did and what the Dunaway ancestors did also. What else on that?

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Do you have any specific memories of him beyond what you said? Is there something that stands out in your mind?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, while we were in Oklahoma City, his visits were just drop-in visits between trains, so to speak. After my family moved to Houston, which was in 1928, my mother invited him to come and have dinner with us every night. And he was pretty nimble with the knife and fork. And, of course, he had been eating in boarding houses and hotels, so he was very happy about having a home-cooked meal. So, there was always a place for him at my mother's dinner table, from the

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time she moved here in 1928 until the time he died in 1939. I guess he was with us hundreds and hundreds of times.

A few anecdotal things which you will find in this envelope here, and I will hand it to you now so you will have it nearby, so that we won't walk off without it . . . my father had died in 1924 and left modest inheritances in trusts for his younger children until they should become 25. I was instructed that I had to come here and go to Rice Institute, it was called, in my sophomore year, and I didn't have a car. He took pity on me and said, "I think you need a car." And I said, "I sure do agree with you on that." And he said, "Well, let's see what we can do about it." So, he had me sign a note for \$500 to my trust. And the trust advanced the money for me to go out and buy the prettiest little Ford Roadster you nearly ever saw! Then, he would remind me, if he was there in the evening and if I was home studying or not doing very much, he'd say, "You'd better get in that car and drive because the interest on that \$500 is running day and night, whether you are getting any enjoyment out of the subject of the interest or not." That was one of my recollections.

Another one was that my mother was twitting him one time in this way: My younger brother, Ben, was a little late in going out and exercising a young man's prerogative of chasing girls. And so, my mother, in speaking to him, said, "You need to call some girls and go and have some dates. You don't want to be an old bachelor. There is a streak of it in the family." Well, Grandpa said, "Just a minute. Don't call me a streak."

You will read in here also the stories about his first car. Do you think we have time for that? I will just go on and tell it.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Well, I don't want to repeat what is already known.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

That is in there - the story of his first car and his second car. And there are some other anecdotes, personal anecdotes, in the written material that I am giving to you.

I happened to be in the same restaurant where he was at lunch on a day in 1938 called the Majestic Grill. It was part of the Majestic Theater building downtown on Rusk and Travis. And of Uncle Mun's friends, a man named Fisher whom I knew casually, came over with a funny look on his face and he said, "Your uncle has something wrong with him. You'd better come and see about him." So, I went over to where he was. He had been sitting at the counter, I think, in this cafe that doesn't deserve the name restaurant, and he was holding his right arm down. He said, "My arm has gone to sleep and I was trying to get it to wake up again." Well, I knew what had happened, of course. We got into a taxi and I said, "I am going to take you to the hospital." "No," he said, "I won't go to the hospital. I want to go back home" which, in that case, was a room in the Texas State Hotel.

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So, over my protests, he outranked me . . . I got him over to the hotel, and some strong porters over there got him up to his room and we called his doctor, a Dr. Gray was his name. He wasn't the prominent Dr. Gray. He was the brother of Marvin Gray who was outstanding.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

What was his first name?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I can't remember. He was the younger brother of Dr. Marvin Gray. It may be in these papers. He came to see him and gave him something to reduce his blood pressure and in a little while, recommended that he be hospitalized. He was a little slow about that, I think but, in any case, he was taken over to Memorial Baptist Hospital and received treatment there. Some of his treatment was given by a Dr. James Greenwood, Jr., who made a talk about him. That is also in the papers that I have handed to you. And, as far as I can tell, it is entirely accurate.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

These are unpublished papers?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, it is a published paper but it is 60 years old, or 50 years old, so it may be that it is not in any archives yet. I had several copies so I made one. I am giving you one. I am down to about two now.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Well, I appreciate it.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Pay some attention to it. There are a bunch of clippings in there also about him, some of which are based on that and some of which are based on interviews that reporters gave to me. I have talked freely about him, so some of that, you will see some quotations in there that are attributable to me. He disliked Franklin Roosevelt, and that is an understatement. He detested the fellow and all that he stood for.

He also was very concerned in his later years that Anderson Clayton and Company, of which he was, of course, a full partner, would suffer greatly on his death because the surviving partner, who would have been Will Clayton, was obliged under the partnership agreement to buy him out, so there just might not be enough money for that. So, they did two things - he and Will Clayton and some other business associates - they incorporated Anderson Clayton and Company, and Uncle Mun received an awful lot of shares in the company. But his lawyers, Colonel Bates primarily, Colonel W.B. Bates, a well-known lawyer in a firm then called Fulbright, Cooker, Freeman and

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Bates, prepared his will and also prepared a charter for the M. D. Anderson Foundation. In 1936, that is, Colonel Bates prepared and Uncle Mun signed, an instrument establishing the M. D. Anderson Foundation. And he put a few dollars into it. But his main purpose was to build a receptacle to receive the bulk of his estate at the time of his death. So, that is what is done. His will was quite generous to his nephews and his one niece, and to his three surviving sisters-in-law, but the bulk of it, 90% of it, I suppose, went into the M. D. Anderson Foundation and is that in the reinvestment and the product of it as the source of the many benefactions that this community has received in the name of M. D. Anderson for the last 50 years, almost 60 now since he died, although they didn't do too much during the war.

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Chapter 03

Connections with MD Anderson and Memories of R. Lee Clark, MD

B: MD Anderson Past;

Codes

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

When did you begin to become involved in the Texas Medical Center itself?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I have never been involved in the Texas Medical Center. I have been close to . . . my older brother, Leland, was the president of the Texas Medical Center for several years. Then, there has been a succession of presidents since then. But I have never been on that board. My connection is with the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, which has had a variety of names. But in about 1950, I suppose, the director of Anderson Hospital, a wonderful man named Randolph Lee Clark, conceived the idea of establishing sort of a board of directors here in Houston, but he couldn't call it that because the Board of Regents was really the owner and operator of the hospital, of the University of Texas. It was then and still is the University of Texas Institution, of course. So, he started what he called a Board of Visitors, which was supposed to help him with decisions that the Regents couldn't make or were too small for them to bother with, and I suppose, to polish the image of the institution. He asked my older brother, James, to be the first chairman of that Board of Visitors --which he called it the Board of Visitors, not board of directors. James accepted that job, and performed well in it for several years. He died in 1958 and the Board of Visitors kind of became inactive.

In the early 1960s, Lee Clark called me one day and asked me if I would like to see that revived and if so, to help him get some fresh members of it and to be chairman of it, which I gladly did. I have been a great admirer of Lee Clark since the day that I first met him.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

What impressed you about him?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, charm, and manifest ability, and intelligence, and energy. He was a great surgeon, by reputation, but he had also keen abilities to raise funds and to lobby the legislature. He had the

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legislature always eating out of his hands whenever he asked for appropriation for this division of the University of Texas. They would just say, 'How much do you want?' They were very responsive to his requests for funds.

I am rambling, so why don't you ask specific questions?

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

No, you are not rambling. You are giving me some information that is useful. Was it his personal qualities that the legislature found . . .

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

This man could charm the birds right out of the trees, and he had the background, in terms of experience and talent, to let them know that he wasn't talking through his hat, that it wasn't all a bunch of front. And perhaps the most outstanding characteristic was optimism. The legislature, state legislature, during World War II, authorized the establishment of a cancer hospital somewhere in the state for research and treatment. The legislature was just enabling statute at that time because there was no money to build anything. But there was that legislation standing there when the war ended or maybe implemented a little bit during the war. When the war ended and it looked like they were going to be able to move forward, I think it was the directors of the M. D. Anderson Foundation and the present University of Texas, began a joint search for a president, a permanent president, to come and take charge of this new institution. But I think some of them thought we needed to get a man who would let people come here to die, and they got the wrong man because Lee Clark's idea was, "I am going to walk them out the front door. They are not going to go out feet first." So, he emphasized curing people. He instilled optimism in all the doctors and the nurses, and they are still there. He saw to it that the buildings and the decorations were colorful, that the employees were cheerful, and I have never heard anybody say that there was a sour or doleful attitude among the personnel of that organization.

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Chapter 04

The Origin of the Texas Medical Center and MD Anderson Cancer Center

B: MD Anderson Past;

Codes

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Let me come at this thing from two or three different angles. One is the site for a medical center. This part is hearsay, and way out of date, but there was a prominent Houston business man and philanthropist named Will Hogg, the older brother of Ms. Imma Hog, who sensed the need for a medical center in Houston, and I think he went and bought most of the land where the Medical Center now is situated, and then turned around and invited the Medical Branch of the University of Texas in Galveston to come here and enjoy this site. That was his idea of starting the Medical Center, was to get the medical school from Galveston up here. But what he perhaps had not found out was that the medical school is forever tied to Galveston because it is the primary beneficiary of some very substantial funds generated and disbursed by the Sealy and Smith Foundation of Galveston, established by one of Galveston's leading philanthropists many years ago and ministered by his son and daughter for their lives, and is still going strong. And it pours an immense amount of money into the medical school so long as it stays in Galveston. So, his approach to move the medical school from Galveston to Houston was unsuccessful. So, there was that land, and I think he deeded it to the City of Houston. You will have to get somebody else to help you with this. Maybe even an abstract company. It was the property of the City of Houston when the M. D. Anderson Foundation was looking for the site for a medical school. Some people thought it was a part of Hermann Park because it lay right adjacent. Ms. Imma Hogg thought so because she told me so. But the solution was to have a referendum vote in Houston during World War II that gave the city permission to sell that 134 acres, I think it was, to the Texas Medical Center. It had been formed, I suppose, early in the war. In terms of timing, M. D. Anderson died in 1939. His estate was just held up by a state tax problem until 1941, at which point, I went off into the service. So, there had not been any organization called The Texas Medical Center, until about 1942.

All right. There was a site for a medical center. When I used to practice law in the courthouse, I became acquainted with a Dr. E.W. Bertner . . . the street is paved for him now . . . a very prominent Houston physician, and in talking to him, he let me know, then and on other occasions, that what Houston needed was a medical center where doctors from all over the city could be drawn under one roof, so to speak, not literally but figuratively, and be in closer proximity to each other, and that

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that would improve the quality of the practice and give the doctors more time to devote themselves to their professional work, instead of driving hither and yon to call on patients or go to hospitals, or whatever.

It really, I think, was more his idea and concept of a medical center that appealed to the M. D. Anderson Foundation. Again, this is in those papers. When it became known that the M. D. Anderson Foundation had \$20,000,000, and had not decided what to do with it, the Harris County Medical Society, composed of really the elite doctors of Houston, and perhaps persuaded to do this by Dr. Bertner himself, elected him to go and talk to the trustees and try to sell them on the concept of a medical center. Well, he was persuasive. So, I really give him as much credit as I do M. D. Anderson for the existence of that great institution today. Dr. Bertner had the idea, the M. D. Anderson trustees had the money. The stars simply lined up about the time World War II ended, and you see the result out there now.

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Chapter 05

The Early Growth of MD Anderson Cancer Center

B: MD Anderson Past;

Codes

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

The Cancer Center had a modest existence during the war, and Dr. Bertner was its first president, and did business, as perhaps you know by now, on the old Captain Baker estate which is almost downtown now. They acquired some military style buildings from a military camp that was between here and the town of Alvin, Texas. It is called Camp Wallace. And several of those buildings were moved up here, sold at a modest cost, to what we now call the Cancer Center, and they had a place in there where they could take outpatients, and maybe one or two inpatients. They couldn't do any surgery for quite a while, but it did have, as I say, a modest existence during the war and greatly expanded immediately after the war, but it didn't get its new building until 1954 or 1955, at which point, a couple of dozen patients were moved over there and then the doors were really open for more business.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

And that was the first M. D. Anderson cancer building?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, the first ones, I guess, were in those temporary buildings.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

The original pink marble building is what I refer to, yes, and it had patient rooms, of course, surgical suites, administrative and executive offices. And was a well self-contained unit at the time it was finished. And I thought that is the way it would be for the next 50 years. Now, it is so surrounded by additions that you can't see it anymore!

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I think the architects, McKee and Kamrath, were the first to . . .

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

They were. They designed that building, and I think they were very knowledgeable about it. It was very functional and, as I say, thanks to Lee Clark, it was colorful because he picked out that

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pink marble. He had seen some buildings in Georgia made of that pink marble. So, he found the same quarry and they provided the same material, which didn't cost greatly more, as I understand it, than any other kind of sheathing, masonry sheathing, would at cost.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I understand there were some innovative refinements made in the building itself that were relatively unknown before, or not used before, the way it was laid out.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I am not familiar with that. Of course, the basic structure did not really change appreciably, and is still there. Some of the rooms are now devoted to different purposes. And some of the patient rooms indeed were redesigned, perhaps before it was converted almost entirely to administrative purposes. I don't think they keep patients in there anymore. I am not sure. But the changes came about through the additions that went off in every direction. And, of course, they were always state-of-the art treatment and diagnostic facilities.

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Chapter 06

The Board of Visitors and Views of Dr. LeMaistre

B: Building the Institution;

Codes

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

You mentioned earlier in the interview about the Board of Visitors. How did that name come about?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, that is pretty easy. It is a term . . . Lee Clark had gone to medical school in Richmond, Virginia, and it is a term that is used there in lieu of the term "board of directors," or alternatively to the term "board of directors." For example, the Virginia legislature has appointed a board of visitors to literally visit Mount Vernon, George Washington's old home. They don't run it. It is owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the union, and my wife has been very active in it for 30 years, until recently. They have no real responsibility except to be sure, I suppose, that they are not running it for somebody's private benefit -- that it continues to be a tax-free, property tax-free institution. And so, the Ladies Association welcome the Board of Visitors annually, I think, for a big feast and show them around, give them a big party, and they go home well-content with being on the Board of Visitors. He just brought that term to Texas with him.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

It is an interesting connection that he has made. Now, you served on the Board of Visitors for some years.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

When it was revived, Lee Clark asked me to be the chairman and help him get it going again, and at that point, we used to meet around a table in a room smaller than this. Now, it has 300-400 members. I don't know how many. I am a so-called "lifetime member." I don't do anything except go to the meetings, but it has expanded immensely and has become a very useful fund raising adjunct, I guess you might say, to the development office. The development office tries to remain more or less invisible but it arranges the meetings of the Board of Visitors and the entertainments that go along with it, and the fund-raising efforts that go along with it. The development officer out there, his name is Pat Mulvey [oral history interview], and he is a very suave and effective fund

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raiser. I think he has the term of assistant vice-president now. He is a top-notch man. Of course, all of the presidents have been absolutely top-notch men. After Lee Clark retired, Mickey LeMaistre [oral history interview] came to take his place and he was outstanding in his own way.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

When you say, "his own way," what does that mean?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, he was not the same kind of personality as Lee Clark. He was not as outgoing, but he was really an organizational whiz. He had been Chancellor of the University of Texas system before coming down here to take charge of this institution, which is only one of many components of the University of Texas system. And whatever it needed in terms of organization or restructuring, he knew how to do. He, too, was very persuasive, not quite as extroverted perhaps as Lee Clark. And then, of course, he retired and John Mendelsohn has taken his place now, and you know all about him.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

With the board of visitors, in the earlier days, it must have been a smaller group. Did they have a more direct impact, more than fund-raisers? Did they actually have set policies or discussed policies?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

No. They could not do that. The Board of Regents sets the policies. But perhaps some of those policies are responsible to what the president of the Cancer Center recommends, and he used the Board of Visitors, Lee Clark in particular, as a sort of sounding board for what he has in mind as a suggested policy. I think, basically, we were just a bunch of yes men, because almost whatever he wanted to be done, they would say, 'That's fine, have at it.' And it succeeded almost beyond measure.

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Chapter 07

Physician Referrals and Other Changes at a Growing Institution

A: Overview;

Codes

B: Institutional Processes;

B: MD Anderson and Government;

B: Beyond the Institution;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Growth and/or Change;

B: Obstacles, Challenges;

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Were there any policies that did not reach fruition that was hoped?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

There has been one change in policy. When the institution started, there was no way that it could claim to be the only place where sick people could be treated for cancer. Houston had good doctors, and they did not voluntarily want to turn their patients over to the new kid on the block, so to speak. So, for many years, 40 perhaps . . . not that many . . . 30 . . . it was a policy that a person in Texas had to be referred by his physician. Since then, that has been abandoned and they have the walk-in capability now. A person can just go and say, 'I'm sick. I want to see if it is cancer. Can you take care of me?' And the answer is yes, I think in nearly every case. Their policy with regard to out-of-state people may be a shade different, and I am not really familiar with those. I just frankly don't remember which it is or how the policy differs.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

What was the reason for having physician referrals in the beginning?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

They wanted the good will of Houston doctors. They would not have been good will if this institution came down and tried to steal their cancer patients. It is that simple.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

What do you think changed that viewpoint?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I think the perception that, look, this is a great cancer institution. They know more . . . a conscientious doctor would say, they know more than I do about treating this patient, and if the

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patient wants to go there, it is going to be all right with me. I won't raise any objections. But, of course, patients with cancer are treated at St. Luke's and at Methodist and Stehlin's Institution down at St. Joseph. They are treated, no doubt, by any number of private physicians outside of hospitals. They don't want to surrender their patients, then or now. But I think some of them are beginning to realize that if they've got a case that is just too much for them, that there is a place that they can be sent that will receive them, no questions asked.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I have read in several publications that in actuality, the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center would prefer people who are suspicious of their condition to first go there rather than another hospital so that they could provide an accurate diagnosis, or perhaps that is not the correct word, accurate . . . their own diagnosis and treatment plan.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, I think that is consistent with what I say. They have opened the doors now so that a person can walk in who is neither dissatisfied with his doctor and won't be referred or just hasn't even got a doctor. A lot of country people come there and think, I've got a big hickey on my back. I don't know what it is but maybe you do. And maybe he didn't see a doctor. And that is permitted now. It would not have been permitted 30 years ago. They'd say, 'we only take patients referred by private physicians.' So, that is one of the key changes in policy that has taken place.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Have there been any other changes which you consider significant that you have witnessed?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, they have all been significant. The addition of new buildings, the installation of extremely sophisticated diagnostic tools, the concept now of looking at immunization as a way of treating, and I think probably when there is gene therapy, they will be in on that as well. They are on the cutting edge always of research and diagnosis and therapy. I don't know how many researchers they employ out there, but they've got so many that they are building a great big office building across Holcombe Drive that is going to accommodate dozens and dozens of doctors who simply have had small offices in the main buildings, where they can move across the street now, and get into a more office-like environment and away from the hospital environment, and maybe get a fresh perspective. I wouldn't want to have to walk across that street four or five times a day but they don't mind!

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

In the role of the bureaucratic structure of M. D. Anderson, have you noted perhaps an overabundance of bureaucratic offices? Is it necessary, do you think?

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Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Those people are so smart out there that I am not going to suggest for a moment that they are overburdened with staff - administrative and the like. I just don't believe that John Mendelsohn [oral history interview] is half asleep at the switch and would let somebody get a desk job there that wasn't doing a job. There are many complexities, of course, in operating in that environment, and I think that they want to cover them all.

Here is just one example: There was a wonderful woman named Lorena Collier, who I think had the title of something like Patient Coordinator. She would go to work at five o'clock in the morning, and using records . . . in the later years, it was computer records . . . to see who was coming there during the day. If it was anybody she knew or knew about, she would go and meet them at the station where they were supposed to go, and help expedite their appointment to be sure they weren't kept waiting too long, and to just generally make them feel more comfortable, because, obviously, many of these people are very apprehensive. They come from out of town and it is all a brand new world for them, and she had great quality as a comforter, to make them kind of feel better about being there. She retired a while back, and I guess you could say they didn't really have to replace her, but they did. They got Linda Hilton, I think it is, to take her place, and she is a whiz in her own way. And she has an assistant who is helping her with it because it is a great big job. I don't think they get there at five o'clock, but they have a pretty full day when they do.

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Chapter 08

More on the "Primitive Beginnings" of MD Anderson and the Texas Medical Center

B: MD Anderson Past;

Codes

A: Personal Background;

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

From the outside looking in, it seems like a city within itself.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Well, it does, but cities always have beginnings. At least, although I had no direct connection with the Medical Center, of course, I have known all the presidents of the Medical Center and the director, Wainerdi and his predecessors, and I try to be sure that I know those people. I don't actively cultivate them perhaps but I sure don't avoid them when I see them. They have an enormous job and, as I say, it was in that pink building . . . well, first of all, its beginnings down on the Baker estate were very humble indeed. They were so humble that, as my papers point out here, I think they got these temporary buildings from Camp Wallace. Remember that World War II in Europe ended in May of 1945. It went on until August on the other side of the Pacific. And some of those buildings at Camp Wallace became excess. So, Dr. Bertner, the acting president, was resourceful enough to get some of those buildings moved up here in the summer time of 1945, but come winter, one of them didn't have a furnace. We were doing something about air-conditioning this house, and I gave him a furnace out of our back room, which they were glad to have. So, it has a primitive beginning and then it grows. And how it grows! How it grows!

Lee Clark and I were at a meeting one time. We said, our happiest day will be the day that we close our doors. That has been 30 years ago and we are still growing. And the end is not in sight.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I think it is a rather remarkable story that you have just told in terms of Lee's early "primitive" beginnings, to what exists now, and I think there is really a great story to be told between those points, how that happened. And you have touched on some of the major aspects of how it happened. Personality. The legislature reacting to the appeals of the presidents of the institution. Can you think of . . .

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Let's talk about the Medical Center again for just a minute. I have been kind of a spectator at that one, but the buildings . . . I think the first building to be completed in the Medical Center was Baylor College of Medicine. But it, too, had primitive beginnings in Houston. The Baylor College of Medicine was in Dallas and had been supported, to some extent, by Baylor University in Waco, some miles away. And I think it was during the war that they withdrew that support, which made the administration of the medical department pretty unhappy, you might say, and they began casting about to see where they might go and be welcome, and maybe get somebody to help them with a new building. So, the trustees of the Medical Center found out about that and said, 'If you'll come to Houston, we'll help you pay for the move and in due course, we will help you build a new building and a new medical center.' Now, down on Allen Parkway, there are buildings still standing, that started out as a Sears Roebuck store, the first one in Houston in the early 1930s, and it was flooded in a terrible Houston flood in about 1936 and they never reopened as a store. That building was standing empty when Baylor accepted an invitation to move to Houston. So, they did a little remodeling inside and then faculty and staff and vans and furniture and equipment all moved down here one day or one week, and got started in that very humble place over on Allen Parkway. And when the Medical Center finally said, 'Well the war is over, boys. We've got building sites that we will lease to you if we can get together on terms' . . . our terms, I think, were one dollar a year rent. And there are some other things that we need to include in the lease. And so, Baylor selected a site and went about raising money. The Anderson Foundation, I am sure, gave it some . . . went about raising money, and the principal benefactor turned out to be Roy Cullen, a prominent Houston philanthropist, who had nothing to do with establishing the Medical Center, but who, at one point, and I remember reading the newspaper headlines . . . I hope you can find these because I would like to have it verified . . . he offered one million dollars to five downtown hospitals if they would move to the Medical Center. And two of them did. Three of them did not. St. Joe's stayed down there and Memorial Baptist stayed down there. And St. Luke's, which was hardly really in existence before war, and Methodist, did move out there and take the free ground. And I know there was one that was left out and complained about it . . . "Mr. Cumson, I didn't mean to leave you out. I got one million dollars for you, too." But some of them didn't want to move. At least two that I remember. And some did. I don't know how much _____. But his thinking was, you might say, not much different from Uncle Mun's . . . let's help sick people, basically. Let's help sick people. So, building a medical school right in the heart of the Medical Center was right down his alley. And they named the building for him, of course.

And there is one other thing about that building: it is in this material I am giving you, but I am going to recite it anyway because I think it is so funny. It is in this Bill Fields book, too. Bill Fields was an active neurologist in Houston, trained in Canada but he moved down here in the early days when the Medical Center was going pretty strong. And he got a call one day from Dr. M. D. Levy, Moise D. Levy, who is a very prominent physician, and he said, "Dr. Fields, this is Dr. Levy. I

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have Mr. Jesse Jones as one of my patients at Memorial Hospital downtown following surgery, but he is not recovering as I think he ought to, and he is very nervous and very badly upset, thrashing around and not being calm like I want him to be. Why don't you come down and have a look at him?" So, Fields got in his Dodge car, I suppose, and drove down, and as he went into Mr. Jones' hospital room, it was summer time . . . Mr. Jones didn't have on his pajama top. Dr. Fields noticed that the one side of his chest was expanding more rapidly than the other, more regularly, more thoroughly, I guess. And he got Dr. Levy outside the door and he said, "I think he has a collapsed lung." Levy said, "Well, I hadn't thought about that but that is easy to repair." So, they got Mr. Jones on his feet just in a few days time. That seemed to be the end of that. Fields submitted a modest statement for services which was promptly paid. But a few weeks later, he got a call from Mr. Jones who said, "Come down here. I want to talk to you." Fields went to town. Mr. Jones said, "You haven't charged me very much here but you've saved my life. I want to pay you for more than that." Fields said, "No. That is all my professional services were worth, but if you really want to do something, then there is this problem: in the Cullen Building of Baylor, there are thousands of books that belong to the Harris County Medical Society and they are not properly stored or cataloged or secured and it is just a terrible place to have a medical library. Would you consider helping to fund a proper building to house those books?" Mr. Jones said, "Yes, I would. Get the numbers." Thus, you see the Jesse H. Jones Library Building, also in the center of things. Fields swears that it came about in that way, and you will see it in his book. Not exactly in my words but I am telling you as he told me, not as the book says.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

It sounds plausible, logical, that that would happen that way.

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Chapter 09

Family Connections with MD Anderson and the Texas Medical Center

B: MD Anderson Past;

Codes

A: Personal Background;

B: MD Anderson History; B: MD Anderson Snapshot;

B: Building/Transforming the Institution;

B: Institutional Processes;

C: Portraits;

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

The members of my family who have had some connection with the Medical Center are my brother, Leland, who I think was the first president of that corporation after the war, and stayed in that capacity for a good many years. And then, as I told you, my brother, James, was the first chairman of the Board of Visitors. And then, I was the second chairman of the Board of Visitors. So, those have been the family connections with the Cancer Center and the Medical Center. Otherwise, the recollections relate primarily to family matters and in the years really before any of this got started.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I wonder if, for the last part of our interview here, we might talk about Leland and your brother, James, a bit and their contributions. I would dislike leaving them out of it, if that is OK with you.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Yes.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I think the people commissioning me for this interview would appreciate it, if that is all right. Let me put on a new tape, so I won't have to interrupt you again.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Leland was also with Anderson Clayton and Company all of his business days, and after James, was the number two brother. Well, James was active in the Cancer Center, so the trustees of the Anderson Foundation asked him to take over the presidency of a medical center. And there was a big ceremony downtown one time, and you will see that, I think, in the Macon book, when the members of the Foundation, Anderson Foundation, and Leland, as President of the Medical Center, had a deed to that 134 acres. That was a matter that the prominent people in town took notice of way back there in the 1950s. And, as I say, Leland continued in that job and hired the directors and did people like that, a succession of directors . . . I guess Fred Elliot was the first. I've kind of

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forgotten the names of the ones who came afterwards. So, in due course, he retired from that and they established then a business of having terms of office. But I am sure his first was a good deal longer than the present terms are because it was open-ended when he was appointed.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

How long was he on the board?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I can't tell you. The record speaks for itself. Don Macon's book may have something about that in the appendix. That includes not only biographical material, but also a chronology of the Texas Medical Center.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Yes, I went through it, but I don't recall . . .

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I don't recall either. I would have to refer you to the book. I think I am pumped pretty dry now unless you've got some more questions.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Is there anything more on James?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

No.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

That covers it, pretty much?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

As I say, I know he was a help to Lee Clark in getting the pension program started, and he was helpful in getting the Board of Visitors started. It was small, too, in the beginning, and has grown to be an enormous organization now. So, I think he founded well.

It sounds like a lot of nepotism was at work here. My own connection . . . part of my interest in being on the Board of Visitors for so long was I liked to watch Lee Clark go! I mean, he was terrific. He was just full of charge in building that place -- getting it started, getting it built, and then running it, raising money for more buildings. He was a pleasure to watch, a pleasure to know. That book is about him, too, one of which he wrote, I think. There is a book about the first 20 years, and you are writing about the next 20 years.

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Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Right.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

You are picking up where the first 20 year book left off?

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Yes. Now, I want to ask you, before I leave, these documents that you have given me. Do you want them to go to the . . .

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I don't need to have them back. I will let you decide whether they go into archives or whether they are only background material for you. Some of them are clippings that perhaps should be in the archives. I think the Jim Greenwood talk could very well go into the archives. As I say, it is accurate. I read it just the other day. Reread it. I have read it many times.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

I will want to look at them for future interviews, and then I will let the M. D. Anderson History Committee decide what they would like to do with them. I am sure they will keep them.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

That is all right. I made Xerox copies where I needed to. So, there isn't any material in there that I don't have a duplicate of.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

All right, sir. And the last point I wanted to raise: You mentioned there were photographs that could be reproduced but you would prefer to have technicians come here and do it. Is that correct?

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

That is correct.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

O.K. I will pass that information on to them and I am sure they will act upon it. Before we close, I just wanted to remind you . . . maybe we haven't attended the same meetings, but we both belong to the Harris County Historical Commission.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Oh, yes! I enjoy that. I like Al Davis very much.

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Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Yes. And we have something else in common: You graduated from Rice and so have I.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I didn't graduate from Rice. I went there one year and then went back to Washington and Lee where I had started out. I had my freshman year at Washington Lee, and then the sophomore year at Rice. And going into Rice as a sophomore was pretty hard. I didn't know anybody in town. I didn't know anybody at Rice. My mother finally took pity on me and let me go back up to Washington Lee and go into law school up there.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Well, sir, I want to thank you for your time, and I hope I haven't pushed you too hard.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

Not at all.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

On behalf of the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center and the Texas Medical Center, I want to thank you for consenting to this interview.

Thomas Dunaway Anderson

I am happy to do so.

Louis Marchiafava, PhD

Thank you, sir.