

**New England Jesuit
Oral History Program**



**Fr. Edward J. Hanrahan, S.J.
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AMDG

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HISTORY

Oral histories are the taped recordings of interviews with interesting and often important persons. They are not folklore, gossip, hearsay, or rumor. They are the voice of the person interviewed. These oral records are, in many instances, transcribed into printed documentary form. Though only so much can be done, of course, in an hour or some times two, they are an important historical record whose value increases with the inevitable march of time.

For whatever reason, New England Jesuits, among others around the world, have not made any significant number of oral histories of their members. Given the range of their achievements and their impact on the Church and society, this seems to many to be an important opportunity missed. They have all worked as best they could for the greater glory of God. Some have done extraordinary things. Some have done important things. All have made valuable contributions to spirituality, education, art, science, discovery, and many other fields. But living memories quickly fade. Valuable and inspiring stories slip away.

This need not be. Their stories can be retold, their achievements can be remembered, their adventures saved. Their inspiration can provide future generations with attractive models. That is what Jesuit oral history is all about.

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Interview with Fr. Edward J. Hanrahan, S.J.
by Fr. Richard W. Rousseau, S.J.
April 2, 2008

EARLY YEARS

RICHARD ROUSSEAU: Good morning. Welcome to our conversation. We are going to proceed chronologically. So let's start with the beginnings—when and where were you born, as well as something about your father and mother.

EDWARD HANRAHAN: I was born on February 4, 1926 in Boston, Massachusetts. My father's name was Cornelius, and my mother's, Nora. We lived in Boston for two or three years and then we moved to Somerville, Massachusetts.

RR: How about your brothers and sisters?

EH: I was the fifth of seven children. We grew up entirely in West Somerville.

RR: Did you go to school there as well?

EH: I went to grammar at the Lincoln School in Teele Square, Somerville. This was a two-story building with two classrooms on each level. When it rained, school was canceled for the day, because the rain could get to the bathrooms in the basement. It was an antiquated old school. At commencement time, we had to bring

newspapers to school and sit on two flights of stairs. They led to the school's second floor. There was nothing else in that school, besides the four classrooms, not even an office.

From there, I went to the Cutler School in West Somerville to finish my grammar school. Then I went to West Junior High School in West Somerville. My principal there was George Coyne. He was a very astute young man who taught us practically everything we needed to get along in the world. He gave us lectures every week, for example, "Civics and Virtues." He especially emphasized virtues in those Wednesday morning lectures. We found his lectures very interesting, even entertaining. He was a super professor, super teacher.

PARENTS

RR: Could you tell us more about your parents?

EH: My father was born in Ireland and came to America as a young man. My mother was also from the County of Kerry in Ireland. When they married, they settled in Boston. My father got a job in the post office department. During the early days of the Depression, he worked in New York City and commuted between Boston and New York. He was a great father, a great person. My mother was a great person as well.

RR: Did your mother also work outside the house?

EH: No, she always managed our home. She took good care of us seven children and managed the house, where there was always plenty to do. She did a super job raising us children.

SCHOOLING

EH: We all went to public schools, except for my two youngest sisters, who went to a parochial school in Cambridge. It was in an orphanage in North Cambridge

and is now closed. From there, they went to St. John's High School in Cambridge. My two older sisters went to Somerville High School along with my brothers.

HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

RR: Tell us more about your high school days.

EH: I found Somerville High School very interesting. I graduated with a class of a thousand students. It made me realize how many multinational people lived in Somerville. Whenever we traveled from our neighborhood to Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge and took the T into Boston, we would bypass Somerville. The result was that, until I went to high school, I never really saw Somerville. So when I discovered the tremendous number of Italian students in the high school, it amazed me. Over all, it was a good high school. I studied the classic scientific course: physics, chemistry, math, and biology. It was an excellent high school

RR: Were you involved in sports at all?

EH: I played hockey in high school and I injured my knee in my junior year. I tore a cartilage in my knee.

GROWING UP DURING THE DEPRESSION

RR: So you weren't able to play any more?

EH: No. That was the end of my playing in school. I'd like to say something about the kind of society I grew up in. We were in the midst of the Depression, and the most important thing in those days was the WPA, Work Projects Administration.

Young men were recruited far and wide to work as laborers in the Civilian Conservation Corps, constructing sidewalks, schools, hospitals, and recreational facilities. They worked in greater Boston and throughout New England.

They made a great impression on me when I was young. I used to go and watch them at work. I talked

to them by the hour about their college and law school careers. That's how they eked out an existence during the Depression.

We used to watch them going up to Route 2 towards Concord in their green uniforms. They worked in the great forests in the hinterlands of New England reclaiming the woods and doing whatever needed to be done.

These young men were paid \$20 a month, if that. And they would send their parents maybe three-quarters of that amount. Some of them came to our junior high school each month to give us a concert. It was fantastic. The first impression I ever had of music was with the WPA orchestra. It was great, it was super. Others also painted some great pictures on public buildings, many of which can still be seen today.

WARTIME IN THE NAVY

RR: What did you do after high school?

EH: In 1941, right after Pearl Harbor, my brother Thomas went into the Marines. And my older brother, Neal, went into the Navy two years later. After high school, in 1944, I went immediately into the Army. I ended up going into the heavy artillery training at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

RR: Could you tell us more about the Army?

EH: For my basic training, I went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina for training in heavy artillery for four to five weeks. Cannons have long tubes that shoot directly. But the howitzers could lob shells over hills and could shoot maybe ten miles.

We paraded in the field, dug holes in the woods, then filled them up again. It was an incredible ordeal, but it really toughened us for what we had to face in the future. We were then allowed one week at home. We were then sent down to Fort Shanks in New York. We

stayed there maybe two to three weeks, waiting for a ship to take us from New Jersey to London, England. We embarked on a very fast and very big luxury liner. We were without a military escort. And that's how we went across the Atlantic to England. When we were off the western coast of Ireland, we were followed for some time by a German submarine. But then, when we got close to the break between Ireland and England, the sub somehow disappeared. We didn't know whether it had been sunk or not. After we landed at Liverpool in staid old England, we stayed near Winchester for maybe four weeks, getting ready to cross the Channel.

OFF TO FRANCE AND GERMANY

RR: Did you go anywhere in England during that time?

EH: Yes, I remember going to the back of the Episcopal cathedral to get some sleep in the pews. We were exhausted from our training. After about four weeks, we left on a small British troop ship. We had to sleep on the floors and on planks: there were no beds or tables. The chain link gates around London had to be opened to let us pass through. Can you believe, it took us twenty-four hours to cross the English Channel? Also, the German subs were a threat. But we landed safely in Normandy after D-Day. From there we went to Fécamp in northern France.

RR: Where is that in France?

EH: It's a great city where they make the world-famous Benedictine liqueur. We were there for maybe two months cleaning our howitzers and preparing to move on. Before we left the States, we had coated all our equipment and guns with cosmoline, which is a very thick black substance like tar. We had pounded it into the tubes of our howitzers to preserve them from corrosion on the high seas. Now we had to clean them out and get them all ready for firing. Once finished

with that, we moved on to Germany.

WARM WELCOME BY THE GERMANS

EH: I should add that all the time we were in England and France, we were never able to get to a Catholic Mass, even in France. But we were able to do so in Germany once we were there, because even during the war, some Germans invited us into their parish churches for Mass. They are a very, very hospitable people.

RR: So a good relationship with them developed?

EH: Yes, unexpectedly, but there it was. We American soldiers related much better with the Germans than we did with the French. The French considered us foreigners, while the Germans saw us as brothers and sisters. It was amazing.

When we landed, we went through France to Belgium. Then, from there, we went into Germany under General George Patton. He led the attack on Aachen, which was almost obliterated. We also went into Bonn, and from there down the Rhine to Bavaria, Heilbronn, and Stuttgart. I remember those cities, because, as we went from town to town, we could see nothing but telephone poles. All the buildings had been reduced to rubble.

HOWITZERS AT WORK IN THE COLD

RR: And some of them were very old. How did it happen?

EH: It was our howitzers, which could shoot more than ten miles with single-loading ammunition. That's what we did to the Remagen bridge. It was knocked out the day before we got there, so we went across on a pontoon bridge.

We were hauling howitzers with twelve men in the cab. The howitzers shot 200-pound shells. As you can imagine, they were very heavy. Two men would lift that shell into the cannon. If you weren't good at this,

you were replaced. Our barrages were working well, and we kept shooting and moving forward until we stopped in Bachknang, Germany.

RR: This sounds like the war was close to the end?

EH: Yes. It was near the war's end. We had moved all the way to Bachknang in one month and we were able to relax. At breakfast, we would hear General George Patton's comments on getting to Russia.

Of course, we never slept in a bed while in Europe—and I mean never. We slept on the ground. And you always ate outdoors, out of a mess kit. That's the way we lived for the six months we were over there.

RR: I hope it was during the summertime?

EH: It went from January to May.

RR: The January time must have been hard?

EH: Oh, yes. There was a lot of snow. It was tough, but you had to get used to it. You had a sleeping bag with a little liner inside. But you slept with your clothes on, including your shoes, because you couldn't get them on in the middle of the night. You kept them on all night. But sometimes you took them off during the day so you could wash your socks.

We stayed in Bachknang for maybe a month. Then all the young men in the outfit were requisitioned separately to go to a camp in France. They used to have camps named after cigarettes, including Lucky Strike and Twenty Grand. The big tents were for the thousands of American soldiers waiting for a ship.

THE WAR'S OVER

RR: Were they going directly to their homes?

EH: No. The war was still on. These ships were going to Japan. So we're in the mid-Atlantic, heading down to the Panama Canal Zone. Unbeknownst to us, we were part of the fleet going to Japan as part of the invasion force. We were just getting an inkling of that, when

the PA system came on one day in the mid-Atlantic telling us that the US had dropped the atom bomb on Japan.

With that, the ship immediately turned around and we went all the way back to Manhattan. As you can imagine, the day we arrived in Manhattan, passing the Statue of Liberty, was a very festive day! It was eight o'clock in the morning, and all these New Yorkers who owned luxury cruisers followed our ships to the dock. We were tempted to jump out and swim in, but we were too high up. We'd be killed if we tried it.

When we got off the ship, we were taken to Camp Schanks in New York. We stayed there about two days while they gave us all a full physical exam. Then we were sent home for forty-five days of recuperation leave.

BACK IN BOSTON

EH: The war was really over. And I arrived in Boston the evening the war was pronounced over in Japan. V-J Day was celebrated in Boston. I was riding on the T from Park Street Station to Lechmere, when I was swept up in something I had never seen before in my life. People were passing around bottles of booze to others. The idea was to take a nip of the booze and join V-J Day in the most glorious street celebration in Boston's history. It was great.

After that, I was at home for forty-five days and returned to duty at Fort Sill, in Oklahoma. We were there to attend a training school for about two months. We were to be trained as senior instructors in artillery. And, I have to say, the great majority of our students were recruits from the south—Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. They were basically Mexicans; we couldn't understand their Spanish and they couldn't understand our English. It was a kind of mixed bag.

So we finished training the recruits, and in May I was relieved from the Army as a corporal. It was a great moment. And it was the end of my career in the US Army.

CAPE COD DAYS

RR: Where were you released from the Army?

EH: I left from Fort Sill, Oklahoma. We were given money and a train ticket to travel home. We had to find our own pad up on a luggage compartment. How they ever got us up on the luggage compartments to sleep over the heads of the customers, I'll never know! [Laughter] Actually, in those days just about all the trains were military.

RR: So you finally arrived back home. Was it at all a kind of a let-down after all the tension and excitement you had gone through?

EH: In a way. In any case, I went back to my job in the finance division at the Boston post office department. I worked there full-time. And every weekend we went down to Cape Cod, especially Hyannis and Falmouth. Three of us were able to buy a convertible with a rumble seat for maybe \$100.

We each had the \$600 we got from the federal government and state government for our release from the military service. That's how we were able to go to the Cape on weekends. And after that money was gone, we'd wait for somebody else to come out of the service and we'd help them spend their money! It was an interesting time. That whole summer we tore up the Cape.

PHILIP NERI AND SHADOWBROOK

RR: What's the phrase for that, "Carpe Diem"?

EH: I did that kind of thing off and on for about three years. Then, for one year '47 or '48, I went to Newman

Prep just to refresh my high school education. That was a great school. It was founded in 1945 by Dr. J. Harry Lynch, a famous Catholic layman, and a group of colleagues, all alumni of Boston College.

After that, I enrolled in Boston College starting with freshman year. But after about two months there I said, 'I think I'll talk to the Dean of Freshman, Fr. John Foley, about what he thinks of my becoming a priest.'

And he looked at me and said, "You can't be a priest." I asked, "Why not? I'm a Catholic." He said, "You don't know Latin or Greek. You went to Somerville High School. You never went to a Catholic school in your life. You don't know Latin, you don't know Greek."

So he counseled me about this for a couple of hours and ended up telling me to study Latin and Greek. So I did that. I went to St. Philip Neri School [for delayed vocations] in Boston for almost a year.

RR: That was good advice, given what was happening in the Church at the time.

EH: Though it came a little late, I studied Greek. I was able to do all this because of the GI Bill. It paid for four years of our college education, plus all the books involved. We also got a \$75 a monthly stipend for our subsistence. Relatively speaking, that GI Bill was better than what veterans get today.

SPEAKING LATIN AT SHADOWBROOK

EH: Then in August 1949, I entered the seminary at Shadowbrook. I was under the tutelage of Fr. John Post, the Master of novices. I had two years of novitiate, which, for me, was an interesting experience. I could understand the regimentation of the Jesuits because it was very much like the Army.

RR: I've heard other veterans say something similar.

EH: In the Army you had to get up at five in the morning and everything went by the horn: start running, stop running, etc. Jesuits are pretty much the same. So I adjusted fairly well during those two novitiate years.

The novitiate was very difficult in the sense that I studied Latin for a year, but did very well with it. Three or four of us were twenty-three years old, while everybody else, about thirty five of them, were of high school age. We were a real minority. They spoke Latin during the day.

And I became mute. I just didn't talk to anybody for maybe six months. I didn't know Latin well enough to speak it. Then a couple of friends helped me with Latin jingles. They'd break into Latin for my sake. That was very helpful and interesting.

I then went to the juniorate for two more years, and that was interesting as well. We studied the classics, English, and history. It was very good.

SNOWY SHADOWBROOK

EH: Just one further remark about Shadowbrook, namely the snow in the wintertime. We would wake up in the morning with snow on our beds. You'd be frozen to death, but it would only take you two seconds to dress, because you couldn't stay in that room any longer than that or you'd freeze to death.

RR: A rough time.

ON TO WESTON FOR PHILOSOPHY

EH: Yes. We left Shadowbrook in May 1953 to go to Weston. But I must say that Weston was quite an eye-opener. We no longer were clustered in a big dormitory as in the Army. We opened the windows at night and the wind would blow through the dormitory. When we got to Weston, we had private rooms. I found that to be just great.

We studied philosophy there. However, I was never a great scholar of philosophy. I just couldn't get the knack of it right away. But we did those three years, and right after that, we went to regency. During the philosophy years, I had studied physics with math as a minor.

TEACHING PHYSICS AT BC HIGH

RR: Were you always interested in physics and math?

EH: Yes. It fitted right in. So I went to BC High as a teacher of physics and math. I was supposed to be there only one year for regency, but then they couldn't find a replacement for me, so the provincial asked me to stay an extra year, and I agreed.

At the time, the Society had a very humane but demanding, even domineering style of managing regents. The principal told you what to do, and when and how to do it. However, they didn't know anything about science, so they left the science teachers alone. We could spend money like it was going out of style. We could do what we wanted. We could make our own exams, because they never knew anything about physics or math. We were left alone. We had a sense of freedom, not of demand. All that was really unique and a real pleasure for us high school teachers.

RR: After only two years of regency, you left BC High in 1958?

THEOLOGY AT WOODSTOCK

EH: Yes. I left BC High to go to Woodstock, in Maryland. It's about twenty miles west of Baltimore. There were about 230 to 250 theologians there at the time. It's a great fortress type seminary. They had great customs and a great styles of living.

RR: Why did you go there rather than to Weston?

EH: There was a very personal reason. I just knew Weston

was not the place or the faculty for me. When the provincial asked me, “Well, where would you like to study theology, Eddie?” And without thinking, I said, “Woodstock.” It was the only other place I knew, but I didn’t know much of anything about Woodstock. So I went to Woodstock, and it turned out to be a great decision.

EXCELLENT PROFESSORS

RR: How about the professors?

EH: They were super: John Courtney Murray, Gus Weigel, Joe Fitzmyer, Jack Sweeney, John Reed, and Joe Gallen. It was the best theological faculty in the United States. For example, John Courtney Murray. He was a super person. Our lectures were supposedly in Latin, and some of them were in Latin. But frequently you were not aware of whether it was Latin or English. Often, after a lecture, you’d come out and say to a friend, “Was that in Latin or in English?” You never quite knew because the Latin was just so superb that anybody could grasp it. It was excellent, it was super.

For every lecture there was a rack where you could pick up notes on the lecture. They were fifteen to twenty pages long. These notes were distributed every day. And the lectures themselves were rewritten by the Woodstock professors every other year. And they did a super job with those rewrites. The exams were all in Latin but generally we were able to handle them well enough.

TEACHING STRUGGLING BOYS

EH: While I was there, we helped out at the Maryland Training School in Towson, Maryland. It was for boys aged eight to sixteen. They were somewhat delinquents in their neighborhoods or at school. Their families were not able to handle them, so they were sent to a camp.

They lived in twenty or so cottages with twenty students in each cottage along with an elderly married couple. They ate there and slept there. We would meet with them each weekend and teach them math and help with the liturgy. I thought that this off-hours work was really great.

HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHER

RR: What else did you do at Woodstock?

EH: I was the house photographer. Until my own ordination, I handled all the ordination portraits. I had also done the photography when I was at Weston College. It was all a great experience for me. But, amazingly, after I left Woodstock, I never touched a camera again.

The Jesuits were very active in the local community of Woodstock, we had our own own fire department, though I was never a member of it myself. I was the only New Englander of my class at Woodstock; everyone else was from the New York or Maryland province. There was a large number of Filipinos at Woodstock as well. And we got to know them somewhat, though they were generally aloof. Over all, I had a super four years.

ORDINATION AND FATHER'S DEATH

RR: What about your ordination?

EH: I was ordained in 1961 by Archbishop Keough of Baltimore, if I remember correctly. At the time, my father was quite sick, but he was able to fly down and attend the ordination in a wheelchair. He stayed in the infirmary during the day and then came to the ordination itself. He then went back to Boston the very next day. He died at home a week later. I celebrated my first public Mass and then went home to preside over my father's funeral Mass. So I had two big Masses, one right after the other.

PASTORAL EXPERIENCES IN MARYLAND

RR: You still had a fourth year of theological studies ahead of you at that time. Right?

EH: Yes. It was an interesting year. We went to our classes during the week, and on weekends we went out to say local public Masses.

And I should add that customs at Woodstock were quite different from those in Weston at the time. Personal initiative was encouraged at Woodstock. As scholastics, we were given authority to do things on our own. We would get money from the rector or minister and go out on our own on errands for the house. For example, I was on the wine crew. We used to buy cordials and serve them at first class feasts. We scholastics handled all sorts of things at Woodstock. It was really great for us.

SEGREGATED CONGREGATIONS

EH: On our weekend calls, we went down to the southern counties of Maryland such as St. Inigoes. That's where the Jesuits first landed in Maryland. We got to know the Black Catholics. They were great people.

We experienced segregation first-hand ourselves. On one interesting occasion, there were plans to build a new parish church in Leonardtown. But the parishioners decided they were not going to build a church, but a high school instead. So that's what they did, they built a high school. The reason they didn't want to build a church was that they were afraid they would have to integrate the Blacks with the whites. So no new church was build in that area but rather a school. I don't know if or when a new church was built in the parish.

On another occasion, when the minister at Woodstock had gone on a call and preached something about integration, he had to be rushed back to Balti-

more for his own protection.

RR: Feelings were obviously high there.

EH: When I was down there on one weekend call, the pastor said interestingly, "I will do the sermon at today's Mass because I want to give a special emphasis to a little project I have in mind." I said, "Great. Go ahead." So he gave his sermon which turned out to be an introduction on the Holy Name Society.

That church, like many southern Maryland churches, was built in a special way. It had a second floor balcony that wrapped around three sides of the church. And that's where the Blacks sat. Whites were in pews on the first floor.

What he was suggesting was that Black boys and men and the white boys and white men go to Communion together. But they didn't want to do that, and refused to take up the collection that day, and the pastor got no money, but he got his sermon across. I don't know where he went for the rest of that day. He just disappeared and so we drove back to Woodstock without saying good-bye. This attempt at integration happened in 1962.

RR: What else did you experience there?

EH: I found Marylanders generally to be such a wonderful population. So aristocratic, so social-minded, so amenable, but they had this chink in their armor. They just wouldn't budge on letting the blacks into their homes or their restaurants. It was very difficult to do that it those days.

TERTIANSHIP AT POMFRET

RR: Where did you then go for tertianship?

EH: I went to Pomfret. It was nine months of lackluster drudgery reading things like the constitutions.

RR: I understand what you mean.

EH: The only relief we had was during Lent when we were

sent out to various places. Amazingly, I went to the Immaculate Conception church in the South End of Boston as a chaplain. I was then assigned to St. Mary's in the North End for two weeks. While there I heard one of the kids say to me, "I see you're doing the Novena." I said, "What did you say?" And he repeated, "You're giving the Novena of the Sacred Heart." I said, "My God! No one ever told me that!" So I had to prepare the novena immediately. And somehow I was able to give the novena there at St. Mary's in the north end. That church was later torn down.

RR: What else happened to you during tertianship?

EH: I found it to be very quiet. I did nothing but read history books. I think I read every history book in the house. The Tertian Director, James Murphy, was very pleasant, brilliant, and congenial, but he was not up to the task they gave him to do. Despite that, he did a good job.

FIRST ASSIGNMENTS

RR: Where did you go after tertianship?

EH: I was assigned to BC High again to teach physics and math. During the year I was there, I had the seniors for physics and juniors for math. In April of that year, Fr. Joe Shea, the rector, called me in and said, "I have news for you. The provincial and the president of Boston College want you to go there next year." And when I asked him why, he said, "They want you to take over the student body discipline job." I said, "My gosh." I had no idea what kind of discipline was needed on a university level. But I then said, "Okay." So he answered, "Don't mention this to the community." But this new assignment became public knowledge in the yearly list only a month or so later.

DIRECTOR OF RESIDENT STUDENTS

EH: I went to Boston College as Director of Resident Students and University Discipline. My job description was to promote a solid Christian, Catholic environment for the student population. So I gave them all sorts of programs to help develop a Catholic environment. My other responsibility was to manage good discipline in the school.

NEW DISCIPLINARY RULES

RR: So how did you go about doing all this?

EH: I had to create a brand-new handbook on discipline. None existed at the time, so I had to create one myself. It was around the time we began to have some demonstrations, so I had to draw up a policy on that, too. At that time, the greatest discipline problem was bringing beer onto campus. The drinking age in Massachusetts was twenty-one. But in New York State you could drink at the age of eighteen. So that was a big problem for us.

INCREASE OF BOARDERS

RR: At that time weren't there more day students than boarders? Then they gradually grew over the years, right?

EH: Yes. When I arrived at Boston College in 1964, there were about 1,500 male students living in the dorms. And 100 freshmen lived at the Greenleaf Hilton. I don't know where that name came from. (I was always fearful that we'd be sued by the Hilton Hotel corporation for using their name for a dormitory in Cleveland Circle.)

They were a wonderful group of students that also included a lot of bandits. Also, there were about 100 freshmen living off campus, mainly in Newton, along with a few in Brighton. They lived in local neighbors'

homes, paying them about \$10 a week for their board. They took their meals in the campus dining room.

DINING ROOM PROBLEMS

RR: I assume that you had to watch over the dining room?

EH: Yes. The dining room was quite an experience. The university had its dining services. They hired their own dining room manager and a supervisory staff. All of them worked for the university. The food was good, but in a sense, rarified. Once a week they would serve liver. Well, American adults don't eat that much liver. And just imagine robust, young American men eating liver.

RR: Could you give us some ideas of the numbers involved?

EH: The main dining room seated about 2,000 people for every meal. You could see the table linens, plates, knives, and forks, all stretching out in one row after another. Given their dislike of the weekly liver served, you would see all these forks just stuck in the liver on the plate like a cemetery in Belgium. [Laughter] It was incredible. The kids just wouldn't eat liver. And it never seemed to dawn on the food service to change their menu.

I also had to fight with them for maybe six months to get them to put meat on the breakfast menu. Well, they did introduce it in an omelet with a little ham in it. It was terrible, but the food service thought it was fine.

CHRISTMAS IN THE DINING ROOM

RR: What other problems did you have with the food service?

EH: Every year around Christmas and the end of the academic year, they would put on a banquet. They had prime rib roast beef for 2,000 kids at one setting. But they put it out so early that it would sit around on the

tables for quite a few hours and the fat on the roast beef would get stiff and a little tarnished with bacteria, which made many students deathly sick.

I used to meet with the dining service people frequently and ask them to change the menus. And they'd say, "Whatever you want, Father, we'll do." Then they would change it for one day and put it out on another day. So I was never very successful in dealing with that dining service crew. They were very congenial, very friendly, but they never listened to me. [Laughter]

NEW PRESIDENT BRINGS A NEW APPROACH

RR: So how was this food problem solved?

EH: What happened was that in 1966, a new vice president came on board along with Fr. Mike Walsh as president. They heard all the complaints about the food, including some food riots in the dorms. I was even sick from the food myself. But I had been there only two years, and I was wondering what to do. But in 1966 the new president brought on a committee just before the Easter vacation.

That committee hired a company called Saga. It came from California and was the preeminent food service company in America. Given a contract, they provided super food. They also brought tubs of ice cream into the dining room. You could have all you could eat. They also had special meals all during the school year. They were super. Anything the students wanted, they gave them. It was part of a great new financial arrangement. And I don't think we lost money by hiring them. Rather, we created a lot of good will in the young student body that loved the change.

SUCCESS AT LAST

RR: It sounds like a win-win situation.

EH Yes. In those days, kids weren't interested so much in

eating formal meals. They preferred to run and grab a sandwich, hot dog, or pizza. They thought that sitting down to eat was something odd. They kind of took it badly when the university tried to force them to eat more formal meals. The solution was to give them options. Once we gave them options, they never complained again, even if you gave them second-rate food. That second food service company was great, and they were there for some seven or eight years.

DEAN OF STUDENTS

RR: So what else happened as time went on?

EH: After those two years, I was made Dean Of Students there at BC. At that time, I was the only Jesuit in America acting as a Dean of Students. It was great.

RR: What were your new responsibilities?

EH: I did many of the same things I had been doing as Dean of Resident Students, plus other things. I had to hire two additional assistants, a man and a woman, both from St. Louis, Missouri. I also had the man deal with the male dorms, and the woman deal with the female dorms.

The women's dormitories were down on South Street and were under the direction of the Litwack family, who owned the apartment buildings on one side the South Street. They owned half the street and had the education school students in their dorms. The nursing students were all female and they were under the aegis of Leo Leary, who owned the other buildings on South Street as well as some in Brighton. He also owned a boys' dorm at the Greenleaf Hilton in Cleveland Circle. Between the two of them, they ran all the BC off-campus housing. It was a super arrangement.

DORMS BECOME COED

RR: But didn't BC build some coed dorms on the upper

campus?

EH: Yes. But it wasn't until 1971. They had to change the bathrooms, as well as put covers on all the urinals and adapt everything else to suit the women. And I didn't know myself just how to handle all these housing issues. So they put the girls on the second and third floor of Williams, Welch, and Roncalli dorms. The men were then put on the first floor.

Well, in a month or so, the guys figured out that we were using them as security guards protecting the women. So they just wouldn't talk to the girls and ignored them completely. We were afraid that there would be problems with boys and girls living in the same building. And that lasted for quite a few years. But we had no problem in the dining room. They integrated easily there. But those girls in the dormitories still ate off campus.

IMPROVED HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS

RR: Did all this change somewhat as time went on?

EH: Yes. Around 1969 we bought those dormitories from the owners. It was when F. X. Shea [S.J.] became Executive Vice President under President Seavey Joyce [S.J.] It was then that finally more of the men and women began to eat in the same dining room in McElroy. We more or less canceled the two dining rooms in the South Street area since we now owned them. It was mostly the boys who lived down there. The neighbors demanded that we put police down there to supervise the students. So we did that. Of course, we were not always sure whether the police were cooperating with the students or even with the university.

RR: Did you have students in other places?

EH: We had about a hundred students living at St. Gabriel's Monastery. And we also had problems there with the neighbors. There was this woman neighbor who ada-

mantly demanded that she be part of the operation. Of course she had no right to do anything of the kind. But she pushed herself in and demanded to inspect these dormitories. St. Gabriel's had been running a retreat house and we had turned it into a dormitory. She wanted to inspect their eating facilities. The students were opposing her all the time, and just pushed her away. But she didn't go away easily and was there many years.

RR: Did the students stay long at St Gabriel?

EH: No. They were there only two years. We then got out of there completely. We brought them back to campus. But we still had some students down at South Street until probably 1979. I don't remember just when we sold all of the properties on South Street. We built a new dorm now called Walsh Hall. We got a permit for the dorm all right. But we had to sell the property on South Street so it could be put back on the tax rolls and make the city happy.

RATHSKELLER AT BC

RR: What about the change in the drinking age? How did this work on the BC campus?

EH: In 1973, the legislature and the governor agreed to change the drinking age in Massachusetts to eighteen years. Well, that was a great moment for American students. You're eighteen, you can drink beer, you can go in the package store.

But a new set of problems developed. These students were far from home and largely on their own, without much parental influence or guidance on how to deal with alcohol. Also there are fewer Jesuit prefects on campus and they are more distant from the students. In fact, no one was really close to these young American students when beer became legal and available. It wasn't so much a binge drinking problem as just a beer

drinking problem. So they demanded that we do what other universities in the country were doing and open up a Rathskeller. And we did that in 1973. The word Rathskeller is a German word which originally meant “city hall basement restaurant.” It was a time when community leaders would go down to the basement to drink beer and discuss the problems of the day.

RR: So how did that go?

EH: We set it up in Lyons Hall cafeteria, which was open seven nights a week that first year. But it didn’t go over that well for the simple reason that students could go to other places to drink, especially on weekends. When we opened up the moduls in 1970, the number of students on campus increased dramatically. These new two-story dorms were built with two-person bedrooms, dining rooms, living rooms, and kitchens. We were the first university in America to provide full apartment living for undergraduate students.

MODS BROUGHT MAJOR CHANGES

RR: I understand that the moduls brought changes to campus?

EH: Well it was the end of supervision. Students could visit each other in the modular apartments. They could sit in those living rooms after midnight, while they couldn’t do that in the dorms after ten o’clock at night. So that was the end of parietals supervision. That died two years or so after we built the mods. It was a great innovation. They were supposed to last at least six or seven years to pay off the mortgage.

They were built down in Bridgeport, Connecticut as four units per apartment. They were then brought to campus in 1970 and are still there today in 2008. They brought all the parts and put them up in one day. They had toilets, curtains, beds, and even a bit of furniture. Everything was there in one day. The students were

able to move in the very next day. It took from September through December to fill all the modular apartments.

DEMONSTRATION TIME

RR: What about the general turmoil of campuses around the country and the attempts to deal with it?

EH: What we've been discussing happened near the beginning of the tumultuous era of the Vietnam War and drugs on campus. As early as 1966, I experienced the impact of LSD on campus. It was the year that Mike Walsh sent me down to the University of Maryland to participate in the first National Conference of Student Government in American universities. It was a career training program. They were trying to establish a curriculum and a mandate, while trying to get the laws they felt were needed to do this. But the first day I was there they kept giving me the runaround: go here, go there. And no matter where I went, I couldn't find anybody that I was looking for. I guess I was the only Jesuit and the only adult in the whole congregation of students. But finally, one day they let me in the committee meetings.

RR: How did this meeting help you?

EH: One of the lecturers was Timothy Leary. A graduate of Holy Cross and a professor at Harvard, he was fired from its faculty after he got involved with LSD. He gave a lecture, "Drop in, Cop out, Get on Drugs, Enjoy Yourself. The heck with University Life, Just Forget it." That was his style of living. I was down there for three or four days, and, when I got back to Boston, we opened the Rathskeller. I got a license for it under my name. I was probably the only Jesuit in America with a liquor license in his own name. So we served beer, wine, and food in our university setting.

THURSDAY NIGHTS, NOT FRIDAY

RR: But as you said earlier, you opened it less often than expected. Why?

EH: We went from seven nights a week to once a week on Thursday, because on Friday nights the students could bring beer into their dormitories. In those days the dorms were modulars, and they could bring beer into them and nobody could say anything.

Not surprisingly, they wouldn't come to the Rathskeller on Friday night but did so on Thursdays. The faculty could not understand why I opened it up on Thursday nights. It was simply the only night the students wanted to come. So every Thursday night the Lyons Cafeteria was jam-packed with maybe 800 students dancing crazily the whole evening. We then closed it at eleven-thirty. We'd close the hall and there wouldn't be any more beer there after that. The students found it very entertaining. The only food we served with beer and wine were popcorn and pretzels.

RR: How long did this arrangement last?

EH: It went from 1973 to 1979 when the laws were changed again to twenty years of age. So I shut the Rathskeller down. Then, a year later, they wanted it back for the seniors who could drink at twenty. So I said, "Okay," and opened it up again. But it was only for two years, because during the Easter vacation when all the students were away from campus, Governor King changed the law completely. He upped the drinking age to twenty-one. However, there were no protests or demands from the students. Nothing at all happened on campus. And that was the real end of the Rathskeller.

RATHSKELLER'S PROFITS

RR: Would you say that while it lasted that the Rathskeller was profitable?

EH: The interesting thing about the finances of the Rath-

keller was we served rather cheap beer, though I'm not sure how much it was per glass. Anyhow, at the end of the first two years, the Rathskeller paid for all the renovations in the dining room. We air-conditioned the room among other things and still had a substantial profit over a six- or seven-year period that we had the Rathskeller. The manager of the dining room service would get students to work for him. They were wonderful kids, solid and hard workers, but they would take the kegs of beer on their off days and bring them down to the mods to have their own beer parties. So that was where the profits of the last two years went.

DETECTIVE WORK

RR: So what was the next big thing there?

EH: Well, drugs really increased in 1966 and during the Vietnam years. And, in 1970 or so, it shifted to marijuana and lasted for about a full year. I would say that maybe eighty percent of the students experienced marijuana. About twenty percent of these smoked it all the time. We could spot this in the dormitories, because we could locate the rooms where marijuana smoking was going on. Smokers had their windows wide open in the middle of the winter trying to get rid of the smoke in their rooms. We caught them by simply walking around the dorms and seeing the open windows that had smoke coming out.

We would go in those rooms and say, "Hi. Ooh, what a stink," and they'd give me the marijuana or I'd confiscate it. They would blatantly pretend ignorance or say that they were a captive audience. But you couldn't miss it with marijuana. However, when the demonstrations started, this kind of smoking pretty much disappeared from the university campus. In 1971 Richard Nixon was President.

ANTI-WAR DEMONSTRATIONS

RR: What was that like?

EH: The demonstrations, of course, were precipitated by the Vietnam war. They were against the military recruiters, and even more against the industrial recruiters coming to campus. The students would either protest against them or keep them out of the hall. The recruiters were using the old Alumni Hall on Commonwealth Avenue.

When they were blocked in this way, I had to get the head of security to come with me. I'd say to him, "Now listen, march in front of me. We're going to step right over the students and go in the building." So I'd push him in the back right through the crowd sitting on the ground. We'd step right over them to get into the building in order to open it up. Then we'd let the recruiters in. These were interesting moments.

George Donaldson was the Director of the Alumni Placement Office. He had a brother a Jesuit and taught at Holy Cross. He dealt with recruiters and placement facilities. His wife made brownies, which he would bring to the crowd along with some apples. Then, about halfway through the demonstration, I'd call a halt and we'd distribute these refreshments. The protesters would mingle around. Then, after fifteen minutes, I'd blow my whistle and say, "Everybody back to your places." Then they'd continue their demonstration.

RR: [Laughter] That was quite an achievement! What happened next?

EH: Then the BC president asked me to go to the Mass. Superior Court with the university lawyer to get an injunction against the demonstrations. So I went down to the courthouse with four or five others and appealed to the Superior Court judge to issue a reprimand prohibiting the demonstrations. The charge presented was that they were trespassing illegally on university prop-

erty. There was also a charge of interference with the peaceful and legitimate use of the university's educational responsibilities. We wanted to get a mechanism that would stop the demonstrations. The judge then accepted our appeals. Of course, the students were furious about this, but they had to obey the court's mandate. Any violation of the mandate could result in a jailing. In any case, we had six or eight sessions like that over a two-year period. Finally, it was all over.

MYSTERIOUS EVENT

RR: I understand that you were involved in a mysterious event?

EH: Yes. Something happened during Fr. Seavey Joyce's four-year career at Boston College. One night I got a telephone call from a student who was probably a senior and worked on campus. So I met with him and we drove around Newton for a whole hour. He wanted me to allow him to meet with the president. But he wouldn't tell me what he wanted to say to him.

Finally I said to him, "If you don't tell me what this is about, I can't do that for you. I'll have to say goodbye." So he left. But the next day, he came to me a second time. That night, we drove around Newton again for another hour. He kept telling me that he wanted to meet with the president of the university as well as the chairman of the board of trustees.

RR: This sounds very serious.

EH: The President of the Board was Fr. Joe Shea and he lived in Portland, Maine. I said, "You have to give me something substantive if I'm to go to the President's office. If you give it to me, I could review it and give you an answer." So he says, "All right. Give him the note with this sentence on it." And that's what we did. It was the sentence that the president often used to break up a meeting before they sat down to eat.

The next day I gave the note to the president and he said, "That's incredible. I'll meet with him." The next day I got a room in a local motel and brought the student over there. I had a second key, which I gave to the president before driving him over to that hotel room. He went in and met with the student. I still didn't know what he wanted to say.

THE PRESIDENT ACTS

RR: The suspense is building up.

EH: When the student met with the president, he gave him a manuscript. It was a typewritten verbatim transcript. It contained a word for word copy of an entire university Jesuit trustee meeting. The voluminous copy was from a meeting led by President Seavey Joyce in Botolph House. So he gave it to Seavey Joyce, who said, "Oh!"

The quick result was a big meeting called by him two hours later. He called all the vice presidents, myself, and a few others. And he told them of the eavesdropping problem. With the tape, the students involved had been able to figure out who said what.

They were somehow able to tape this second floor meeting. Of course, such a stunt is no longer possible. They did it by putting a microphone inside the curtain in the second floor meeting room. The mike cable went through the window to a car parked outside the house the day before the trustees' meeting.

THE FINAL OUTCOME

RR: So what did the president and trustees decide to do?

EH: The university's lawyers said, "We can't stop them from printing the text, but if they do print it, then we can take them to court for eavesdropping." So they went to the Attorney General of Massachusetts and presented their case to him. And he said, "Yes, we'll take

the case.” The government investigators asked me what I knew about the case. And they decided to prosecute the students involved.

In the meantime, I found out that they had a bank account in a Newton-Waltham Bank, where I had connections. The bank president there let me examine their canceled checks, which they were just about to send out. I went through them and found the check that was paid to a company in Newton for the recording equipment they used. I went to that company with the idea that they must have rented a very sophisticated tape recorder especially intended for eavesdropping. And that turned out to be the case.

I took the check and gave it to the investigators from the Attorney General’s office. Those students were prosecuted and found guilty of eavesdropping. However, Seavey Joyce, who was a magnanimous man, a real gentleman and a wonderfully holy man, just exonerated them, and therefore they had no criminal record.

But about a year later, I got a call from a lawyer at the University of Baltimore Law School for information about one of their applicants. It was one of those students involved in the taping. I told him what he had done at BC and how he was one of the two students found guilty of eavesdropping. He asked me about my impression of the student, what I thought of what he did and what was the aftermath. I said it was a foolish prank on the part of the students and I would give him a solid recommendation for the law school. He was accepted in 1976 and he’s a successful lawyer today.

RR: A fine summary of a complex and sensitive situation. We have to remember that this was in the 1970’s.

BC LAW SCHOOL

RR: Were you helped much by taking some courses at BC Law School ?

EH: Yes, very much. During my many years as Dean of Students I constantly had to listen to attorneys representing students facing a hearing. I decided that I should attend Boston College Law School to learn more about criminal law and criminal procedures.

I attended BC Law from September 1976 to 1977. It offered me a great leverage to use when I was constantly confronted by the attorneys and fellow Jesuits representing the students. This was also a great weapon to use to protect the rights of students in a very problematic era of confrontation in America.

RR: That's what I've heard.

PRESIDENT MONAN'S CONTRIBUTIONS

EH: In 1972 Fr. J. Donald Monan became President of Boston College, replacing Seavey Joyce. He seemed very young compared to previous presidents at Boston College. He was also the third president I served under. As it turned out, he did a magnificent job. When he took over, BC's endowment was only about 7 million dollars. By the end of his twenty-four year term, he had increased it to 1.6 billion dollars. It was a masterful financing job. He put together a superb team of financial moderators, supervisors, financial officers, and deans. He was very astute.

RR: Yes, and I believe it was something that he started implementing from the very beginning?

EH: Yes. He brought in John Smith and Frank Campanello to basically run the university. They were super and did a great job. He was very friendly with the students and had an excellent sense of how to deal with them. He never gave the impression that he was aloof and beyond them. Though Fr. Monan was always very close

to the students as well, he could be tough and a bit standoffish at times. He was a super president.

His career was just magnanimous. He didn't create any problems that a Dean of Students like myself had to deal with. But one day, the president of the student government, whose name I can't remember, did a prank of his own. He went to a hardware store in Brighton Center and bought a large chain. He then brought the chain into Botolph House by the back door. There were pillars at the entrance in that part of the house. So one night he wrapped his lengthy chains around the pillars lining the president's office. When the president got to his office the next morning, he couldn't get in his office, until they had cut the chain. When the president found out who had done this, he dealt with him quietly, without creating a problem.

FUNDING WORK

RR: How many years were you Dean of Students?

EH: Up until 1986. When I was leaving, they set up a big banquet for me at McElroy Commons. It was attended by a few hundred people. It was a great moment for me, and we all had a super time. Their advice was, "Take a year off and rest up." And when I asked them, "Where will I go?" they answered, "You can go to Berkeley." When I said, "What will I do at Berkeley?" they said, "You can study theology." Well, I didn't want to study theology, so I said, "Let me think it over and I'll get back to you."

I thought it over for a couple of weeks. I was told that these days you have to get your own job. So I got a job myself doing fund raising in the BC development office. That was in 1986, and I stayed there until 2008. I was Dean for twenty-two years and worked in the development office for twenty-two years, for a total of forty-four years at BC. Not bad!

RR: How did the fund raising work out for you?

EH: As you can see from the number of years, it was excellent. It was super. I found it great. It was easy work for me, because I was given responsibility for my own management work. I would be given a name on a data sheet. Beside the name, it had the person's year of graduation as well as what he or she had been doing over the past five years. I'd then study that whole profile carefully and even call that person for a talk. I knew exactly just who he or she was and had been doing over time. It was amazing how well that worked.

INTERESTING CONTACTS

RR: That means that you must have met a lot of interesting people.

EH: Yes. I remember one, a young cardiovascular surgeon who lived up on the North Shore of Boston. His name was Nicholas Sanella. We used to go out to dinner together every other week or so. Occasionally, he would be called away from dinner by some medical emergency. If it didn't take too long, he would come back and have dessert. He was a great friend.

Then, lo and behold, he said to me, "I think I'll become a priest." I was surprised that after so many years as a cardiovascular surgeon he would want to do this. He went to Pope John XXIII Seminary four years, and was ordained about four years ago. Now he's the pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Lowell, and doing a great job. In some ways he's a kind of superman.

I was pleased to help him raise 1.8 million dollars for a national scholarship fund. I also developed a scholarship fund of my own, the Edward J. Hanrahan Scholarship Fund, now over \$300,000. That's pretty good, considering it has been going only seven years.

RETIREMENT FROM BC

RR: When did you retire?

EH: In 2007 I gave in my resignation from the university. So this past year I was given a farewell party in November. It was in the big conference room at Gasson Hall with the president in attendance. There were about 200 people there. It was a nice afternoon social, with cocktails and hor d'oeuvres. They were nice enough to give me a donation of \$40,000 for my scholarship fund. It was unbelievable.

RR: Why don't we wrap things up?

EH: I don't believe that I gave you my Army credits. So let me do that quickly now. I have one battle star for the Rhineland Campaign in Germany. I got a European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Campaign Ribbon, a Victory medal, Good Conduct medal, American Theater Campaign Unit medal, and the Army of Occupation of Germany medal.

RR: I'm glad that we were able to include this impressive list in the interview. So thanks, it's very helpful.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

RR: As we conclude, let me ask you one final question. As you look back over all these years and all the things that you have done, did you feel at times that God's providential guidance helped and supported you?

EH: Absolutely. Even though I never went to a Catholic school, providence directed my whole life. Through my military service and my Jesuit training, and later in my life, I never ambitioned the type of work I was involved in. My whole life was completely directed by divine providence. It's been terrific.

RR: Thanks for being so informative and helpful. As you say, "It's been terrific!"

Fr. Edward J. Hanrahan, S.J.

Born: February 4, 1926, Boston, Massachusetts
Entered: August 14, 1949, Lenox, Massachusetts, St.
Stanislaus Novitiate / Shadowbrook
Ordination: June 18, 1961, Woodstock, Maryland
Final Vows: August 15, 1964, Chestnut Hill,
Massachusetts, Boston College

1940 Somerville, Massachusetts: Somerville High School -
Student

1944 US Army Artillery Division

1946 Somerville, Massachusetts: US Post Office - Finance
division

1947 Boston, Massachusetts: Newman Prep - Student

1948 Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts: Boston College -
Student

Boston, Massachusetts: Philip Neri School - Student

1949 Lenox, Massachusetts: St. Stanislaus Novitiate /
Shadowbrook - Novitiate, juniorate

1953 Weston, Massachusetts: Weston College - Studied
philosophy

1956 Boston, Massachusetts: Boston College High School
- Taught physics, math

1958 Woodstock, Maryland: Woodstock College - Studied
theology

- 1962 Pomfret, Connecticut: St. Robert Hall - Tertianship
- 1963 Boston, Massachusetts: Boston College High School
- Taught physics
- 1964 Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts: Boston College -
 1964-1966 Director of Resident Students
 1966-1986 Dean of Students
 1986-1994 Assistant Director of Development
 1994-2008 Sub-minister, Jesuit Community
- 2008 Weston, Massachusetts: Campion Health Center -
Praying for the Church and the Society

Degrees

- 1953 Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy, Weston College-
Boston College
- 1953 Master of Arts, Philosophy, Weston College-Boston
College
- 1960 Master of Divinity, Woodstock College