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This interview was conducted with Harold Partlow, Class of 1950, in the Viking Union on June 21, 2003. The interviewer is Tamara Belts. This was part of the Golden Vikings Reunion weekend.

TB: [Today is June 21], 2003 and we are here with Harold Partlow, an alumni of Western. We're going to do his oral history, and he just has signed the Informed Consent agreement. Mr. Partlow, why did you choose to attend Western?

HP: Well, I'm from Bellingham. After I got out of the service, I came here.

TB: What were your actual dates of attendance at Western?

HP: I got here in January of '46 and left in 1950.

TB: What degrees or certificates did you receive from Western?

HP: A Bachelor of Arts, and the fifth year, general certificate.

TB: What other degrees, if any, did you receive elsewhere (before or after your attendance at Western)?

HP: Oh, there are some hours I picked up during the summer and evening and what have you.

TB: OK, what was your first job after leaving Western?

HP: I went over to a little school in eastern Washington called Inchilliam.

HP: Inchilliam, a little Indian school in eastern Washington.

TB: OK, have any other family members attended Western, like parents, spouses, children, grandchildren?

HP: Oh, I had a cousin who went there, and I have a granddaughter that's coming in next fall.

Mrs.P: Step-daughter.

HP: Step-daughter.

Mrs.P: Five years ago got a teaching certificate.

TB: Are there any personal achievements you would like us to know about, such as awards, citations, decorations, "personal bests"?

HP: Oh, a few in athletics, nothing to mention it. I played ...

Mrs.P: All-Conference end.

HP: I was a player lettering in football and baseball.

TB: Right, actually, you played football -- Moose Zurline was your football captain?

HP: Yes.

TB: So tell us about it. You were on one of the first teams to fly to a competition.

HP: I know. I played when we flew to eastern Washington one time, the first time we flew there. Plus, our team was different in those days; we had older guys from World War II coming back, plus the high school kids. It was a little older group that was playing in those days.

TB: What about -- you played baseball also?

HP: Yes, a center fielder.

TB: Any comments about Lappenbusch, he was your coach?

HP: Oh, he was a great man.

TB: What was he like?

HP: Oh, he was something else. -- eccentric, but brilliant -- too smart for the average person. He was quite a coach.

TB: What about that straight-line philosophy he had?

HP: Well, he was one of the few coaches that invented a defense himself, it was called the straight line; but it actually ended up about a six, two, two, one, but they'd line up in a straight line behind the center on defense, and then you'd go either right or left, depending on which way the play was going -- quite a complicated defense, and he invented it.

TB: OK, how about also you were on the same team with Mel Lindbloom?

HP: Oh, yes, Mel was the leftfielder; I was the centerfielder; and he's the quarterback in football. I'd come in and Mel would say, "Here comes old give me the ball, Partlow."

TB: Were you here with Frank Gayda, too?

HP: Oh, yes, Frank, an old .... He was a track guy.

TB: OK.

HP: Larry Gayda played baseball, his brother.

TB: And, I think, also Joe Martin.

HP: I played for Joe, too.

TB: What was he like?

HP: He was a good friend of mine from before. He managed the Bellingham Bells, the summer pro team in Bellingham, and they got him up to coach baseball a couple years. He had a shoe shop downtown, a shoe repair place, repaired athletic equipment and all that. Joe's quite a guy.

TB: OK. Where did you live most of the time while you attended Western?

HP: On Huntoon Drive they had a housing project up the hill there. They had a housing project there, I lived there most of the time; and Daniels Hall for a year.

TB: Do you have any special memories of those experiences?

HP: No (laughter).

Mrs.P: He doesn't want to talk about it (laughter).

TB: OK, who were your favorite or most influential teachers (and please tell us why)?

HP: Lappenbusch was by far, and Dr. Murray, and Bill McDonald -- Lappy mostly.

Mrs.P: You told me about a landlady that really took you in.

HP: Oh, Amber Daniels from Daniels Hall. Took me under her wing when I first went down there. She's quite a lady. She named me Hal-Ma-Pal.

TB: What was your main course study?

HP: Social studies and P.E.

TB: Which classes, then, did you like best or learn the most from?

HP: I don't know. I liked the U.S. history classes, all P.E. classes.

TB: OK, what activities did you most enjoy, sports, clubs, student government? Obviously you were involved in sports.

HP: I was a President in one of those things, Senior Class or something.

TB: OK, and do you have any other outstanding memories of your college days?

HP: Oh, no, I just you know, enjoyed my stay. I had a lot of fun.

TB: OK, anything else that you'd like to add? Like, how was Lappenbusch a great inspiration?

HP: Well, I went in the service in World War II when I was a sophomore in high school. When I came out, I took a test and they put me on probation for a year but I hadn't played any high school athletics because I was in the service. And then I turned out with eighty-eight guys, and two of us were left over -- Joe Hoard and I. And he put me in the game when I was a freshman. I made twenty-five yards on one play, twenty-five on the next, and people were wondering, "Where'd this guy come from?"

I was a halfback that year and I'd go out there, and tackle the whole thing and I said, "I think I'll make a better end than a halfback."

"No," he says, "you're going to stay at halfback."

About a week later, he came, "You might have a good idea right now; let's try it."

I made All-Conference the next year, and that then sealed it a little bit. But he was quite an influence.

Mrs.P: And his nickname was "Mutt," and everybody called him "Mutt."

HP: That was my nickname from high school.

TB: OK, how'd you get that nickname?

HP: When I was a little kid, I was a mutt (laughter).

TB: OK. That's all the questions that I have for you. Is there anything else that you would like to say?

HP: No, except they had a lot of neat guys who played with me through the whole thing. One year I was the Athletic Publicity Director for Lappenbusch, too. That's about it. I got out alive.

TB: OK (laughter), well, good, thank you very much.

HP: OK, thank you.