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## **Interview with Patrick Thompson**

**13 June 2002**

Present: Patrick Thompson, Dr. Robert V. Remini, and Dr. Fred W. Beuttler

Location: UIC Historian's Office, 628 UH, 601 South Morgan, Chicago, IL.

Dr. Robert V. Remini: Have you seen our tape about your grandfather?

Patrick Thompson: Yes.

RVR: It is that sort of thing that history has to rectify, in other words, what the man did accomplish and his importance to the city, state, and country. It's got to be present. With all of the blemishes, if there are blemishes, that's what we're all about. And that is telling a straight story and providing the material for future historians that know nothing about him, except what they can research.

PT: I know that from my perspective, and most of our family, we appreciate what you're doing and what you're trying to do. We all knew him and have a certain perspective. Obviously, it's going to be a little biased. But the way we try to be objective and judge him, the way he's been depicted at times, it isn't fair. A lot of policy things and decisions that he made, I think you saw those decisions being made throughout all major cities. It wasn't so specific on certain things.

RVR: See, I had my distorted view of him, because I was here in 1968. And I had to forbid my daughter who wanted to come down here and participate in the activities (laughs). I had to forbid her from coming. Then, when I was asked to do a talk, and then started to do the research, that's when I became alive to what this man really had accomplished. It was my job to try to repeat some of that to a lot of people that already knew him (laughs). So, I realized then, so many historians, so many people who are not directly involved the way you are and many of the people at the celebration were, to come out with the real Richard J. Daley. This is part of the task. We're sending out letters, from the library, to all of the people who were there and all of the people who went to the

luncheon. We'll be saying, "If you have reminiscences, if you have papers, please get in touch with us so that we can record the reminiscences and have this." That way, the Richard J. Daley Archives will be enormous by the time we finish with it." If all these people plus your uncles and other family members were to give their papers to us, maybe in time we would really need a special building. Or we would have part of the library that would be a major exhibition area of Richard J. Daley. Not just a small part, it's a very little nice exhibit. But it's small. We're thinking in terms of the oval office. The State of Illinois has his desk. His office could easily be recreated with a lot of the artifacts, if they were given to the library (laughs). So, these are the plans for the future. But we have to start now, working on it, with things like this. And I would encourage you to help us with your family. Now, your grandmother has agreed to turn the papers over. I hope to work through your mother and your Uncle Michael to get to interview your grandmother. She is ninety-five. She has a lot to tell us, if we could possibly get to her. We have to be careful.

PT: Right. She is amazing even though she is ninety-five. I see her quite often. We grew up next door. Then, being the clannish that we are, the Irish (RVR laughs), I bought the building next door to the one I grew up in. So we're all kind of right in a row.

RVR: Oh, you're still there?

PT: I moved two blocks away.

RVR: I see, but you're still in Bridgeport.

PT: When we had our second daughter, we needed a bigger home. So we moved. But she's really an amazing person. We have coffee every week, or just about every weekend.

RVR: Do you?

PT: We go from talking about Roth IRA's. She's educating me on Roth IRA's. And we talk about investments to every current issue. And then we talk about just life in general. She's really an amazing person.

RVR: She's not ill now?

PT: No.

RVR: I mean, she's not recovering?

PT: She's ninety-five and just slowed a little bit physically. But mentally, she's as sharp as a tack.

RVR: Yes. I've been told that she wants to be interviewed. But I've got to get your uncle to agree, because I don't want to be pushy. Being a New Yorker, I instinctively am (laughs)! The sooner we could do it, but your mother said that maybe I ought to call your uncle next week.

PT: That's how they coordinate it.

RVR: Anyway, you may be able to tell us a lot about her, as well as your grandfather. Why don't we begin by my asking of your earliest recollection of him?

PT: My parents were divorced when we were young. We actually moved in with my grandmother and grandfather. At the time, my Aunt Ellie and my Uncle John were still living at home. So we moved in with them for a short period of time.

RVR: How many rooms were there in that house?

PT: There were enough rooms.

RVR: Really? But you had to double up.

PT: Oh, absolutely. Then, after we had our own home, we still doubled up. I think we're kind of old-fashioned in that sense (RVR laughs). It's nice to have someone to talk to at night. My brother and I would talk in the evening. So we spent time there. Like any family, they were looking out for their daughter, who is my mother, and their grandchildren. So we came home and stayed with them. We lived there for a short period of time. Then we moved across the street to an apartment. We lived there, I think it was about two years. I'm not exactly sure on the time frame, but a couple years. Then we bought the home next door. I just remember the move. One of my first memories as a child was when we moved across the street into the apartment. My grandfather was the foreman of the moving crew. The moving crew consisted of neighbors and friends.

RVR: What office did your grandfather hold at that time?

PT: He was the mayor.

RVR: He was the mayor?

PT: Yes. He was the mayor from 1955 to 1976. One of my vivid memories is him standing in the street, directing traffic, having these fellows move stuff, and literally picking up our furniture (RVR laughs). They were carrying it across the street into the apartment. It was just so much fun. We had the street blocked off. It was like a big affair. And it was just him. It wasn't the police department. It was just a father and his grandkids. We were riding our bikes up and down the street. It was the only time we could ever go in the street with our bikes (RVR laughs). It was really kind of a touching moment because it was just a family doing something together. It was neat. Then we had a big celebration once we moved in. The apartment was probably a little bit bigger than this room. It was really nice, though. It was really a home. It was a true home. My mom had a big open house party. My grandparents came over, along with friends of theirs and all kinds of neighbors and family. We packed it in wall to wall (RVR laughs). We just

had a great party. We all kind of had a fun time together. So it was really enjoyable. My brother and sister were both in school down the street, at Nativity of Our Lord, our grade school.

RVR: You're the youngest?

PT: I'm the youngest in our family. I was in Kindergarten. So, at that time, the Catholic school started in first grade. You'd go to public school for pre-school and Kindergarten, which was McClellan School, located at Thirty-fifth and Wallace. My mom or my grandmother would take me to school, depending on the schedule, I wasn't a big fan back then (RVR laughs). I would go in. I remember just crying. I didn't want to go to school. It was sort of a tantrum. They would walk me in and say, "You're going to school. You have to learn." Boom! They'd shut the door and then they'd leave (RVR laughs). I'm sort of stuck. On the days my grandfather would take me, it was great. We'd walk out of the house and get in his car. We were at Thirty-fifth and Lowe. Wallace is one block east of where we lived. So it was just around the corner. But we'd go around the corner and he'd hold my hand. The two of us would walk up the stairs to school. Then I'd start crying. We'd get to the top of the stairs and he'd look at me. We'd turn around and switch hands, walk right back down the stairs, get back in the car, go back around the block, and he would take me back into the house. Then he'd say, "Sis! Pat! The kid's not going to school! That's it! He doesn't like! He's staying home!" (RVR laughs) He was just so kind, in that sense. Not to a fault, but kind, he saw that I didn't enjoy it (RVR laughs). He took me back and went right home. I just remember my grandmother saying, "Dick! He's got to go to school! He's got to learn! He's got to get in class and meet other students!" He'd say, "He's not going to school!" So then, I was home schooled. My Aunt Ellie, who was a teacher, would bring assignments home. Then I would stay home and do them (RVR laughs). So I think my grandfather won out on that discussion, I guess (RVR laughs).

RVR: Well, he was the mayor (laughs).

PT: But when you walked in the house though, everything was level. It wasn't, "I'm the mayor!" He walked in and, first and foremost, he was my grandmother's husband. He was then a father, and then a grandfather. It was all about family, I think, when he walked in. He checked his position at the door with his coat and hat and that was it.

RVR: Did he serve as a kind of father to you, as well as a grandfather? Or was your own father still...?

PT: No. My own father was still very much involved with our lives and throughout our lives. He unfortunately passed away two years ago. With any other divorce in a family, he wasn't around twenty-four seven. I mean, we could call him at times. We would see him on the weekends. We would visit with him and talk to him. But he wasn't always there. So, to fill that void, my grandfather was very much involved for the period of time before his death. Then, my four uncles have all been kind of surrogate fathers. Our family is a very close family. And I'm sure it's like that in many families, where everyone kind of looks out for each other.

RVR: You're quite unique though, I think, from what I've heard. It's really wonderful. It's extraordinary.

PT: Yes. It's fun. It's nice. I mean, it's a real comfort, to be able to pick up the phone. If you have a personal issue, a decision on a career, or a decision on anything, you're able to call them and ask for advice and counsel. They'd drop what they're doing and see you immediately. It's a very comforting feeling to know that you have so many people that you're so close to. It's an extended family, but we're very close.

RVR: Do you think all of that emanated from your grandmother and grandfather, that it's what they created initially and that's what's been perpetuated?

PT: I think so. My grandfather, as you probably know, was an only child. My grandmother was from a large family. I think because of that fact, because he was an only

child, he liked to have other people around. He had seven in his family. I think there were twenty-two, twenty of us now, in the grandchildren level. Then, in the great grandchildren level, we have another, oh what is it now? It's eleven great grandchildren, and one on the way. My cousin Bob Vanecko, his wife is expecting their fifth.

RVR: Wow! He's going to come next week.

PT: Yes. So, I think there's the sense of family. The other part of it was being in the public light for so much of his career. You really need to have your privacy. You will have very good friends. But I think your family is this special place that you can go and not have to worry about what you look like or what you say. You can relax. And it's family. So no one is going to say anything and nothing is going to happen. You're kind of in this little island of peace.

RVR: I sort of hear it now with the present mayor and the condition of his wife. It's the fact that he's asking people to please leave it to the family to handle, which is almost instinctive.

PT: I think he's very much like my grandfather, in that sense of privacy. I mean, there's enough of us where we have fun together. There's enough people. I mean, I always say that because we had so many cousins, we were close growing up together. My best friends happen to be my cousins. We talk on a daily basis. That's d-a-i-l-y (PT and RVR laugh). But we talk and just enjoy each other. I think that that sense of closeness and family, my grandfather thought that was really important and that we all stick together. As he said to my aunts, uncles, and mother, "Stick together!" He used to talk about that. My grandparents had a beautiful relationship. They were very similar but unique in their own sense. But I think their values were the same. I think that the values they had together have been passed down. That's not only with my grandparents. But that's also through our parents. My mother is very much like both of them because she is the product of them.

RVR: Tell me, are there any individual experiences that you had with him, say alone, that you remember? Your brother told us how he used to take him to the fights once in a while.

PT: That's still a very disturbing point with me (RVR laughs), because they used to sneak out the front door. I was too young. There was an ice cream parlor near our home. They would go and get milk shakes. They would bring them into the kitchen and say, "Oh, we have milkshakes!" I would walk into the back and, boom, out the front door they would go! My Uncle John, my grandfather, and my brother would leave and go to the fights. And before I knew what was happening, they were gone.

RVR: But didn't you get angry and upset? "They don't love me at all the way they love my brother!"

PT: No, I didn't get upset. He'd see great fights. My grandfather was a big sports fan. He loved boxing. He loved baseball. We would go on Opening Day every year with my grandfather.

RVR: That was to the White Sox, not the Cubs (laughs).

PT: I don't recall or have any recollection of going to a Cubs game, although he did attend. He was still the Mayor of Chicago.

RVR: Oh, he would have to, I'm sure.

PT: But the White Sox, he loved. He grew up going to games as a kid and kept that tradition. My grandmother is a big baseball fan. But we would go on Opening Day. Back then school was closed and then we went to a half day of school on the White Sox opening day. It was such a big part of the community. Everyone would go. Then, I think during one of my last years of grade school, they did switch. I think maybe they had a full day. It didn't matter. My grandparents would pick us up and they would take us out of

school so we could go to the game. It was terrific. We had the opportunity to meet players. Every team that would come to town would sign a box of balls and give them to my grandfather, because they knew he was such a good fan. Back then, Bill Veck would have them sign it and he'd give it to him. So we would have these balls and it would be some of the great Yankee players, all of the great players.

RVR: You kept them or distributed them?

PT: No. We would go up to the park and play baseball with them (RVR laughs). It was a baseball! We didn't think at the time that we had some of the great players like Reggie Jackson.

RVR: Oh, they'd be worth a fortune today.

PT: Oh they'd be worth...

RVR: Are they all gone?

PT: Yes, for the most part. Everything he would get he'd give, not only to us but to all of my cousins.

RVR: Are there just you three Thompsons?

PT: There's just three Thompsons and the two Vaneckos. There's Bob, who is the oldest grandchild, and then his brother Mark, who is the second oldest. Then it's Courtney, Peter, and myself. Then the next oldest would be Billy, my Uncle Bill's son.

RVR: So there's a gap there?

PT: There's a few years between myself and Bill. Then it goes down from there with the rest of...

RVR: Of the brothers.

PT: Yes, with the rest of my cousins.

RVR: Right. Well, let me ask you this. Did he ever try to make up to you for what he had denied you, with your other brother?

PT: Well, it wasn't a denial. Anytime you were with him, you were the focus. We would spend a lot of time with him in Michigan in the summer. That was another place he could go and be out of the light. At times, when he was sick after his stroke, he would go and recuperate there, just because of the quiet. We would go fishing. He loved to fish. He would take us. There was a fishing pond not too far away. He was friends with the man that owned the pond in the back yard.

RVR: In his back yard?

PT: Yes, it was in his back yard. That was in Michigan. It was a big farm. He had this pond back there that he'd stocked with bass, catfish, and bluegill. For a young kid, I thought it was terrific. So we would go fishing. Almost every weekend, he would take us. We would go over and he would help you bait the worms. Then he'd cast it in. He always wanted everyone to have that feeling of "Everyone is equal here and everyone gets what everyone else gets." And he never treated one different. So if you weren't catching a fish, he'd go over, catch a fish, and then hand you the pole. Then he'd say, "Why don't you try this one?" (RVR laughs) Then you'd have a fish and say, "Wow! I got one!" (RVR laughs) Oh, it was terrific. I just remember how kind he was, on a personal level. I was young. What was going on in government, politics, and policy...

RVR: You never saw him upset? You never saw him angry?

PT: No. I never have a recollection of him being angry. Everything was always...

RVR: So, your recollection of him is pretty much in the family setting. And in that setting, he was always kind, good, generous, and thoughtful.

PT: Absolutely. And I remember when the circus came down to Soldier Field. There were other kids there. He'd usher the other kids over to meet the clowns coming down. He was like a grandfather to everyone. We had the special connection. We had the fortune of seeing him more often than any other kid in the city, on a close, personal basis. But when he'd be in public, it didn't matter if you were a little child. You got to come over. Whoever was there, he'd introduce the clowns or whatever it was.

RVR: Did your grandmother go with you, too?

PT: She did, on a lot of things. She went on anything of official capacity. We were always doing family. I mean, it wasn't like I was going to city council with my grandfather to sit on a hearing (RVR laughs). I mean, I was a young kid. But we would go to functions. If it was opening day, she would go. Every year, on St. Patrick's Day, we'd go to mass with them down at Old St. Pat's. We'd go from there and step out to march in the parade.

RVR: Tell me more about your grandmother. I've been talking a great deal with your mother and your brother about your grandfather. We've talked about your grandmother. But I thought maybe with you I could explore that more. Can you tell me more about her background and more about her? Her name is Eleanor Guilfoyle.

PT: Correct.

RVR: And there were seven children in that family. But her parents never lived in the house, as far as you know.

PT: No. Her father was killed when she was young. He was killed in a car accident.

RVR: What was he, do you remember? I mean, what did he do?

PT: What did he do?

RVR: It doesn't matter. I just thought I'd ask.

PT: He was a tradesman. I believe he was. But he was killed when she was young. Then, her mother passed away when she was still a young woman. At that time, she was engaged to my grandfather. Her mother passed away.

RVR: Was she the eldest of the children?

PT: No. She would have been, I think about in the middle. She had a few younger sisters.

RVR: She didn't have to take care of her younger sisters?

PT: Some of the younger ones she did, yes. She and her older sisters did. She was still young when her mother died. So both of her parents were dead before she was married. My grandfather's parents...

RVR: Right, they lived with them.

PT: Then Lil died, and Mike lived with them for quite some time. There's still a lot of Guilfoyles, Greens, and relatives from my grandmother's side of the family. There are relatives that live in the neighborhood and live around. They're still close.

RVR: Right. Are they close to the rest of the Daleys?

PT: They're close. And they're cousins.

RVR: They're once removed.

PT: Right. I mean, they're all first cousins of my mother and her siblings. So those were her only first cousins. There weren't any first cousins on the Daley side. My grandfather's father, Big Mike, who was about five foot five (RVR laughs), but he was older than my Uncle Mike, he was Big Mike. Big Mike had a number of brothers. They were all sheet metal workers, tradesmen. They had children. So there are Daleys. But they would be once removed or twice removed. But we're still close. They're the only Daleys on that side. Our particular Daley unit has enough of us again, where we're real close with each other. As I was mentioning about Grand Beach, we would all go up. We all had homes, kind of right across the street from one another. We're all kind of clustered together. It's terrific because in the summer, all of our families would go up. The men would commute back and forth. So we would grow up with all of our cousins. We got to know them. That's another unique thing as to why we're so close. It was important that we stayed close. So, we would see each other every day. We'd play together. We all grew up together. The weekends would come up. Then my grandfather, our fathers, and our uncles would come up. I remember that my grandfather would try to be a handyman. He's passed down I think, at least to me, the gene to me that I can't hang a picture (RVR laughs). I used to say that I could hang a picture. My wife said, "No. You can't do that." They're too short or they're angled (RVR laughs).

RVR: I'm the same. I can't do anything (pointing to FWB). This man can do everything (laughs). I hate these people, too (laughs).

PT: I'm an attorney by trade. I think, "Gee, I'm a smart guy. I should be able to figure this out." I'm dumbfounded by it.

RVR: That's exactly so.

PT: So he would always be tinkering at a little workshop in the basement.

RVR: Oh, he had a workshop in the basement?

PT: Yes, he had a little workshop. We built a tree house.

FWB: This is up in Michigan?

PT: It's in Michigan. I have a daughter Eleanor, who will be five in September. I have a daughter Grace who will be two in September. Nora and I were up a few weeks ago. We kind of went wandering through. I said, "Come on. Let's go see if we can find Papa's fort." And there it was.

PT and RVR: It's still there.

PT: It had about eight thousand nails (PT and RVR laugh). He thought if you just kept hammering! I remember when we went up to build it, it was my brother and I, Mark and Bob, and my sister Courtney. She was the only girl out of the five of us. But she was always included. It was never....

RVR: Boys discriminating.

PT: Yes, boys only. It was always everyone came together and we all stayed together. But she didn't really get into the nitty gritty of building. She kind of stood back and monitored. So we went up and we built this fort. It was the five of us. There were my grandfather, my Uncle Bob Vanecko, and my Uncle John. At the time Uncle John was either still single or just recently married and didn't have children. He would always come. He was very close to us too, especially with my family. So we built this fort. It was just a riot. But parts of it are still standing. So we're planning on going back there this summer.

RVR: But you're saying your grandfather wasn't much of a mechanic or....

PT: He wasn't a mechanic. But we found all of this old wood. He was recycling before recycling was the in thing to do. He was conscious of it. We took all of this old wood that was around. We were finding pieces. That was what we built this tree fort with. It was just a nice memory.

RVR: You told me before that you see you grandmother, pretty much once a week.

PT: At the minimum.

RVR: At the minimum? You go to visit her just....

PT: I like her (laughs). I mean, you like people and you talk to them.

RVR: Yes, tell me about that. Why do you like her so much? What is it about her that's so special, would you say?

PT: For us, there was growing up next door. Then, after my grandfather had passed away, my grandmother and my Aunt Ellie kind of stepped in. My mother is a terrific mother. But she had three children and she was working full time. She was busy. She was working. So my Aunt Ellie and my grandmother were like another mother to us. So we were very close. Growing up, we'd have dinner with them probably three to five days a week. We lived next door. In the summer time, we'd be out either in their yard or our yard. One of us would be barbecuing and you'd just walk next door. In looking at it, you'd think that with the child of a divorced couple, sometimes it's harder. But this gave us the opportunity to really be close to these people. It was a great experience.

RVR: And feel loved.

PT: Oh, absolutely.

RVR: Do you have any stories about your grandmother that would help us to give her more presence in the life of your grandfather? Everybody has said wonderful things about her. But we need to put some flesh and....

PT: Right. As I said, they had a beautiful relationship. They were a true team. They were a married couple. On decisions that were being made, they made them together. There never was one person as the lead, made the decisions, and followed. They really sat down and they talked. They would talk about things.

RVR: Do you think they talked about politics as well?

PT: Oh, I'm sure.

RVR: And he probably listened to her.

PT: Oh, absolutely. She gives good advice. She didn't have a lot of formal education. But she's one of the most intelligent people. She's self-taught. As I started saying, even now she's telling us about Roth IRA's (RVR laughs), investment vehicles, and educational bonds that you can buy. She's always concerned about my kids. And that was another big point I think, that my grandfather would always make. My grandmother has continued to make it. The most important thing that you can do is to educate your children. We didn't have a lot of money. My grandfather said, "I can't leave you money. I can leave you a good name and opportunities. It's a matter of taking those opportunities and using them to your advantage.

RVR: Did your grandmother help you with your homework, do you remember? Or was that mostly your mother and your grandfather? Or who was it?

PT: With my homework, a lot of times I would say it was my Aunt Ellie. She just passed away. She was a teacher. So she would always be helping and kind of tutoring me. My mother is also a teacher.

RVR: I know that.

PT: My Aunt Mary Carol, My Aunt Ellie, and my mother were all teachers.

RVR: But Mary Carol didn't live in the house with you, or close by?

PT: No. Mary Carol was already married at that time. She was married by the time my parents divorced and we moved back home.

RVR: Did she live close by? I'll learn more when I speak to your cousin.

PT: There's kind of two clusters. There were the Daleys that lived within about eight homes of each other in Sauganash. And then there were the Daleys that lived in Bridgeport that lived within about eight homes of each other. It's funny when you think about it. I think that was because my mother and her siblings had a very good upbringing. They enjoyed it and they enjoyed each other. I think that stems from my grandmother and grandfather making it an environment that was a loving home and a caring home and you cared about each other. To this day, we still do. We still live near each other. We still see each other and enjoy each other's company. Now, within my family, my brother, my sister, and I are extremely close. And my cousins are extremely close to us.

RVR: Your Aunt Ellie then, was a real presence in your life.

PT: Absolutely. She was a unique person. She was a wonderful person.

RVR: How was she unique?

PT: She was just a mother to so many of my cousins. She gave so much of her life to others, not only to her students, but also to her nieces and nephews, and to my grandmother. She lived with my grandmother until she passed away.

RVR: Was she the youngest of the daughters?

PT: Yes, she was the youngest of the daughters. She was the third oldest in the family.

RVR: Her death must have been devastating.

PT: It was. To this day, it is.

RVR: Do you remember the time when she died?

PT: Yes.

RVR: Do you have any recollections of what it did to your grandmother and grandfather and how they responded to it?

PT: Well, my grandfather had already passed away.

RVR: Oh, he had? That's right.

PT: He had already passed away. It was really difficult. It still is difficult for my grandmother. Anytime you bury your child....

RVR: It's an abomination.

PT: I have never experienced it. And I hope to God I never do. But I've had two cousins that have passed away. There was Rich's son Kevin and my Uncle Bill's son Richie. Aunt Barbara passed away, too.

RVR: It's a horror. It's not natural.

PT: No. As a parent....

RVR: We don't know much about Ellie in the interviews we've been doing. Since you've brought her up, she was apparently a very important person in your life. I thought I'd try to explore it a little bit more. Much of what you're telling us we've heard from your brother. We'll hear it again from your cousin (laughs). But it's important because in history, in just one, it ain't necessarily true (laughs)!

PT: Right.

RVR: And we understand that you're speaking from a very particular perspective, which is very important. I don't think it can be challenged in any way as to what kind of family this was.

PT: From a public standpoint, I remember growing up in Bridgeport, in the Eleventh Ward. It was active political neighborhood and community, and to this day it is. The people and neighbors enjoy politics. They're interested in the issues. They're interested in candidates. They get involved and they support. They're the most loyal people around for the candidates that they support. We would have rallies at Healy School, which is one of the public schools. They had a big auditorium. We would go down and my grandfather would have these big rallies there. Rich was running for the state senate then. The love and support of the community towards my grandfather is amazing, to this day. To this day, people talk about him as though he were still here. Their devotion and support for him is a real unbelievable feeling. And it's a humbling feeling when somebody could have such love for a man. And a lot of them have never met him. A lot of them never had the opportunity to meet him. Now many of them, the families, are neighbors of ours for many generations. Some of them may have worked on a campaign. Some of them are civil servants today. But they just loved him.

RVR: He was a human being.

PT: Yes.

RVR: Do you think he had any faults?

PT: Oh, he was human. I mean, you just said it. He was a human being.

RVR: I don't mean that you witnessed them necessarily. But do you think, looking back, that you could say, "Well, he made some mistakes." Or, "He did things in hindsight, that weren't wise," or however you want to phrase it. I don't want you to feel that I'm a prosecutor in any way. I want to get as rounded a picture of the man that I can. So don't let me put any words in your mouth. And if you don't think of anything, that's fine.

PT: I'd say, at least with me at times, he was kind to a fault.

RVR: And it was a fault.

PT: And example was the school. If I didn't like the school and he tried and tried, he'd come home and say, "He's not going!" (RVR laughs) Well obviously, in retrospect, you should go to school. But that was his kindness. You know, I read history books. I'm a history buff. I'm interested in government and politics. I read articles, books, and so on.

RVR: What do you think of the 1968 Convention, let's say?

PT: I think the 1968 Convention would have happened in any city, no matter where it happened. And I think it took courage to host it. I think what was unique was that no one was killed in Chicago. There was in Miami at the Republican Convention. So someone was killed there and no one was killed here. There were riots here. There were issues here.

RVR: That's a good point.

PT: No matter what you say about the police brutality, Sheriff Elrod, who is the former Cook County Sheriff, he was paralyzed by protesters. He was injured and there were

policemen that were injured, as there were protestors. At that time, in society, there was so much going on that it would've happened anywhere. So I don't think Chicago, the tactics, or the strategies that were in place, can you fault it? I don't know. We all look back and say, "I wish I could do this over or that over." I think a lot of the policies he had in place were always well intended. There was the concept of public housing, for example. To me, I'm not an urban planner. Some of the critics say, "Housing was built in a certain way because of racial motivation." Well, his largest supporters were African Americans. He won in 1955 because of African American and Jewish support. So, we're Irish by heritage. But they didn't necessarily come out at that time and support him. It continued through all of his campaigns. The African American vote was a very strong vote for him. He did a lot for all of the communities. The high rise developments were going up on Lake Shore Drive at that time. Now you see town homes. The concept is that society likes homes. Whether it be affordable housing, public housing, or wealthy housing, homes are preferred over high rise today. And I think that's societal. So when you look back, I don't think it was necessarily what he was doing. He was well intended.

RVR: That's a good point. He was a man of such great integrity, that never did corruption come....

PT: Unbelievable integrity.

RVR: And it was probably happening in the administration, whenever you get politics.

PT: Oh, I'm sure. I don't know the roles but there were probably twenty-five to thirty thousand employees that worked for the city.

RVR: There wasn't even a whisper of it connecting him in any way.

PT: He had too much respect, I think, for the office of mayor and for the City of Chicago. His love for the city was immeasurable.

RVR: Did you ever watch him in action, personally? I mean like going to city council or going to his office?

PT: we would go down to his office, on occasion, for an event. Or we would be stopping there and going on from there to a parade or something. But we'd never go down to watch. That was business. Business and family were totally separate and always separate. And as Rich said, it continues today. You need to have that balance, I think. If one takes too much of the other, it can run you into trouble.

\*\*\*\*\*END OF SIDE ONE\*\*\*\*\*

PT: There's some inaccuracies, at times.

RVR: Factual.

PT: Yes, factual. If you're not getting the facts right and you can't get that part right, your conclusions would obviously be wrong, if the facts are wrong. There's little minor things. For example, in the book, "The Boss," it talks about the patronage or influence when one of his daughters married. She married a man and her future father-in-law was a Chicago policeman. He immediately became a commander of a police district. Well, the only father-in-law of a daughter who was a Chicago policeman was my other grandfather, my Grandpa Ted Thompson. He was retired in 1959 from the police department. My mother didn't marry my father until the mid 1960's. But it's implied in there, and that's just one example. So I think some of the books are good. As for some of the books, a lot was done in the city. The politics during that time were much different than today.

RVR: Do you think it would be appropriate for anybody writing a serious scholarly work on your grandfather to show some of it to the family and get a reaction? I mean, whether or not they're evoking your grandfather, the image? That's what we try to do as historians, have them personally alive as they existed. I don't mean as critics. It's not a hagiography,

on the one hand. We're not dealing with a saint. Nor are we dealing with a villain. We're dealing with a human being. And you have to show him in three dimensions.

PT: I think that would help you. I think that's a decision you would have to evaluate, if that will skew the person. I say that because you're going to get perspectives from my family. As you learn now, our family is very close. It's our family. We're not going to want critical....

PT and RVR: Distortions.

PT: You can criticize the policy and you can criticize the office. But to criticize him personally as though there were some personal vendetta or personal motives behind these decisions, I think it's wrong. One thing that he used to say when he was running for office was the candidate running against him was his opponent and not his enemy. He would say that and it would resonate. It's not your enemy. At the end of the day, we're all Americans. You're going to live with that person. One of you will govern the other at the end of the day. So, at times I think it gets mean in politics. I've seen it where it gets personal. He never had it personal.

RVR: See, I would think as an obligation on my part, since I've gotten the information from the family, I should check with the family. I should say, "Look, here's what I'm going to say," or show you. I have in mind, particularly, to be honest with you, I understand that there's a diary. Maybe that diary is of such importance that it ought to be published and edited so names are identified and the background information is given. If that were published, it seems to me, it would have to have the family's approval. They would not want to see anything published that would diminish what is there. That's my perspective on it. That's why I feel that I may just be an intermediary between you people and the future scholars who will use our work for their purposes. But I think that's the only way to go. It's the only way to establish confidence. I think the family feels

confident in the university in giving the papers here and that they'll not become a travesty, for example. Have you seen the papers at all, at your grandmother's house?

PT: No. I think that'll be a decision that my grandmother, and my aunts, uncles, and my mother will make. We follow a military order here (laughs).

RVR: The grandchildren?

PT: I mean, we debate issues....

RVR: Would you be involved in any way, when the papers...?

PT: We would be involved. But to say it would be my decision, or my brother's, or my sister's, that's a personal property of my grandmother.

RVR: Right. It belongs to her.

PT: It's depending on what she wants, because it brings back memories for her about great times and my grandfather. He was her best friend. So, that would be her decision.

RVR: It would be. You think that she'll make the decision, then?

PT: It's her decision. I think she's committed because this place was such an important part and such a key part of my grandfather's life, I think. I mean, when he was in the state legislature, he was pushing for this. When he was able to finally have the influence to make it happen, he did. As it's been said, he thought it was his greatest accomplishment. And because of that....

RVR: It explains him in large measure, who he was, and the existence of this university. So, I think your grandmother would do it in consultation with her children. So it may be a while before we see any of the papers. I'm personally hoping to speak to her if I can. But

I'm leaving it to your mother and your uncle. I know it's a decision that's out of everybody else's hands. But it is nice to know that the Daley family is anxious to want to create something as a monument to what this man achieved.

PT: Right. I think his love of the city and all of our family's love of Chicago....

RVR: He was the greatest mayor that Chicago has ever had. That has to be understood.

PT: It's amazing when you look at it. There's a time magazine article in 1955 when he won. They show the skyline of the city with the Prudential Building. It's the old one, 1952 Prudential Building, which was the tallest building in that skyline. Then there's a picture from 1976.

RVR: I wish I'd known that for my talk, because I knew the skyline was his doing. But if I had known it was all one little building (laughs)....

PT: He was a real urban-minded mayor, for not being a student of urban planning, as is Rich. I think that you can see how development helps a community. That's not only from providing amenities in that area that will serve the people long after it's built, but also the jobs it creates to build that amenity.

RVR: He may not have known it. But one of the first things he did was to create a planning commission. He got really good people to work for him.

PT: "Surround yourself with smarter people" is what he always used to say. The guy that thinks he knows everything and micromanage, he runs into some problems. But I appreciate your taking time to study my grandfather.

RVR: Oh, I appreciate the time you're giving us. As I've said to your mother and your brother, if there's anything else that comes to mind that we can use and have for the archives, let us know. We will type all of this up so it'll be in hard form and you can go

over it. Maybe there will be things that you'll want to add or subtract. That'll be fine. But I would also urge you to help us so that you can help us with whatever influence or words so that we can move the project without us intruding into the family. We want to respect the privacy of the family. We only want to move at the direction of the family and do what they want us to do. But we're ready (laughs).

PT: I appreciate that and I know that my mother and grandmother do. In terms of timing though, what is your time frame that you have? "By this date we have to move on to the next...."

RVR: Well, we were hoping to do a history of the university. We've done our pictorial history. It has the picture of your grandfather standing by himself in the old forum. I used to have it there but we took it. When are we going to get it back? Well anyway, it doesn't matter. In 2005, we would like to publish a narrative history of the University of Illinois at Chicago. This would mean we would have to have a manuscript by 2004, because it takes almost a year with all of the rest of it. We've been interviewing people that have nothing to do with your grandfather or with the involvement of the city, but in actually setting up the university. We've interviewed about eighty people. And we're continuing to do that. More and more information is being drawn. But now, all of a sudden, we have the Daley papers! And we don't know what might be there that's of crucial importance, without which the history wouldn't be really complete. I just don't know. If he kept a diary, it would be interesting to know what your grandfather was talking about. We do know of the commitment from the beginning. We do know of the determination that there would be a great public university in the city, not in the suburbs. We know a great deal about what he was doing, but we don't know everything. Everything is in the papers. It will take time to catalog them and to read through them. I don't know. You don't have any idea of how extensive they are, do you? Mostly, I guess, they're with your grandmother in the basement, and in a warehouse. Your mother told us. But even if we were allowed to begin to look at some of it, we wouldn't have to have the whole thing. I think it'd be important that the family know what they feel is sensitive will either be withdrawn and be

kept by the family. Or, what the library often does is to say that "These are closed for twenty-five or fifty years," or whatever the donor decides.

FWB: One of the things that your grandfather mentioned a number of times was when he was first a state legislature. He introduced a resolution in 1936 and 1937 on the branch campus in Chicago. We haven't been able to find anything. There's nothing down in Springfield on that. That's one of the things, because he didn't introduce a bill at that point. He introduced a series of bills in 1945. We have those, because those are part of the legislative record. But sometimes speeches and resolutions don't immediately become part of the record. That's some of the things on the early history of his involvement with the campus. We really need to be able to be able to tell the story and ideally to quote from it, if it's available. Also on some of the background, the bills in 1945 were not passed. They were buried in committee. He went out of the legislature at that point and was up here in Chicago. To see the actual move, he was behind the actual bill that did get passed in 1951. He was pushing it three or four different ways. To tell that part of the story is important.

RVR: Now your Uncle John has offered to help us there. He would put us in touch with Madigan. But he said to wait until the present legislature, with all of the problems they have with the budget, is over. But that's a good example, you see. And we just don't know what's there. We don't know if there's personal letters, to what extent, how much of it are official documents, or whether they're state. I imagine there's a great deal. Even the extent of the collection, are we talking about ten boxes, fifty boxes, or one hundred boxes?

PT: Not that we're pack rats, but my wife is always saying, "Throw that out!" I'll say, "No! No! You've got to keep that in a box (laughs)!" But there's a tremendous number of photographs and things like that.

RVR: That's history. That tells you a lot.

PT: At least it could give a perspective of him from a photo.

RVR: It's just the thing you mentioned, a before and after of Chicago. Twenty-one years of political and economic stability is what he gave this city. I forgot to mention that in my talk and it was in my notes, too. But that's one of the most compelling things. All of the other cities were going into bankruptcy. Look at Detroit. Detroit was burning. It was not so here. But, as historians, we're drooling at the very thought of it. You could see it in the Sun Times report of the diary when they heard about it. They picked up on. The Tribune didn't. But you could see the reporter recognized the possible importance of that document. It may be nothing. It may be, "I woke up at six-thirty and went to work. I came home at five (laughs)!" Or, it could be a John Quincy Adams diary, which would tell you so many things that you wouldn't get anywhere. Talking about John Quincy Adams, I've just finished a little book on him. You told that story on how he took you to school. John Quincy Adams's grandson was Henry Adams, who you probably know of. He decided that he wasn't going to go to school. He didn't like to go to school. He said his grandfather John, just got up, took him by the hand, and lead him to school. He put him in the seat and said, "You stay there (laughs)!" The poor kid didn't move (laughs)!

PT: My grandmother would insist that "He stay there!" My grandfather didn't want to see me cry.

RVR: He was a very sensitive man, I think, as well as being kind. But emotionally, I think he hated to see people suffer. He hated to see people in pain.

PT: Absolutely. He was. I think you're right. He was very sensitive to other people.

RVR: I don't know your other uncles. But I think I've seen it in your Uncle Rich, too. He's a very sensitive man like his father. Maybe all of the brothers are.

PT: That might come from him being an only child, like I said. I do know that my grandmother always talks about when they'd go out to buy a dog for the kids, he'd buy two. He wouldn't want the one to be alone (RVR laughs). So it always had somebody else

to be around. We always joked, "That's because he was an only child. He didn't have anyone to play with. And he didn't want the dog to be alone."

RVR: Was there always a dog in the house? I never realized that.

PT: Yes, they would always have....

RVR: A couple of dogs?

PT: Yes, two dogs.

RVR: Were they mutts or did they tend to be...?

PT: The last one was Boots. Boots was a boxer. They had a couple of boxers at the end.

RVR: What were their names?

PT: Boots was the last one. Then they had some collies.

RVR: Of course, in Michigan they must have had some. Oh, they brought the dogs with them.

PT: Yes, we would. Then once we moved up there, the house in Chicago would be closed. They'd commute every day, back and forth to the city. It was only sixty miles. There was a train that would take you back and forth. He would get a reprieve. If he had city business, as the mayor he'd sometimes have to stay in Chicago. But other than that, he'd go back up there. When my grandmother closed the house, that was it. And we would all move up. It was a lot of fun. It still is. We still go up and we still enjoy doing it.

RVR: Do you realize how privileged you are to have a family like that? There aren't many other people, I suspect, that have as close and committed a family. You just happen to have a famous name.

PT: A lot of people that you talk to don't know their cousins or their relatives. I think that part of it, my family part of it, is very unique. I'm very privileged to have it. Then, to go outside the family, I have my aunts and uncles. Then we go out and have the opportunities that we've had, because of the public life. I'm not talking about having the privilege of having an uncle who's a mayor, a county commissioner, and a secretary of commerce. They're all uncles. It's funny. It doesn't matter what office you hold. We're all family. But then to have that ability because of the commitment that they've had to public service, and the exposure we've all been fortunate to have, it's very unique. You're right. It's an honor. It truly is an honor. I hope that we continue it with our children.

RVR: And you know what's very interesting, too? It's the sense of commitment to their civic duty. I think that's part of the reason your grandmother is anxious to give these papers is because they're part of the life of the city. Put them in a university where they can be used to understand better how this city developed. This is not to say that everybody has to go into politics. You can do it in many different ways. But I think that sense comes through, too. That's my interpretation from what I've been learning about the family.

PT: It is. I mean, my mother and my two aunts are perfect examples of civic duty by teaching in the public school system. My wife is also a public school teacher.

RVR: (Laughs) You guys married public school teachers as well! It's funny (laughs)!

PT: I do think that, as my mom said jokingly about the Daley women. There's other ways to serve, whether it's on a school board, on a block club, in the CAPS Organization, on the local level, or on civic boards.

RVR: Your brother serves on the Mercy Hospital Board.

PT: Yes, he's on the Mercy Hospital Board. There's other ways that we can serve for the better good of all.

RVR: Who knows? Your son might want to run for mayor someday (laughs).

PT: Well, politics is still interesting. Government is interesting.

RVR: It is. It's fascinating.

PT: We'll see.

RVR: Well, thank you very much.

PT: Thank you.

RVR: I do appreciate this.

PT: Nice to meet you. Do you have a card?

RVR: Yes. Please keep in touch with me. If I can do anything to help, I'll be glad to do anything I can.

PT: Good luck. Are you done now for the summer?

RVR: Oh no. I'm going to be here. I took a month off practically, to go to Germany. That was back in April.

\*\*\*\*\*END OF INTERVIEW\*\*\*\*\*