

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Fred Edgar

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar Oral History project

Interview # ISG-A-L-2009-012

Fred Edgar, the older brother of Governor Jim Edgar (1991-1999), was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Jim Edgar* Oral History project.

Interview date & location:

Date: April 22, 2009 Location: Coles County Mental Health Facility, Charleston, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Mike Czaplicki, ALPL & Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: 42 Total Time: 2 hrs 18 min / 2.3 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 02/01/2010.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Fred Edgar, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISG-A-L-2009-012

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Fred Edgar was born on September 4, 1940 in Tuscola, Illinois. During the Second World War, the family moved from Illinois to Kansas, where Fred's father worked in a munitions plant. Following the war, the family moved to Oklahoma, closer to relatives. It was there that Jim, the third son of Cecil and Betty Edgar, was born in 1946. Shortly thereafter, the family moved back to Illinois, where Cecil started an office supply business. In 1953, Cecil was killed in an automobile accident, leaving Betty with three young sons. She went back to school and soon found work in Charleston.

Although finances were tight after his father died, Fred described the boys' upbringing as very typical, with Betty working hard, and relatives and the church helping the family to cope. Betty also rented out rooms to college students to help with the family's finances. Fred was very active in sports in high school, and he had a typical relationship with his younger brother. He served as an officer in the Signal Corps and had a tour of duty in Vietnam in 1968. Although very different people, Fred was always supportive of Jim's political career, helping his younger brother in his failed bid for a state legislative seat in 1974, then with Jim's successful bids for political office, first as a state legislator in 1976 and 1978, then as Secretary of State in 1982 and 1986, and finally during his gubernatorial races in 1990 and 1994.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Charleston, Illinois; Cecil and Betty Edgar; Eastern Illinois University; Jim Edgar; Max Coffey; Vietnam War; Tom Edgar (brother);

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee, and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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