

Interview with Dr. Daniel Massey, '29 24 FEB 1986.

Allen: First of all we want to identify you, You are Daniel Massey, class of '29, you were in the first class at the Jr. College .

Massey: Class of '29.

Allen: Did you graduate from the Jr. College? How long were you there?

Massey: Two years.

Allen: Two years, so that you were in the first graduating class. Wonderful and what did you do after that?

Massey: After that, I went to Columbia and I got my Bachelor of Science Degree and from there I went to medical school.

Allen: Which one?

Massey: Hanneman School in Philadelphia and when I graduated from there, I interned at Bridgeport Hospital. (HE TOLD ME AFTERWARD that his intern pay was \$5.00 a month plus room and board.) Then I worked on the ambulance for the City of Bridgeport for a year and I opened up a general practice which I think I did for two years . Then I went to Belevue Hospital in New York and took a residency in Anesthesia. When I got through with that, I came back to Bridgeport and became the Chairman of the Dept. of Anesthesiology at Bridgeport Hospital which I held for 40 years. In 1941 I joined the Army , the 9th Evacuation Hospital .

Allen: Where was that?

Massey: That's the Roosevelt Hospital in New York.

Allen: Where was this station, did it stay there or did it go overseas?

Massey: Oh no, we went overseas. We were overseas early . We were overseas three years .

Allen: In Europe?

Massey: Yes, we went from , we went on manovers at No. Carolina and were there only six weeks when we went overseas. We went to England, we hit Italy and France and Germany. We were overseas three and a half years and when I got through with my service I came back to Bridgeport and resumed my position as Chairman of the Dept. of Anesthesiology and I retired in '81.

Allen: Wonderful, that's fantastic. The more that I look at

that first class, the more I'm impressed with the quality of that first class.

Massey: Well, it is interesting to note that every member of the first class obtained a professional degree after they got through with their training at the Jr. college and went on to further studies . The first class Everybody obtained a higher professional position after they got through which is interesting.

Allen: Yes

Massey: The whole class did it. These are the people who are deceased since then. Now I don't have a picture of the football team but I've got a picture of the baseball team.

Allen: Oh, good, now this would be baseball in the spring of '28 or '29.

Massey: Well, now it must be because there are some people here who were not in our original class so it must be '30. It was our second year. This is Mr. Henderson, who was our coach. Now this fella, I don't remember his name but there is Dr. Scalzi , this is Dr. Romano.

Allen: Oh, yes, his widow lives near us. He became a dentist.

Massey: That's myself and that is Dr. Carl Hedberg. The others, I don't remember their names but I think this must have been '30 because there are people here who were not in our class.

Allen: And how did you do on that?

Massey: I don't remember , I don't remember what we did .

Allen: O.K. I do not have with me the schedules . I had the schedules which seem to have been very loose and I have a few of the scores of the baseball team but I haven't finished out the whole thing yet. That's a fantastic picture .

Massey: At the end of that year, we held a prom . The first annual Sophmore Prom. Have you got that?

Allen: No, I've read about it but here you have a dance card.

Massey: June 10 of 1929, in the Roosevelt School auditorium.

Allen: Good

Massey: And

Allen: Now you were the first alumni association president.'

Massey: Yes, now this is our meeting where we organized the alumni association. I don't have the date down there.

Allen: I have that date in my files at home but I would like to comment briefly from this. How our college has been accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Universities was a subject taken by Dr. Cortright at the meeting of the alumni association in the Stratfield Hotel. About 70 members were there presided over by Senator Lavery of Fairfield and Daniel Massey, as president, was introduced. The alumni secretary was Helen Werner and the treasurer was Thomas Cody and Lavery spoke about the rapid growth of the college and then it gives a list of those who were there.

Massey: Did you get college by graduate class on 1929 have been in operation since. (Tape indistinct) Thanksgiving recess, The officers were elected and

Allen: All right, good.

Massey: Now

Allen: Then you have another story of the organization

Massey: Yes, practically all members of the first graduating class were home from the various colleges for the Thanksgiving vacation gathered at the first reunion of the college and formed an alumni association. Several hours were spent together discussing experience of various colleges to which they transferred in and Cortright. Daniel Massey of Columbia Univ. was elected president of the association and Dr. Pierre Zampierre was held of the Dept. of Foreign Language became an honorary advisor. I had forgotten that we held a dance.

Now the men students of the college held a meeting on Tuesday morning at 7:45 for the purpose of discussing a proposed constitution of the Men's Cooperative Student Government. The student were unanimous in their approval and the immediately set out to elect officers and I was elected president and Leonard Scalzi was vice president.

Allen: He was also a third baseman.

Massey: Thomas Cody (Was this Thomas or John?)

Allen: Good, now what did the men's cooperative student government do?

Massey: To tell you the truth, I don't remember. I guess we had meetings concerning the

Allen: I have some indication that a part of the purpose of the organization was to keep order in the halls.

Massey: It may have been , I don't know. I think that's about what I've got

Allen: O.K.

Massey: Here's a picture of the first class.

Allen: Oh yes, this was taken in the Tower Room at your 50th reunion. Great. I have talked to four of these ladies and let's see, who's this?

Massey: Scalzi, myself and Rozinski .

Allen: O.K. He was also a football player, right.

Massey: I guess he had to be .

Allen: O.K. let's talk a little bit about the football team. See what we can remember on that.

Massey: What I remember most is the game that we played with Choate Prep. Now we went down there, there were 12 members and I was the 12th man On the very first play one of our boys got hurt and I had to go in.

Allen: You played tackle.

Massey: I don't remember what I played. Whatever he was, he got hurt and I took his place and it wasn't much of a game, they shallaced us, 60 to 0 and they , we had to cut the time, we didn't play the full 15 min. quarters. We may have played 10 min. quarters and so forth and fortunately after that first mishap, no one else got hurt bad and I don't remember who else we played . I don't

Allen: I have the schedule . You lost to Arnold 56 to 0, you lost to CCNY 12 to 6 and Scalzi scored, Joe Sisko scored in the third period from the one yard line , then Choate, then you lost to Roxbury Prep. 32 to 0, Trinity Freshman 12 to 0 , Peekskill 6 to 0, then you won by forfeit over Collegiate Prep. Do you remember anything about that game?

Massey: No

Allen: A fight was supposed to have broken out in the third quarter.

Massey: I don't remember.

Allen: You don't remember. O.K. So with the forfeit you scored 10 points that year and the opposition scored 179. You built a

lot of character during that time. Who was the coach at that time, do you recall?

Massey: No, I don't . Henderson was our coach for the baseball team and I'm not sure that he wasn't even the coach for the football team. Of course there wasn't anybody there really that and as I said I don't remember the baseball schedule .

Allen: I don't have that with me. I have it back in the office. Then you played the next year. At that time Grant Barber was the coach .

Massey: What year was that?

Allen: That was the fall of '29. It had to be before that, '29 was our first year

Allen: No, the fall of '28 was your first year

Massey: Your right

Allen: And then the fall of '29 was the second year. Then you lost to Wagner 30 to 0, to New York Aggie, 24 to 0 , Roxbury Prep again 70 to 0 and Harding 32 to 6. And then the season was cancelled because of injuries. Now Ben Sternberg who was on that team, do you remember him?

Massey: No, I don't.

Allen: Told me he was knocked out for five, ten minutes and they had to wait till he came to because there were only 11 men. Also, I have some information from the faculty minutes in the fall of '28 that after the season they were having difficulty getting football uniforms back.

Massey: I don't remember that

*allen: You don't remember that at all.

Massey: As I remember, towards the latter part of the season, we had to bring in some players , I don't remember who they were or whether they were members of the school or whether they, and I don't recall very much about that. It was so long ago.

Allen: Wait a minute I have coach Ed Tickey in the fall of '28 . Along with Dr. Scalzi, you probably don't remember how the team was financed.

Massey: No, I don't.

Allen: Did the school do it, did you have to go out

Massey: I don't remember going out. The school must have done it somehow. It shouldn't have been too bad as I said we only had 12 players and too bad, you don't have a picture of the football team.

Allen: I have not run across any pictures of the football team at all. I have some names in that first year , Chernoff, Zaminsky, Strayer, Schneider, Dolan, Kirschbloom, Siviero, Scalzi, DeRosa, Sisko, Kerns, Cody, Keenan, Street, Tillman, Franzer, Pockross , that was it, that was the early part . By the end of the season, the names had changed quite a bit. Was this because people were being hurt and couldn't play or did they just drop out?

Massey: Well , I think the main reason was we were being shal-lacked so badly and some of them were dropping out.

Allen: I know that we were, the faculty agreed to let them the evening students play and that's where they came from. Now how did the baseball team do, do you recall?

Massey: No I don't recall what the baseball team did.

Allen: Where did you play your games?

Massey: We played some at Seaside Park and I don't remember where we went or what we did, I don't recall .

Allen: I realize this is an awfully long time ago .

Massey: Let's see, one, two, three, four, five , six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. The same twelve, I guess. And well so I don't remember what we did.

Allen: O.K. Let's turn to another part . And a few other ques-tions about the jr. college ? Why did you go to the Jr. College in the first place?

Massey: Well, I went to the Jr. College for two reasons, in the first place , I couldn't afford to go any place else and I lived at home and my dad was the only one working , there were four of us and it made it financially convenient to go there.

Allen: And did you have a scholarship to go on to Columbia?

Massey: No

Allen: O.K. do you recall any of the work that Cortright did in helping you to get into Columbia.

Massey: I know Cortright did a lot of work in helping us to get into the various schools that we got into. He worked real hard ,

you know, I don't know exactly what he did but

Allen: Do you remember Mr. Cortright very much?

Massey: No, I don't I remember him. He was a tireless worker. He did a great job but I don't remember too much.

Allen: That was 60 years ago. Mr. Henderson, who was on the faculty and did some coaching of the baseball team, do you remember him?

Massey: I remember a little about him. Mr. Henderson took the job of coaching but I don't think he really was what you would call a coach today. He took the job and of course he had nothing to work with and it was really interesting that the few students we had that we were able to form teams and get out and play these

Allen: Now I've been at the Jr. College and University for 40 years and I never knew that we had athletic teams in the Jr. College, particularly football, baseball and basketball I could see, but football and I know what an expensive operation that is today.

Massey: And to form a team with 12 people.

Allen: You came very close. We had 12 people on my high school team my last year at the end of the year. You played the whole game or else. I know how that went. You mentioned Zampierre here a little bit ago. Do you remember much about him?

Massey: Well, Zampierre was, he taught the foreign languages and he was admired by all the students in that effect he would have them over to his house for dinner a few times, and he was a good teacher and a great guy. As a matter of fact all the teacher must have done a good job.

Allen: They had something to work with too. But the small classes, dedicated teaching and pioneering spirit on the part of both the students and the faculty, and a tremendous record was compiled by that first class and subsequent classes.

Massey: At Columbia when I first went there, I tried commuting and I did it for six months and then I quit. I took a residency down at the dormitory.

Allen: Anyone who commutes to New York has my sympathy.

Massey: It's a tough job, the time on the train and getting up to meet the trains; but I only did it for six months and then I stayed down there.

Allen: So you, did you remember Victor Romano very well.

Massey: Oh yes, I remember Vic very well.

Allen: I didn't know him, I know his widow. Tell me a little bit about him.

Massey: Well, Vic was, he wasn't tall, he was short, probably a little shorter than I am. He was a little stocky and I think he went to the Maryland School of Dentistry. And he came back, he opened up a practice on the Cor. of East Main and Boston Ave. His home, which was just behind the office or to the side was supposed to be a house where Geo. Washington slept. And Vic took care of my teeth all the while he was alive so we were real good friends, and he developed cancer of the lungs, I think, and he couldn't have been too old when he died. He must have been in his early 60's. I know when he first started out he used to, one of the girls in our class was his girl friend, Davis, I think her name was. And you know, I haven't seen this book in 40 years. I was just lucky to find it and I don't know what else to tell you about him.

Allen: O.K. Well you've been very helpful, much more so than you realize because you've been able to fill in a couple of little gaps that I need and one of the big problems in reconstructing a period of time are these little gaps that constantly appear. And you have been very helpful in this and I appreciate it.

Massey: I think the interesting part of it all is that for the first year class is only, there were-what 10 or 12 students and we did so many things. Organize the alumni, had a jr. prom, had a baseball team, a football team, and yet maintained a good scholastic record.

Allen: And then to go on to do such great records. One final question, there wasn't a basketball team while you were there.

Massey: No

Allen: I think that didn't start until 1930 but again I like to double check on those. Well I thank you very, very much Sir, and this will be the end of this tape.