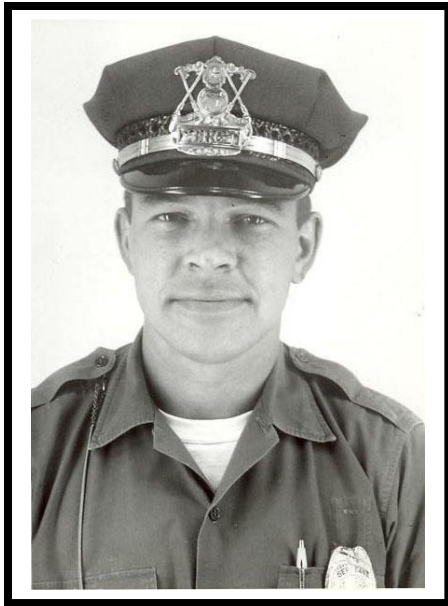
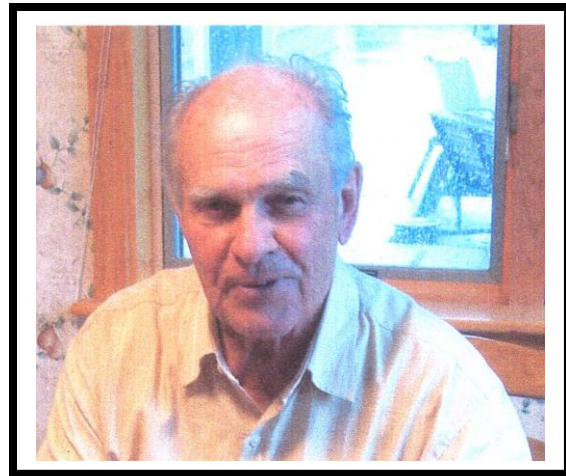


Transcription of Saint Paul Police Oral History Interview with

Chief
William McCutcheon



Sergeant McCutcheon
1963



Bill McCutcheon
2008

Saint Paul Police Officer
January 4, 1954 – July 15, 1992

Interviewed July 7, 2006

By
Kate Cavett of HAND in HAND Productions
at
The McCutcheon northern home in Spring Brook, Wisconsin

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All photographs are from William McCutcheon's personal photo collection or from the Saint Paul Police Department's personnel files.

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2008**

ORAL HISTORY

Oral History is the spoken word in print.

Oral histories are personal memories shared from the perspective of the narrator. By means of recorded interviews oral history documents collect spoken memories and personal commentaries of historical significance. These interviews are transcribed verbatim and minimally edited for accessibility. Greatest appreciation is gained when one can read an oral history aloud.

Oral histories do not follow the standard language usage of the written word. Transcribed interviews are not edited to meet traditional writing standards; they are edited only for clarity and understanding. The hope of oral history is to capture the flavor of the narrator's speech and convey the narrator's feelings through the timbre and tempo of speech patterns.

An oral history is more than a family tree with names of ancestors and their birth and death dates. Oral history is recorded personal memory, and that is its value. What it offers complements other forms of historical text, and does not always require historical collaboration. Oral history recognizes that memories often become polished as they sift through time, taking on new meanings and potentially reshaping the events they relate.

Memories shared in oral histories create a picture of the narrator's life – the culture, food, eccentricities, opinions, thoughts, idiosyncrasies, joys, sorrows, passions – the rich substance that gives color and texture to this individual life.

Kate Cavett

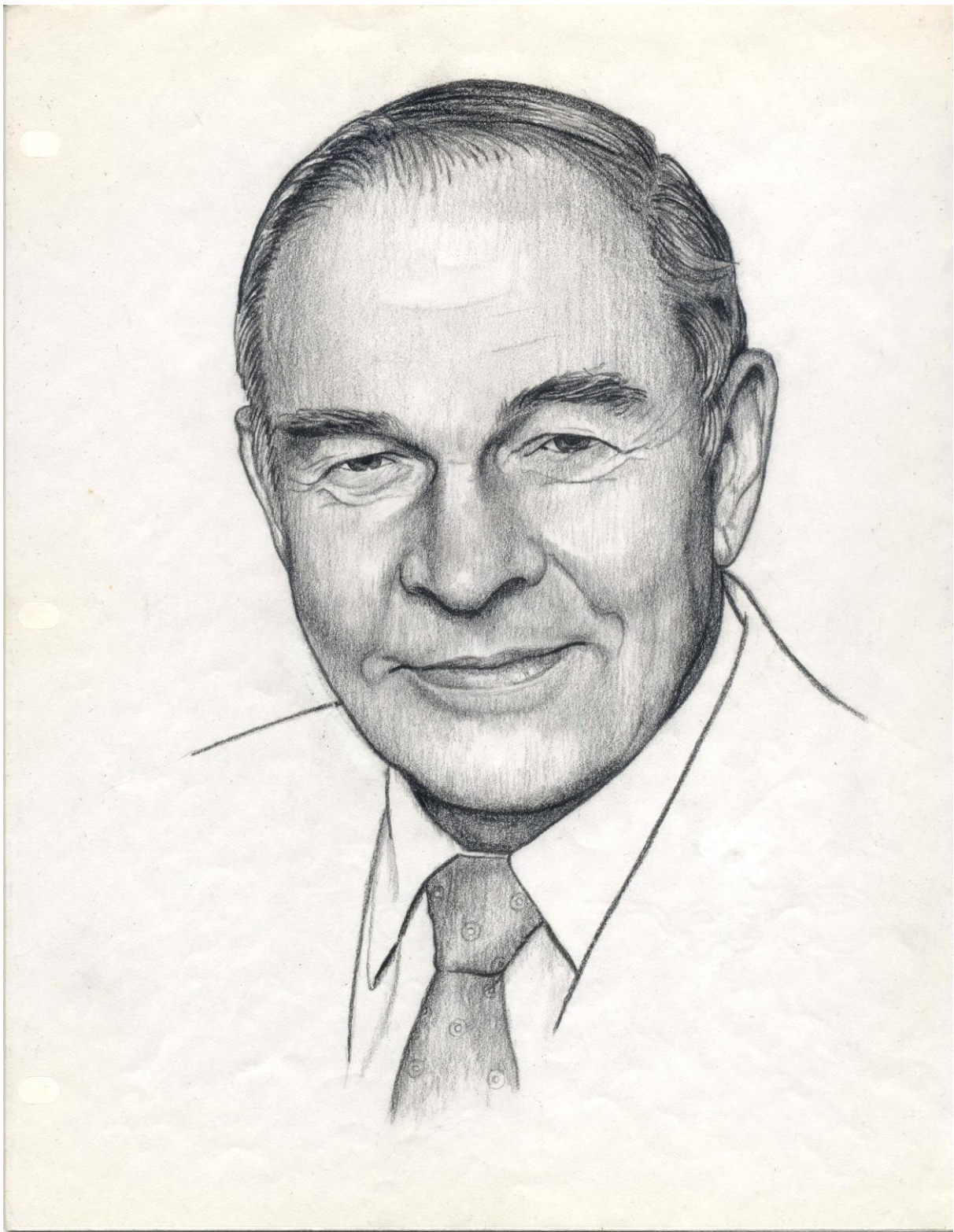
Oral Historian

HAND in HAND Productions

Saint Paul, Minnesota

651-227-5987

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Original sketch of
Chief William McCutcheon
By Forensic Artist Paul Johnson
1990

William Wallace McCutcheon
served the Saint Paul Park Police in 1948 to 1954.
Appointed patrolman for the Saint Paul Bureau of Police
January 4, 1954

Promoted:

Sergeant August 22, 1960
Lieutenant December 12, 1965
Captain June 20, 1969
Deputy Chief February 4, 1972
Chief April 1, 1980

Retired:

July 15, 1992.

KC: Kate Cavett

WM: William McCutcheon

KC: We are doing a Saint Paul Police Oral History interview with retired Chief William McCutcheon at his home in Wisconsin. Good morning, sir.

WM: Good morning.

KC: I'm so glad that you can do this.

What year did you come onto the department and what attracted you to the Saint Paul Police Department?

WM: I actually became involved in law enforcement in 1948, with the Park Police Department. I stayed there until 1954, I think it was, in January, when I took the test for the Saint Paul Police Department and came onboard.

KC: What was the training like? Did you have any specific training for the Park Police? And, did you carry a gun with the Park Police?

WM: My training with the Park Police started with working with Frank Fabio, who was on the Park Police Department. That's what it amounted to, the information that he was able to provide me and the procedures that we used. That's what it amounted to. To answer your question, yes, we had firearms.

KC: No training on firearms, but you did carry firearms.

WM: We carried the same equipment that the Saint Paul Police Department did. In fact, we were on the radio circuit, same radio system.

KC: When you moved in 1954 to the police department, was there more training that happened then?

WM: Yeah. We had Sam Hardy from the FBI, he was the old trainer and we had about thirty days of training at that time. We did that in a Public Safety building¹, up on the third floor in the old training room. Sam came in and told us stories and we listened.

KC: What did you learn from the stories?

WM: Oh, I don't know that we learned a lot. I think we learned most of our street operations with the senior officers that we were assigned with. I think that's the way it was done. It was easier in those days, you know, it just seemed to me that there was a lot more respect for the uniform. We

¹ Public Safety Building at 101 E. 10th Street was occupied 1930. All administration was centralized in the new building that also housed the Fire and the Health Departments. The health department moved out in 1958 to 555 Cedar Street. In 1985 the building was gutted for a new interior configuration. The main entrance was moved to the opposite side of the building with a new address of 100 East Eleventh Street. The headquarters operations moved to 367 Grove Street in 2004. The new building was named The James S. Griffin Building for the deceased deputy chief, who was the first Black to achieve high rank.

were able to do good things with a minimum number of men, no women, and that's the way it started.

KC: Now, you were involved as your career progressed, into changing the training of the department. What inspired you to work with others to look at, golly, maybe more training is necessary?

WM: You know the department was in turmoil, or there was a lot of unrest in the department. A report came out, the Eastman Report, which was prepared by Eastman, who was out of Michigan.

KC: About what year?

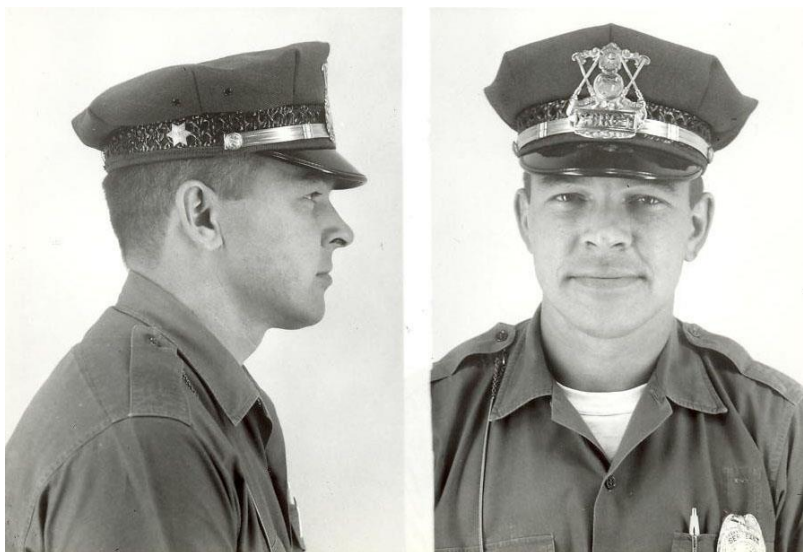
WM: That had to be in, probably, late 1950s, early '60s. What happened was when I came on the job, Tierney² was the chief, and then he died early on and then there was a series of chiefs. Neal McMahon³ came on, he had cancer and he didn't stay very long. Then there was an interim chief, the assistant chief of uniform, Frank Schmidt⁴ was the chief for a little bit.

² Charles J Tierney was appointed police operator March 21, 1921; promoted detective July 1, 1926; detective lieutenant May 6, 1931; permanent detective lieutenant February 6, 1932; provisional assistant inspector of detectives June 16, 1932; provisional inspector of detectives March 1, 1933; inspector of detectives May 12, 1933; voluntary reduction to assistant inspector of detectives July 25, 1935; inspector of detectives June 4, 1936; assistant chief November 7, 1936; chief October 1, 1943; died in office May 30, 1952.

³ Neal C. McMahon was appointed patrolman June 11, 1917; promoted detective April 16, 1921; provisional detective lieutenant August 1, 1931; detective lieutenant February 6, 1932; license inspector June 2, 1936; assistant chief of detective division February 9, 1945; chief of police August 29, 1952; deceased November 10, 1954.

⁴ Frank A. Schmidt was appointed patrolman April 30, 1919; promoted to sergeant August 1, 1927; lieutenant August 1, 1931; inspector April 23, 1936; lieutenant June 2, 1936; captain March 16, 1937; assistant chief—Uniform Division February 9, 1945; and retired September 17, 1963.

Then they had an examination and coming out of that examination was Bill Proetz⁵, Chief Proetz.



Sergeant McCutcheon
1963

It was about that time that the Eastman Report was made public. That had been engineered by a group of businessmen, businesses downtown, who felt it was necessary to get involved with the police department because of the tensions that were within the organization. That committee, I think, a representative of the Chamber at that time, they came up with a series of reports out of the Eastman Report.

⁵William F. Proetz was appointed patrolman March 1, 1937; promoted to sergeant March 16, 1948, detective September 20, 1948, lieutenant December 1949, and chief March 11, 1955; returned to detective lieutenant March 13, 1961; and retired June 12, 1963.

At the same time, Chief Proetz got into trouble by bugging the Union meeting over above the Ford garage. He was not reappointed, there was quite a bit of controversy about that. Bob Peterson threatened to quit, resign. He was the Commissioner of Public Safety at the time, but they worked through that and Proetz stepped down as chief. Then Les McAuliffe⁶ became chief, subsequently to that. It was under his leadership that we first began to put into place the recommendations, or most of the recommendations, that were made by the Eastman Report.

Lt. McCutcheon
1967



⁶ Lester E. McAuliffe was appointed patrolman March 24, 1936; promoted to sergeant December 16, 1947; detective March 16, 1948; detective lieutenant December 1, 1949; assistant chief November 15, 1955; and chief May 23, 1961; and retired March 31, 1970.

He selected Tony Tighe⁷ as the front man for that change. Tony, I really don't know how he got selected, but in any event, I was asked if I would go into training and I said, yeah, I'd give it a go. So, I went into training and then started out under Tony Tighe, and we started the changing of the training methods.

Then we created kind of a Plans and Training Division. We brought into that division, myself, Larry McDonald⁸, Ted Fahey⁹. Will Jyrkas¹⁰ came onboard. We had Tony Policano¹¹ was in there for awhile. Can't remember who else. Ruby Abelson¹² was our secretary for awhile, she was the wife of a naval officer, who had retired, and they lived on the east side. She was there for quite awhile until she retired and then when she

⁷ Anthony J. Tighe was appointed reserve patrolman March 10, 1941; patrolman full-time August 3, 1941; promoted to detective February 18, 1949; and retired July 30, 1979.

⁸ Laurence Francis McDonald was appointed patrolman July 11, 1955; promoted to sergeant February 26, 1966; lieutenant January 14, 1971; captain July 5, 1989; lieutenant January 12, 1991; captain August 31, 1991; commander January 1, 2000; and retired March 31, 1995. Awarded the Medal of Merit Class B on August 26, 1993.

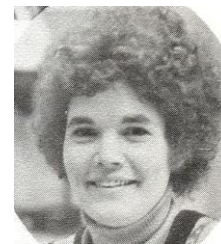
⁹ Theodore C. Fahey was appointed patrolman October 13, 1947; promoted to sergeant September 16, 1955; lieutenant December 18, 1965; captain December 9, 1972; and retired April 20, 1981.

¹⁰ Wilfred O. Jyrkas was appointed patrolman July 29, 1949; promoted to sergeant August 11, 1960; lieutenant December 14, 1965; captain November 29, 1971; and retired August 28, 1986.

¹¹ Anthony Angelo Policano was appointed patrolman April 24, 1961; promoted sergeant May 6, 1972; lieutenant November 20, 1976; retired April 27, 1990; and deceased April 1999.

¹² Ruby J. Abelson was appointed Jr clerk-stenographer August 15, 1962; clerk stenographer November 5, 1962; transfer to Bureau of Police May 1, 1963; certified clerk stenographer III January 7, 1964; resigned June 6, 1975.

retired Carole Yoswa¹³ took over. Carol had been a secretary, I think, with a group over in Ramsey County, and she worked there and we asked her to come onboard and she did. That's how she got started.



Carol Harren Yoswa
1975

Clarence Lauth¹⁴, Tony Policano really were instrumental in getting her onboard. They were both involved in working with federal grants, we had a lot of federal money at that time, too, so it was possible that we could do a lot of things that prior to that time we weren't able to do. That money came down through the LEAA—Law Enforcement Assistance Agency. They threw a lot of money and we gathered as much as we could.

KC: Training police more extensively was a new concept at that time. What were some of the innovative things that you were able to look at and start doing?

WM: Well, you know, I don't really know that I can answer that specifically, but I had a feeling that what we were doing, we were focusing on the academy training, and we kept reinforcing our own beliefs. And, so, I got to thinking that what we wanted to do was get an officer with a broader base of experience before he came to the academy. And the only way I

¹³ Carole J. Harren Yoswa was hired as a clerk typist November 22, 1971 in the mayor's office; transferred to the Bureau of Police June 4, 1973; promoted to clerk steno 1974; secretary-stenographer 1986; coordinator of administration support; title change to executive assistant I July 2006; and retired March 30, 2007. Carole served as secretary to Chief McCutcheon.

¹⁴ Clarence F. Lauth, Jr. was appointed patrolman April 24, 1961; promoted to sergeant November 21, 1970; and retired December 2, 1983.

could see to do that was to provide some way to get these young guys out of college. Well, that was a way I kind of thought, okay. During the time that Les McAuliffe was chief, I moved up the ranks and I eventually headed that whole Plans and Training Division.

When Les retired in 1980, there was a competition for chief of police and coming out of that competition there was three, actually, four candidates. Bob LaBathe¹⁵ and I were tied for third, and they said they had carried out the scoring to the thousandths, which I always was a little bit suspicious of civil service from that time on. But in any event, Dick Rowan¹⁶ became chief and I was disappointed because I thought I was going to be chief. Perhaps it worked out that I wasn't. Bob Pavlak¹⁷ was working in the office with me at the time and he suggested, why don't you run for public office, because there's an opening in your district and there's no candidate there. So, I said, "Well, how do you do that?" because I wasn't very much involved in politics, although, I was involved in a lot of things in the community not necessary in the political end of it. So, he showed me where to go over to the courthouse. So, I took twenty dollars and went over and signed up and never spent another nickel of my own money. But in any event, you know, you go through that process, the preliminaries.

¹⁵ Robert F. LaBathe was appointed patrolman July 6, 1948; promoted to detective September 16, 1955; deputy chief April 17, 1964; acting chief April 1, 1970; returned to deputy chief June 30, 1970; emergency chief January 1, 1980; deputy chief April 2, 1980; retired July 18, 1986.

¹⁶ Richard H. Rowan (1922-2005) was appointed patrolman October 13, 1947; promoted detective June 20, 1965; deputy chief April 17, 1964; chief June 30, 1970; and retired December 31, 1979.

¹⁷ Robert L. Pavlak, Jr. was appointed patrolman July 25, 1949; promoted to sergeant September 16, 1955; lieutenant November 29, 1971; and retired July 31, 1981.

Marlene and I were up here in Wisconsin when the primary contest was going on and we were driving back to town, late that night, and the old guy from CCO—[WCCO Radio], he was on radio and he made the announcement while we were listening that I hadn't made it to the finals. So, we laughed about it, Marlene and I did. Went home and went to bed and along about 1:00 in the morning, Jack Richards, who was my campaign manager, called and said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm sleeping." And, he said, "You know, you made it to primaries." He said, "The last precinct put you over, so now we've got to prepare for the general election." So, we did. I had a good crew, I had John Sterner and Angie Wozniak was there and Tony. So we put together a campaign. We had a nice campaign, got elected and I went up there and I stayed there from 1970 to 1980.

One of the things that happened was that I was able, at that time, to work on my ideas and finally, after many battles, we were able to create the requirements for the officers that they had to have, at least, two years, an associate degree, to be eligible to become law enforcement. And, as usual, when you start a licensing process, you had to grandfather all those officers that were in, so we did that, and then we put in a requirement for

- continuing education. We created a Post Board¹⁸ and all that. And that, I think, was the single best thing that I ever did.
- KC: I concur with you that it was a great thing that made a huge difference in Minnesota law enforcement, What is your educational background, sir?
- WM: I've got a degree in business administration.
- KC: And did you get that before you joined the Park Police?
- WM: No, after.
- KC: So, as you were going through the ranks yourself, you got the degree?
- WM: Yes. I think like many guys are doing that today. It's really great to see that they're getting beyond the bachelor's degree. Going into master's and doctor's, you know, that gives the law enforcement community a great deal more credibility when they're dealing with these people from different disciplines.
- KC: Totally, and the new chief is considering for a language requirement. It's not formal, but with fifty to sixty percent of the kids in our schools second language learners, he's asking that candidates be able to speak another language. So, as we continue to evolve, if you hadn't help laid the foundation of the importance of education, he wouldn't be able to look at that.

¹⁸ The Minnesota legislature created the Minnesota Peace Officer Training Board (MPOTB) in 1967 to regulating the practice of law enforcement. In 1977 several legislative amendments were added to create Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST Board) and the first law enforcement occupational licensing system in the USA. This system established law enforcement licensing and training requirements and set standards for law enforcement agencies and officers. Minnesota officers are required to have a two year degree and 48 CEU —continuing education credits every three years.

WM: You know it's kind of interesting as an aside, in California bilingual education is teaching English and here bilingual education is teaching something other than English, and that's in the same country. Interesting.

KC: Very interesting.

Was it much of a fight in the legislature to raise the standards?

WM: It was because there was also the other argument that there should be a statewide police academy. So we had to overcome that battle, which was pretty much ingrained in the system, in the government, we had a lot of battles. We had a lot of good discussions, too. It comes out that if you really believe in what you're doing and you stay with it long enough and hard enough, it usually comes to pass. And it did come to pass.

But at the same time, you know, as I stayed in the legislature, I had more opportunities to have a say-so in things. Later on I became chair of the tax community and so I had an opportunity then to do some things that were good. I also carried the determinant of sentencing bill, which was another great big battle. But there again, I had been to the Stillwater Prison several times, they made a good argument for the fact that, there again, education was the issue, you could take early morning bird calls or whistling in the dark or whatever, and earn credit for it, which I thought was really stupid. If you look at determinant sentencing, and I suppose, it has changed over time, because they keep fiddling with it, but if you killed a pig in northern Minnesota, you got the same sentence as if you committed armed robbery in the Twin Cities, which none of it made sense. So they passed determinative sentencing. That was really something, I think, that sort of

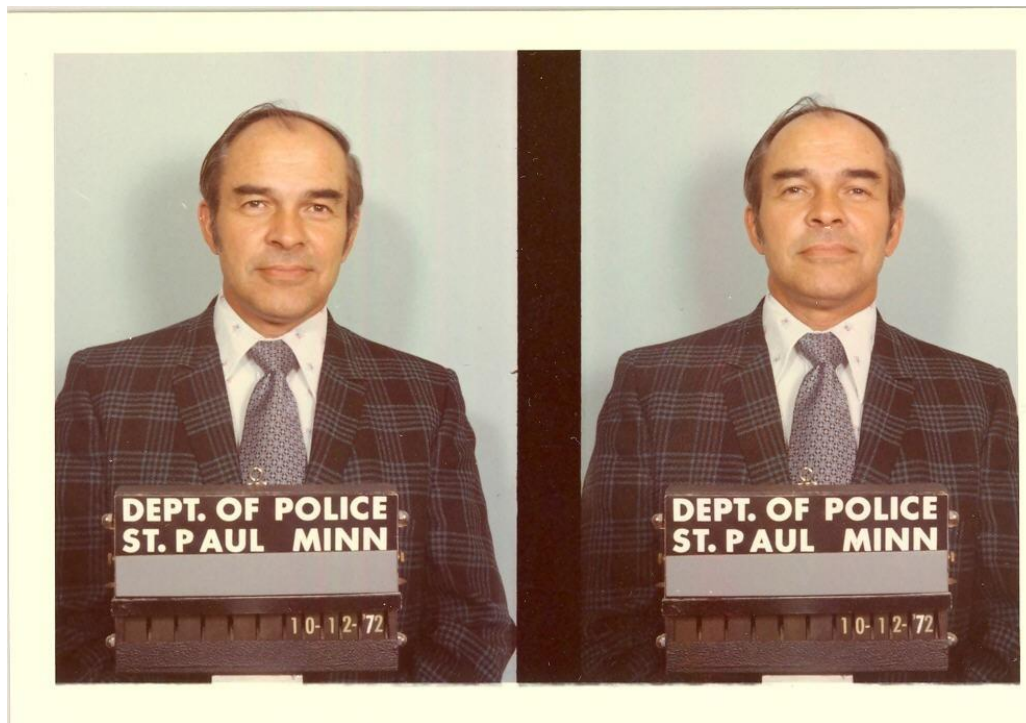
took hold across the country. We were probably the first or second state in the nation that went to determinant sentencing. I know I went down to Kentucky to talk about it. So, it was something that we got a lot of inquiry about. Anyhow, that was part of my life.

KC: When you were starting this training in Saint Paul, were there other models that you had? Were other departments doing a lot of training or this raising the standard, was this fairly a unique concept?

WM: No, I think it was pretty unique. We had Bob Hobart, who was very good, came onboard with us and did a lot work in teaching and helping us to evaluate what we needed to do. We started out in the Armory and we went to thirty days, we had firearms training. We wanted to do some things. We invited people in to share with us their ideas about this “thing” called law enforcement. We were pretty innovative, I think. We started and a lot of departments then followed. We did a lot of training for other departments. We had other officers come in.

KC: Do you remember any specific courses that you developed and taught?

WM: No, not really. I did at one time teach writing. We had problems with names and so we used to put together names, you know, how to spell names and that sort of thing, but that’s my involvement. Then I did, later on, I talked about the department and how it operated and that sort of thing. The communications are all in writing, or ones that are part of the record, at least.



Deputy Chief William McCutcheon 1972

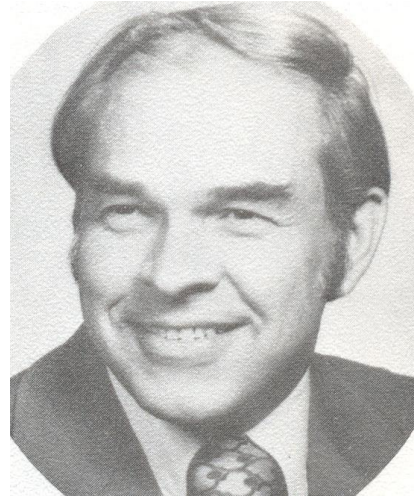
KC: One of the issues that came up in the early 1970s, was this lawsuit that Miles Lord¹⁹ said you have to expand the department. You were deputy chief then after 1972.

WM: Miles Lord is quite a judge. He and I got along real good. I think I would have been in contact with him during this time. One of the things we did was, we went out and actually recruited minorities candidates, Black candidates. We went into the Black community and found people willing to come onboard and they became community officers, as I recall. And from the community officers, they could be promoted into being police

¹⁹ Judge Miles Lord, Minnesota Attorney General 1955-1960, US Attorney 1961-1966, US District Judge 1966-1985.

officers. There was a time, I think, we only had five or six or seven that came in, I can't remember exactly.

Deputy Chief McCutcheon
1975



KC: I know that there wasn't an academy from 1972 to '75 because of this order from Judge Miles Lord that there had to be enough Black candidates in the academy. In the 1975 academy Debbie Montgomery²⁰ came onto the department as the first Black woman.

WM: I don't really remember that, but I know that Debbie competed, Debbie was quite an athlete, she was a very good athlete. I think she's lead umpire in the City League, but she came down and she competed with all those guys. We had that physical training course set up in the auditorium and yeah, I remember, she was an amazing lady. She competed with all

²⁰ Deborah "Debbie" Louise Montgomery was the first female to complete the same academy as male recruits and appointed police officer September 8, 1975; the first Black woman promoted to sergeant November 8, 1987; lieutenant May 29, 1998; commander January 1, 2000; senior commander February 8, 2003; retired July 31, 2003; assistant commissioner the Minnesota Department of Public Safety 1991-1998; the first Black woman to serve on the Saint Paul City Council 2004-2007.

those guys and stood right there with them. That was great, she came on the job, I guess she's still around.

Debbie Montgomery
1975



KC: No, she's retired. She retired as a senior commander and she is now a city council person.

What was it like in the department at that time, when this federal judge is telling you, you have to change the culture with more officers of color and women?

WM: It was nothing that was really particularly unique to Saint Paul. That was kind of going on all over the Country. They had raised that issue and as the lawsuits came down, why, we became one of those who were sued. We did not meet the criteria that had been established and so we had to make an adjustment.

KC: But you had to be a leader in supporting this change.

WM: I never thought it to be a big issue, to tell you the truth. I've never really looked at that as a big issue. They were part of the community and I just don't recall it was any great big issue. It was something that we had to do and we did it. Miles Lord was a very understanding federal judge, who

knew what the problem was and knew that we had to correct it, and was very helpful, I think, in getting it done.

KC: Debbie was the first woman who went through the same training as the males. After that there was an academy that brought in a large number of women in. You're in a leadership position bringing in the women. What did you do to help make that happen and work that transition through?

WM: I don't think I did anything. It had to get done, I didn't do anything. I don't know that I ever was the "hands-on" guy, I think I was sort of *this is what we need to do and you're going to do it*. And, you know, very little resistance.

I think the biggest resistance we had was in implementing the Eastman Report. But once the Department understood that we were going to do the Eastman Report, and you could fuss and muss about it, but it was going to get done, they kind of fell in line, pretty much. There were some old guys that probably didn't like me very much, probably still don't, if they're still around. But once they understood that it was going to get done, they could do it. I think there was a lot of resistance because they didn't think—well, maybe we can't do this – you know, something brand new and, I've never done it before. Once the message stayed firm and clear and they changed, they went right along, everything went very smoothly.

We changed from the eight hour day to the twenty-four hour day and that was a great big to-do about that. Larry McDonald and I sat down and, I

think, I don't know how long, we had been working on the reporting system for a long time, never seemed to get it done. Larry and I sat down and I think in a week we got the manual put together, got the manual out and started teaching how to use the manual. We changed the color of the reports and we did all those things. We just got it done. Once we got it done and got the training along with it and the rules that they were all laid out in writing. It went along swimmingly. There you were.

KC: So, I hear that your philosophy is, look at what needs to be done and just say we're going to do it, we're paramilitary and it will go smoothly.

WM: It really does, you know. And, I think, when you look at that population, you'll probably discover that there's a certain number of guys that are ahead of us, always ahead of us, and we should have been doing that, you know, six months ago. And that's always helpful, because they feed the crop and away we go.

KC: Now, there were times that you were in that crop ahead—Saint Paul was being the innovative.

WM: The reason for that is, I had a free hand, I really did. Les McAuliffe, you know, he was a real tough, stern chief, but he was also a guy who knew



Lorraine Flaherty
1975

that he wasn't cut out to be the office guy. He was a commander and he just gave me all the rope I needed, either to hang myself or to go ahead. He went on vacation one time and he came back, you had to know the chief, when he got mad a little bit of spittle come out of the corner of his mouth, you knew you better get the heck out of the way, because things

were gonna pop. I can remember, he was standing in back of Lorraine Flaherty²¹, who was his secretary. He called me in and he says, "How are things going?" And I said, "Well, we're going pretty good, we got a little problem here." And, he said, "Where's that little problem?" And geez, that little problem disappeared in about twenty minutes, he was that kind of a guy. But he also knew that the Eastman Report should, you know, the business community had spent a lot of time and money and made it possible for us to do those things and, so, we did those things.

And then, of course, there was a lot of federal money that we started writing grants for. We got that federal money. Then I had the privilege of having some contact with the McKnight Foundation. I met one time over at the Minneapolis Athletic Club with Mrs. Binger and her man who ran the McKnight Foundation and coming from that meeting we got almost a million dollars, I think it was, for the upgrading of the communication center. So it was those kinds of contacts and opportunities that we had.

One of the requirements that we negotiated with the McKnight Foundation, that if the money was to be forwarded then we had to change the communication center and try and consolidate the center into police and fire consolidation. That was a battle that was never won. The Fire Department was unable to accept the fact that it made sense to put a

²¹ Lorraine Flaherty was hired as provisional jr. clerk steno September 10, 1963; certified jr. clerk steno October 1, 1963; certified jr. clerk steno II January 7, 1964; certified clerk III August 14, 1976; and retired December 31, 1980.

single communication center in place. You know, there was remodeling that went on up there and changing, but they always had their own separate people up there.

In the mean time, the Saint Paul Police Department, took its sworn officers out of there and went to the non-sworn personnel, we went to computer aided dispatch and we went to all of those things that were new technology – it was kind of the cutting edge across the country at the time, a computer aided dispatch. So, we went that way and it worked out really well, I think, over time there were some changes made. I don't know where it is right now, but when I left it was working very well, I thought. And we put in some computers in the squad cars, I suppose they all got them now. Those things are all good. Technology really helped the department and at the same time gave everybody more information, and the more information you have, the better you can do the job.

KC: Doing a quality job, how is that culture taught? Some departments just want to do band-aid policing, and have a bunch of cowboys riding around in squads.

WM: Well, we had an Internal Affairs Unit, which was real good, very strong. We had a manual, you know, everybody had the manual. You had the training, so now we all started out on the same page and you knew what to do under certain circumstances. You knew when you could use deadly force, you knew when you could use other force or verbal. Then we had a conscience following that called the Internal Affairs. When we'd get a complaint, they'd examine it. Then when they gave the report to me, I'd

call the people in and we'd discuss it and we'd have a visit. Sometimes they'd escape and sometimes they didn't.

KC: Now, you had referred to McAuliffe's style of being chief. What was your style of being chief?

WM: If you were wrong and I knew it, you'd probably catch a little heat. But if you were under the eleventh commandment that you did it and I didn't know about it, you probably got by with it. One thing, I didn't like people to not tell the truth. You know everybody does things that are dumb at times, and if it was a dumb mistake, I could accept that. But, if you made a dumb mistake and then you try to lie about it, I didn't like that. That was one of my concerns.

KC: What was your style of management in working with the people under you? You said McAuliffe just kind of gave you a lot of free rein.

WM: Yeah. I think I gave the guys a lot of rein, free rein. As long as they stayed within our parameters, you know. They did things, they did different things. The team commanders all tried different ideas and did different things, which is okay.

KC: Now, team policing came in.

WM: Yeah. A grant.

KC: Another grant?

WM: Yeah. [Laughter]

KC: Concept out there – you got the grant, you put it in.

WM: Yeah. Then we ran into budget problems almost immediately and we had to shrink that, but the idea was really good, I think. It's still good, get those guys out of their cars and out onto the street talking to people. The

more people you know, the more friends you've got in case you need them when you're out there by yourself. So, that worked good, I think. It's still going on, I suppose. It was good and if you look at the department, you'll probably find guys that are very well indoctrinated in the various communities, you know, doing really well. And during my time, I brought in the first two Hmong officers, too. That was good, they had a connection, well, they could speak the language, first of all. They had good connections in the Hmong community and that worked out really well. Brought them onboard and put them to work.

KC: This community relations piece, how did you know that that was important? Was that part of the culture when you came on in the 1950s?

WM: No, it wasn't, I don't think. I don't know, I really don't know, you just have a sense or a feeling of something. And then if you're in a position to try it, you should try it. I know we tried it and it worked.

KC: At one point you were in Highland Park, weren't you squad 302 in Highland Park?

WM: Yeah, worked 302 for a long time.

KC: Talk about that.

WM: That was a good district to work. I had good partners. I had Ralph Drassal²² and George Dearborn²³. We had a good district down there, knew a lot of the people. It was a nice district to work. Not a lot of

²² Ralph M. Drassal was appointed patrolman July 11, 1955; and retired January 15, 1980.

²³ George L. Dearborn was appointed patrolman July 6, 1948; and retired February 1, 1974.

domestics, not a lot of real heavy stuff, but it was a good district to work. Got to know a lot of people, worked traffic, knew the people along the river drive, you know, stopped and talked to them. Knew the restaurant owners, just got really acquainted with the people.

KC: Do you like people?

WM: Sometimes, yeah. I think we get along pretty good, most of the time.

KC: Are you from Saint Paul?

WM: No, actually, I was born in Hayward, Wisconsin. From there we moved to Hammond, Wisconsin, moved out to Montana, lived in Iowa for a little bit, but eventually came to Parkers Prairie, Minnesota and from there to Saint Paul in 1936 or '37, I think.

KC: What brought you to Saint Paul?

WM: Welfare. Was on welfare.

KC: This is with your parents?

WM: Yeah, we were on welfare and I remember having to go downtown to the welfare store. You get your boots and your pants, and they were all the same size, and everybody, when you went to school, knew you were on welfare.

KC: So, you had done some growing up in Saint Paul?

WM: Yeah.

KC: But not in the Highland Park area.

WM: Never.

KC: So, you're getting to know the people in Highland Park and finding that it works for you?

WM: Oh yeah, in addition to working out there, I also went to work for Jerry, he had a TV shop on Grand Avenue, and I took a course on electronics, TV and radio repair and all that other sort of stuff, and then I went to work for him part-time. So, I worked out there, but then I knew people from running house calls out there, too.

KC: How did that make a difference in your being a street officer and your solving crimes.

WM: I don't know that I solved a lot of crimes, I really don't think I did. I came on in 1954 and I made sergeant in 1960. Anyhow I hadn't been sergeant very long when I was asked to go inside, so I came off the street rather early. And then my other street experience I had, was when we ran, I had the Intelligence Unit for awhile, and I ran that. We did a lot of things with that.

KC: So that would indicate to me that early on they saw you having management ability, if they're pulling you inside.

WM: I came out of the Park Police, you know, I ran the Park Police before I came [to Saint Paul Police. I was a sergeant in charge of the Park Police, I quit that job to come over to the city.

Shortly after I became sergeant they asked me to go into training. That's what started it. Actually, when I think about it, Tom Shanley²⁴ was the head of the Union at the time, his daddy was on the job, and he asked me

²⁴ Thomas H. Shanley was appointed motor patrolman April 16, 1921; leave of absence December 27, 1921 – June 21, 1925; appointed patrolman December 2, 1926; provisional detective March 10, 1932; reinstated patrolman August 1, 1932; military leave December 12, 1942; reinstated patrolman November 21, 1945; retired August 23, 1965; and deceased February 25, 1983.

if I'd go in training and that's the Union, the Federation, I guess, really was the one to ask me if I'd be willing to try it. So, that's when I went inside and they pulled together that group and that's what started it.

KC: So does that mean that the Union or the Federation saw that you were a strong supporter of the line officers?

WM: I don't know about that, they sued the hell out of me.

KC: Tell me that story.

WM: Well, you know, we needed some undercover people, we needed some people that were not brought in the traditional way, so. Rafe²⁵, who was the head of the civil service, and I got together and he agreed to allow me to work it out so that I could bring somebody in that no one knew. So, I did that, well, the Federation got wise to it after awhile.

KC: Do you remember who that was that you brought in?

WM: Yeah, it was a young man out of suburban –

KC: A Latino man?

WM: Yeah.

KC: Bill Martinez²⁶?

WM: Yeah, Bill Martinez. In fact, I saw him being a candidate for San Antonio chief.

KC: He's our senior commander in the East District.

²⁵ Rafael Viscasillas was head of Saint Paul's civil service 1985-1991.

²⁶ William Martinez was a Minnetonka Police Officer 1984 – 1987. He was hired to work undercover through a lateral transfer to the Saint Paul Personnel Department October 5, 1987, with a job title of administrative/management assistant. He was transferred to SPPD as a police officer November 5, 1988; promoted sergeant June 19, 1994; lieutenant July 3, 1999; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander June 12, 2004.

WM: Yeah, well, he was a bright guy.

KC: Yes, he's very bright.

WM: We brought him onboard to do the undercover work and he reported and all, we had a person that he contacted and all that stuff. Well, the Federation got aware of that and they sued me for that. I went to court about it and I lost that battle. I couldn't do that anymore the judge said. So, they sued me for that. Then I went to sell my house after I was going to get out of there and they put a lien on my house without me knowing about it. ha, ha, ha]

KC: So they sued you personally?

WM: Oh, yeah. They put a lien on my house, but they took it off right away, because the city had paid the judgment. I think it was for twelve, maybe, twelve thousand dollars, I don't know what it was for, it was for a small amount of money, but in meanness, they put the lien on just to be ornery, but they took it off right, too. They probably forgot about it, too, because time has a tendency to do that. But, you know, that's the way it went.

We had a lot of battles within the Department about what I would do and what the Federation didn't think I should be able to do. I won some and I lost some, but I think on balance the fact that I did that, kept sending a clear message to the rank and file that would happen to you, what could happen to you.

KC: That you were going to continue to do what you saw as best?

WM: What I thought was right. Sometimes I was right and sometimes I was wrong.

KC: And different than some other departments, that it appears, maybe, that the rank and file are running the department, rather than the chief.

WM: Well, I don't think that ever happened in Saint Paul.

KC: Saint Paul has a strong chief structure.

WM: Excellent. In fact, Minneapolis copied it in a way, in a fashion. [Minneapolis instituted a three year term certain²⁷ around Tony Bouza's²⁸ tenure.] It's a great idea and that was born many, many years ago after our fiasco in the 1930s.²⁹ And that *term certain*³⁰ does give you a certain amount of strength, 'cause the only way you can be dismissed with malfeasance or not and those are

Chief Richard Rowan
1975



²⁷ Minneapolis' 3 year *term certain* went into practice January 2, 1980.

²⁸ Anthony "Tony" V. Bouza was appointed Minneapolis Police Chief February 11, 1980, and retired December 31, 1988.

²⁹ Saint Paul had eight different chiefs between 1930 – 1939. During this gangster era there was significant corruption within the Bureau of Police.

³⁰ Saint Paul Police Chief's six year term certain and it's selection process has been in Saint Paul City charter since 1936. Upon a chief vacancy the city council forms the examinations and qualifications committee of citizen appointees from the mayor, council and members of human resources. This committee outlines the guidelines for the selection process. Their job is to deliver to the mayor five candidates, and they designate one of the five candidates number one. The mayor can pick any one of the five. But the council has to ratify the appointment by a majority vote. If the council doesn't ratify the mayor's choice, then number one candidate gets the job for a six year term. The first year the chief is on probation where you can be dismissed for probationary reasons. After that, it takes cause—malfeasance, misfeasance, nonfeasance—and five votes of a seven member council to dismiss for cause. Malfeasance is committing a crime. Misfeasance is incompetent. And nonfeasance is just not show up to work. This creates a strong chief position.

pretty difficult charges to prove. So, it does give the chief a base of power.

I decided to look back, the chiefs have used it pretty appropriately.

KC: Well, now, you had gone for chief when Rowan was?

WM: Yes. begin

KC: And Rowan was there for?

WM: Ten years, from 1970 to '80. He retired in his second term.

KC: So, you went for chief again? Did you campaign?

WM: No. See, I was at that time, I was also the chairman of the tax committee.

I represented a real good district on the east side of Saint Paul and they had returned me to office with continuing increases and popularity percentages to win. So, I was in a very good position and Nick Coleman was the majority leader at the time. He and I were riding south on down to Cannon Falls to visit with somebody and we got to talking about what I was going to do. And I said, "Well, I think maybe I'll take the chief's job." And we talked some more and he finally understood my desire, so he supported me strongly for that, too. He was a great leader, Nick was a good leader and he never got, in my mind, the recognition that was his due. He did a marvelous job as a leader of the political party and as leader of the majority in the senate.

KC: He's had some good press lately, because his youngest son is our current mayor ³¹.

³¹ Christopher B. Colman was Saint Paul mayor 2006-

WM: Well, one of them is a liberal. Nick, Jr., I suppose it is. He is a columnist [for the Minneapolis Star Tribune.]

KC: When you decided that you wanted to be chief, was there the process that we have now? Were there a lot of community gatherings or was it pretty much a shoe-in, you let the people know and . . .?

WM: No, there was a testing. You know they tested everybody. The testing was pretty usual. The testing process was under a special commission, as I recall. The first time it wasn't, I don't know whether it was the second time or not. The first time that I competed for chief, you know, they wouldn't let me take it. So, I did a lot of research and found out that I should be eligible and I went to the Police Commission and laid out all my arguments and they finally agreed that I could take it. Well then they opened it up to everybody who could breathe, probably, but we all competed. There was a great number of us competing. That's when Dick [Rowan] got the job. That may have been the last time that the Police Commission did that. The second time we competed was under civil service. Well, they brought in a group of people that put that test together. I don't know where they hired them from, they were outsiders and they hired them to come in and conduct the examination for the chief. That was the way it worked the second time, yeah.

KC: What was your relationship with Rowan? You were his deputy chief.

WM: You know, Dick passed away [in 2005], Dick and I lived together down in Sun City, Texas. We went to breakfast every Wednesday morning at the I-Hop and we lied to each other every morning about all the good things that took place when we were there, but he was a good chief.

He tells a story– I was really disappointed when I didn’t make chief that first time because of the information that I had received from a variety of people in the city that I should be ready to go down to city council because I were going to get the job and that didn’t happen. And so when it didn’t happen, I got a call and they said it wasn’t going to happen for certain reasons and I was really mad. I was angry. Well, Dick got the job. I sat in my office and fumed, like, you know, like a spoiled kid, I suppose. But I fumed for awhile and finally I thought, *well, you got to work through this somehow*. So, I went in the office and Dick was still there, it was late, because I was still in my office late. After we got to talking, he said, “I was going to sit here until you came in. . .” he said, “I knew you’d come in.” That started our relationship and we had a real strong relationship, all through his tenure and then after I became chief we still had strong ties. And we retired, and we still had. We were a couple east side guys, you know.

KC: He appointed you deputy chief in 1972.

WM: Yeah.

Deputy Chief James S. Griffin
1979



KC: What was it like with the Griffin lawsuit³²?

WM: It didn't really affect me, I'd been appointed and Jim³³ was mad, he was probably like I was. So, he did what he told Dick he was going to do. He said, "I'm going to start a lawsuit." And Dick told him, "Go ahead and do it."

Well then that put [Mayor] Larry Cohen³⁴, he was, Larry was struggling, I guess with that, because Dick had told him that he was going to appoint me above, over Jim, because he needed what I had to offer. So, Larry had said to go ahead and do that. So, it goes all the way out. But then Jim came in and was upset and he said there was no precedent. Well, I did some research there was precedent of bypassing the top guy. There was a great big controversy then and so coming out of that was my creating the four divisions.

KC: So, you came back and suggested, let's have –

³² In July 1972, the civil service examination for deputy chief of police was posted. James Griffin received the highest score and was number one on the civil serves roster. Chief Rowan consulted with Mayor Cohen, then appointed the number two man on the list, William McCutcheon as deputy chief. The ability to appoint one of the top three candidates, the "3 in 1 Rule," was part of civil service procedure. But, Griffin filed a law suit under the belief that a thirty year precedent of appointing the number one man was broken. Legally McCutcheon's appointment would stand, but there was significant community unset over this as a political of the issue. The issue was settled out of court by the reorganization of the police department to create a fourth deputy chief position for Griffin. When Griffin was appointed deputy chief on October 6, 1972, he became the first Black in the State of Minnesota to hold the rank of sergeant, captain and deputy chief.

³³ James Stafford Griffin (July 6, 1917 – November 23, 2002) was appointed reserve patrolman August 6, 1941; patrolman full-time August 1942; the first Black male to be promoted to sergeant September 16, 1955; and captain March 2, 1970; and deputy chief October 6, 1972; and retired August 31, 1983.

³⁴ Laurence Cohen was Saint Paul Mayor 1972 – 1976; Ramsey County Commissioner, 1970-1972; Ramsey County/Second Judicial District Judge 1988 – 2004.

WM: They wanted me to figure out some way, so I figured out a four division. It was plausible and it was something that you could argue one way or the other, but it was a plausible thing to do and we did that and that shut down the controversy, I think, although I'm not sure. So that's how that happened. Coming out of that, I think more importantly, was recognition that you didn't have to appoint the top person. Now, later on it's very much an appointing process now from that.

When I became chief, I went before the Civil Service Commission and was able to convince them that at least I ought to be able to appoint my deputy chiefs. And then, I think, from that they expanded down the line some. But there was a need, I thought, for the chief to have his own team, because you're going to rise and fall on what your team did. I was very careful of my first appointment, I appointed a real good street cop—John Nord³⁵ first appointed deputy chief. I had two chiefs by civil service, Don



Deputy Chief John Nord
1983

³⁵ John Clay Nord was appointed patrolman August 27, 1965; promoted sergeant December 21, 1968; lieutenant February 17, 1973; captain December 21, 1977; deputy chief February 9, 1984; and retired January 25, 1991.

Blakely³⁶ and Chief LaBathe, but I had a vacancy, my vacancy, and so I was able to convince them that we should fill that vacancy and then subsequently other vacancies.

KC: Didn't you then take it back to just two deputy chiefs?

WM: At one time I did for a budget cut, yeah. We did do that. But, you know, during my tenure we expanded and we shrank and we expanded, so it became a, sometimes, a very disgusting thing that you had to do. You promote somebody and then you had to demote him. It had to be very frustrating for the guys, even more so than for me.

KC: How did you deal with budget crunches?

WM: I fought like hell. I met with the city council people, I worked hard. I had a lot of knowledge and I was able to apply that knowledge, you know, historical knowledge, about how to do things and how to get things done, and I think that I had more knowledge than those who I was dealing with. So, I was able sometimes to get things done that people didn't think I could get done, but I got them done. Knowledge is power, you got a lot of knowledge, a lot of background, a lot of understanding where you're going, what you're going to do, most people will listen to you and you get things done.

KC: So those ten years in the legislature gave you a whole other set of skills?

³⁶ Donald Blakely was appointed to the Saint Paul Park Police for four years then was appointed patrolman January 4, 1954; promoted to detective March 1, 1962; captain August 28, 1968; deputy chief December 26, 1970; and retired January 31, 1984.

WM: Yes. I think that's true and I also was involved in a lot of legislation that affected the City of Saint Paul, so, it all came to help me out in the end.

KC: Now, you had to resign from the legislature when you became chief.

WM: Yes. Resigned in July, so they didn't have to appoint somebody in July. I think the 15th of July I resigned, but I stayed in there until the date passed that they had to have a special election. So I saved money. [Laughter]

KC: What are some of the ways you saved money in the Department, because the federal money got dried up?

WM: Yes, it did. One time we went to little cars, compact automobiles. We did that for awhile. Then we had some problems, some of the guys were so big they couldn't get in the little cars, so we had to have a few regular size cars, but we went to little cars. They grouched about it, but they drove them and we saved money that way. The cars were cheaper and less expensive to run. We went to one-man patrol cars. We cut that out, we went to one-man cars, actually, one-man cars worked out pretty good, I think. I don't know whether they're still doing that or not, but a one-man car with the technology and everything you have now days, pretty good. Then we changed the way we did things. We expected that if John got a call, why Larry would run in on the call, so you know that there would be somebody that was available to back you up or start in your direction, just in case you got into a box. We did that, I don't know what all we did.

KC: What was your biggest challenge as being chief?

WM: I didn't have any big challenges. Let me think. Probably the biggest challenge was budget, money. Money was the big challenge. You had the money and you had the programs and you got the people, you could get

things done. And I think we did when we were operating the way we should be operating with what we had. We never had an over abundance of people, I don't think, but we had enough to get the job done and the innovations that we had and the culture that we had, made it happen.

KC: Was there ever a time when you really didn't think you had enough people to get the job done? When budget cuts had cut you back so much.

WM: Yeah, what we did though, we went to different ideas. We use to send a radio car on all the calls. We went to phone-in reporting, so we saved a lot of time and then we picked up the time that we could use for the more serious calls. And the less serious calls, we wrote the paperwork on it and filed it and that's what would have happened, in any event. So, we picked up street time and we went to civilian dispatchers, we picked up officers there. We took officers out of jobs that we traditionally had sworn personnel in. So, you shrank your reserve to zero, almost, but we were able to get the street job done. That's really what we're measured on is what we did on the street.

The other thing I did was, everybody had a uniform, so even though you were in the investigative function, you had to have a uniform so that when you were called back you had a uniform to wear, we did that. So that gave us more manpower, traditionally detectives didn't have street responsibility, but under the sergeant investigative concept they had both. They had the investigative responsibility and also responsibility to come to work in uniform, if we needed that. So, you know, when you look at all those things, Saint Paul got a good bang for its buck.

KC: And they're still working with much less. Now, it's my illusion that the Eastman Report was about taking kind of the two divisions, the Detective Division and the . . . was combining, so that there weren't the detectives anymore.

WM: Well, if you look at the history of the Department and the promotional ranks were like this, if you wanted to stay in uniform, you went this way and you became a sergeant. A sergeant was paid less than a detective. If you went this way, you became a detective, you immediately received the same pay as a lieutenant. If you became a captain on the detective's side, you became the same as a detective lieutenant. So, that split caused all of the commotion within the department, because when you think about it, you wanted to make the most money you could, so the talent began to go to the investigative division. Well, to bear that out, when they had the first examination for deputy chief, the three finalists were investigators, Rowan, LaBathe and Freischel³⁷. So it did sort of bear out the idea that the talent was going to where the money was, detectives. And those were the three deputy chiefs that were first made under McAuliffe. Rowan, I think, went into patrol, LaBathe went to detective and Freichel had the Support Services Division and that's the way that department was organized then.

There were still detectives. We never appointed another detective, we appointed sergeants, and sergeants and detectives worked together, but there was always a little bit of friction there. Over time it disappeared, but

³⁷ Robert J. Freischel was appointed patrolman October 13, 1947; military leave March 15, 1951; promoted to detective October 1, 1954; deputy chief April 17, 1964; and retired May 8, 1972.

there was still detectives on the department when, maybe, there was only two or three of them left. They retained their title, but all the new ones were then sergeant.

KC: You hadn't gone the detective route?

WM: Nope.

KC: You had gone the uniform route.

WM: Uniform, yep. Probably because I was too dumb to go the other way, I don't know. [Laughter]

KC: That's not what history would indicate.

WM: In any event, it worked.

I was a great believer in rotation. It was good to see people do different things. It was surprising how talented the department was. You put somebody in a new position and they would capture that position in a heartbeat, and do it really well. They would grouse about it, because somebody who wanted to be in plainclothes didn't like to go back into uniform. But I thought rotation was good for the soul, and it was, I think. They rotated and they rotated . . .

KC: How often would you rotate people?

WM: I can't remember. I think it was an annual – we allowed them to select their time. The other thing we did was a 4/40 program, which was really a good way to save people. With the 4/40 program we really were able to put people on the street when we needed them. You know, the 6:00 to 2:00 shift was a great shift and 4/40 – that was something that we did and it worked out real well.

KC: Where do you get these ideas to try it?

WM: I don't know.

KC: I mean, would they come up from your command staff?

WM: You see something or you hear something. The 4/40 program came, probably, up the chain. Oh, I think Larry McDonald may have been the first one to try that out in the housing projects.

KC: The HELP Program, **H**ousing **E**nvironmental **L**iaison and **P**olice Program?

WM: Yeah. That might be where that came from, yeah. And we adopted that for the whole department. It worked super, you know.

KC: What was your relationship with the mayors?

WM: I had George Vavoulis³⁸, Tom Byrne³⁹.



I had to handle the sit-in situation with Tom Byrne. Remember when they sat-in on the AR-15's, we bought some AR-15'⁴⁰s and, of course, there was a great outcry and they sat in on the mayor's office, when Tom Byrne was mayor. We had a sit-in over there. I was a sergeant at that time, and I was the liaison officer with the mayor's office. I got along good with Tom Byrne. [Alan] Edelson, I

³⁸ George J. Vavoulis was Saint Paul's mayor 1960 - 1966

³⁹ Thomas P. Bryne was Saint Paul's mayor 1966 -1970.

⁴⁰ The AR-15 is a lightweight, air-cooled, magazine fed, autoloading, centerfire, shoulder-fired rifle. The Ar-15 is a generic term for a civilian semi-automatic rifle similar to the military M16 rifle.

think, was his aide-de-camp and got along good with him. So, I was over there quite a bit at the mayor's office. They were sitting around, you know, how the sit-ins went. We were very accommodating to them. The only thing I remember about that, there was a young man sitting on the window ledge, this was a sit-in day, and he was telling me, he says "You know, I've got to go in the service pretty soon. What do you think I should do, do you think I should go into the service or do you think I should stay here?" And I said, "Well, you know, I think you should go in the service." I said, "You know, this is fine, you're protesting this, it's a great idea, but, you know, you've got another obligation." And, so, by gosh, he left, he went into the service. But that's the kind of relationship we had. And then the day came when I went over and I said, "You know, we've all had our sit-in and everything's done now and it's time that you guys left." And they all left. No problem. Tom was a school teacher, I think he went on to be a principal out at Harding or a vice principal or something, but he was a good mayor. He had an educational philosophy, liberal philosophy, I think. But I give him a lot of credit, he was very firm, very understanding, but very firm on the sit-in.

KC: And it is my illusion that you have a more traditional police conservative political philosophy?

WM: Oh, absolutely. I ran as a conservative, but then when they changed the – this is funny – I ran as a conservative the first year I served as a conservative senator and then they changed the conservative liberal

connotation to DFL/Republican. So midterm I said I was going to be a DFLer. Okay. Well, on the east side I had, you know you put out a lot of signs, I think my change from Republican to Democrat—Conservative to Liberal I only lost about eleven or twelve yard signs out of hundreds. So, most people, I think at that level, nominate the individual and aren't too excited about the party labels.

KC: You didn't have any tough fights with any of your mayors then? No concerns about being reappointed?

WM: No. George Latimer⁴¹ would have been the mayor who reappointed me. I had a real good relationship with Charlie McCarty⁴². Charlie use to call me every morning at home, 7:00, to see if he could catch me in the shower. He always asked me, "Are you in the shower?" I said, "No." He was that way, he was really a flamboyant guy. He didn't last long, but during his tenure, he was there.

KC: I remember that time, I was living in Saint Paul then, it was an interesting time. We were on the news every night.

WM: He got the Ford Motor Company to donate him a car, brand new car.

KC: Now, he was running around arresting people, too?

WM: Oh, yeah. One of the issues that I remember when Charlie was mayor, was there was a standoff up off of Minnehaha Avenue [on July 9, 1971], so we were all around it waiting to see what was going to happen. All of our

⁴¹ George Latimer was Saint Paul's mayor 1976-1990

⁴² Charles P. McCarty was Saint Paul's mayor 1970 - 1972

SWAT team was out and eventually Jim Mann, Officer Jim Mann⁴³, was able to get in and do some conversation with the guy and convince him that he should surrender, give up. Well, Charlie was out there and Charlie insisted that we do certain things. I finally [Chief] Rowan and told him that, "Charlie, you say one more thing and I'm going to have you locked up." And Charlie shut up. He wanted to have the prisoner ride down in his car. That's the way Charlie was. So, I remember that at that incident.



Officer Mann
walking the skyway
beat in 1975

But Jim Mann did a nice job there, he was a very good man and never got the credit for it, I don't think he did, he deserved it. And, I think, probably because people didn't like Jim Mann. I'm guessing that he might not have been well liked by the hierarchy, but I got along good with Jim. He had Tennessee horses, anybody that has horses, is a pretty good guy, you know.

KC: So, Officer Mann is a character?

How did you decide to leave in 1992?

WM: Well, Scheibel⁴⁴ was the mayor then and I was 65 and I didn't like Scheibel.

KC: Scheibel is very liberal.

WM: Well, I didn't like Scheibel because I never did like the way he treated his wife. Mary was a nice little girl, I should say a little lady. She was really a

⁴³ James Oliver Mann was hired patrolman January 2, 1957, and retired June 10, 1977.

⁴⁴ James Scheibel was Saint Paul's mayor 1990-1993.

nice person and he got rid of her, I thought that was terrible. I didn't like that. And I suppose that colored my thinking with him, so. The other thing, he came from the west side, you know, as a community officer and all that. But then later on, I found out he wanted to charge the community people every time he appeared there for something. So, there was some money problems over there, with him wanting to get money. I suppose because he needed it to pay rent or something. But anyhow those little things kind of bothered me about him, so.

And then he said he wasn't going to reappoint me and I said, "Fine, I'm not asking you to, I'm done." Well, then he asked me to stay on until they got a new chief and so I stayed on until sometime in July. I had a special contract written.

KC: You would have been done in January?

WM: Yeah, so I didn't lose any of my rights and privileges of benefits, I had that drawn up and so I stayed until they got a new chief.

KC: Now if he would have reappointed you, would you have stayed on? Were you ready to leave?

WM: No, I was ready to go, yeah. Yep, had done everything I could do. I don't know about that, but I was done. I was, you know, I had –

KC: Were you tired?

WM: Yeah, I think so. Just, it was, you know the job doesn't have any hours. You know, it gets tiresome going to bed with the phone at your head, you know, knowing that it's going to ring, maybe. And no matter where you are the phone rings, you're out of town, you're up here [in Wisconsin], the

phone rings, *this is going on*, you know. It was very difficult to let go or to get rid of the process.

I had good deputy chiefs. John Nord is the first one I appointed. John Nord was a great street cop, you know, and so good with the guys and they really looked up to him. He was a fearless young man. He became my first appointed deputy chief. It was a good appointment. He really fulfilled every expectation. I think that made it very palatable for the department, the appointing process, because everybody respected John and then it just fell into place.

KC: Who were other people that you developed? You saw their potential, you brought them along, you developed.

WM: Oh, John Sturner⁴⁵ was very good, very bright guy, too bright. You know, you gotta be careful, some of these guys are so bright that they can get ahead of you, but John was very bright, very busy. He had another career, too, he was in the National Guard and he moved up the ranks there as he did in the department. But he was a very good man. Larry McDonald was good.

⁴⁵ John Sturner was appointed patrolman January 21, 1963; promoted to sergeant September 30, 1967; lieutenant November 27, 1971; captain November 26, 1980; emergency deputy chief August 4, 1983; return to captain December 10, 1983; deputy chief April 1, 1984; captain August 16, 1992; title changed to commander April 7, 1993; and retired December 31, 1997.

Well, Donny Winger⁴⁶. I had appointed him as a captain and then demoted him, back and forth, just because of the dang budget. He and I had a visit about it and he didn't like it, but I think maybe as a chief out there in Maplewood he began to understand some of the trials and tribulations of the head man out there. I think he had some difficult times out at Maplewood with some of those councilmen. He had an ex-chief as a councilman, probably second guessing him all the time, you know.

KC: He was in his glory when he commanded East Team, he loved commanding East Team.

WM: Oh yeah. He had a nice style.

The Wingers were a good bunch, there were three of them, Donny, Rocky,⁴⁷ and Larry⁴⁸. Larry and I played racket ball together, we golfed together, we did a lot of things together.

KC: Well, They're east siders.

WM: Yeah, that's true. You notice the east siders really produce some good people. Dick Rowan, the Wingers, you know. I don't know where Larry [McDonald] was from, but Will Jyrkas, east sider.

KC: Larry's from the west side.

⁴⁶ Donald Stuart Winger appointed patrolman May 1, 1972; promoted to sergeant May 20, 1976; lieutenant May 26, 1985; captain September 23, 1989; Commander of East team December 1992 to December 1997; leave of absence in 1998; and resigned December 17, 1999 as senior commander. He served as chief of Maplewood Police Department August 1998 to August 2002.

⁴⁷ Karsten G. "Rocky" Winger (1941) was appointed patrolman March 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant January 1, 1968; lieutenant December 1, 1982; captain November 10, 1987; and died of cancer May 1, 1990 while still a member of the department.

⁴⁸ Larry James Winger was appointed patrolman April 1, 1968; promoted to sergeant May 11, 1972, lieutenant October 10, 1979, captain August 5, 1984, and retired July 30, 1999.

WM: Oh, yeah, Larry was from the west side, yeah, he and Bob Pavlak⁴⁹. So there was west side, east side – pretty good people.



John "Dude" O'Brien

KC: Yeah, east side seems to have a real relationship with the police.

KC: When you were chief in 1984, Saint Paul lost an officer in an automobile accident—O'Brien, Dude O'Brien⁵⁰.

WM: That was very early on in my career. So, I had no background on that O'Brien. The O'Brien's were very, very popular and he was a very popular guy. I don't recall ever having met him or known him.

He was working with a brand new recruit, who was seriously injured, and I think later on, we brought him back into the department, tried to rehab him. Richard Paul Fillmore⁵¹, he was new. They got a call over on the east side somewhere, an automobile accident, and he was killed. They had a huge funeral for him. He was buried in White Bear, I think. It was a huge, huge funeral, with lots and lots of officers attending.

KC: That was the first funeral that you had to preside over as chief. What was that like for you?

⁴⁹ Robert L. Pavlak, Jr. was appointed patrolman July 25, 1949; promoted to sergeant September 16, 1955; lieutenant November 29, 1971; and retired July 31, 1981.

⁵⁰ John J. "Dude" O'Brien was appointed patrolman October 26, 1971, and fatally injured when his patrol car was struck by a vehicle that had fled another patrol car April 16, 1981.

⁵¹ Richard Paul Fillmore was appointed emergency neighborhood aide III on May 8, 1980; appointed police officer November 1, 1980; voluntary reduction in title to Clerk I (due to on the job auto accident) October 13, 1986; retired March 16, 2001.

WM: Tough. I didn't know, it brings tears to your eyes, you kind of choke up, you know. And I expect it was the same with a lot of guys. It's tough. And I really didn't know him, but just the idea. I think he had two brothers on the department, Mike⁵² and Frank.⁵³ Frank stayed on the department for a long time, I know he did have cancer.

KC: And Mike is still on the department.

Now, a story that I've been told is on the procession from Dude O'Brien's funeral to the cemetery, that one of his wishes was that the sirens blare and, so, there was one siren turned on and there were two sirens –

WM: Every damn siren in the county went off and I tried to shut them up, but they paid no attention to me. I was totally unaware that that was what was supposed to happen. [Laughter]

KC: The way Officer Tim Bradley⁵⁴ tells it, some of them knew it was Dude O'Brien's wish and he says, "And the Chief got on the line and said, 'turn them off' and we thought and we respectfully considered and we respectfully ignored him."

WM: Yeah, that's true, yeah.

KC: How does that feel when your staff is saying, no, we're ignoring you?

WM: That happens. Probably did it more than once that I'm not aware of.

⁵² Michael James O'Brien was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; canine officer January 17, 1987; promoted sergeant November 15, 1997; retired May 31, 1997.

⁵³ Francis "Frank" Stephen O'Brien was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972; promoted to sergeant October 19, 1981; and retired October 9, 1996.

⁵⁴ Timothy Robert Bradley was appointed police officer September 8, 1975; awarded the Metal of Valor July 7, 1996; Metal of Merit Class B on November 10, 1989 and November 6, 1997; and the Metal of Commendation Class C June 12, 1987 date July 8, 2004.

KC: Well, that time it was pretty public. Does that bring up any emotions as chief?

WM: There's some things you can control and some things you can't.

KC: As chief, how important was it to be in control?

WM: I don't know that it was ever a big issue. I was always in control, except there. And I probably wouldn't have said anything if I had known that was the circumstances, but I thought they were just being smart asses.

KC: Would Saint Paul's finest be smart asses?

WM: Oh, yeah, once in awhile, for certain emotional issues. That was an emotional thing and, I think, yeah – no big deal.

KC: In the 1960s there was the civil unrest. You were sending officers over to the University of Minnesota. In '69, we had our own little race riot, Labor Day weekend. Any memories around having –

WM: Was that the one in the auditorium? Where some officer put through a tear gas canister in the hallway then locked the door. Is that the one?

KC: You've got a story I don't have.

WM: That was at the Stem Hall⁵⁵. Yeah, somebody threw tear gas in there and then locked the door. That's what started that whole thing.

KC: Really?

WM: Oh, yeah, away it went then. Why they locked the door, I know who did it, too, he's long gone, it's not important. That's what started it. Then

⁵⁵ Stem Hall was part of the original Roy Wilkins complex that included a theater and the Roy Wilkins Auditorium. Stem Hall and the theater were taken down in the early 1980's. Roy Wilkins Auditorium remains part of the River Center complex that accommodates various entertainment and convention events at Kellogg and Seventh Streets. The Auditorium was named for Roy Wilkins (1901-1981) who attended the University of Minnesota and lived in Saint Paul, going on to become Executive Director of the national NAACP and a respected civil rights activist.

they finally got out and they went through the town, they were enraged, and they busted things up all the way up the hill to the Rondo, Selby, Dale area. That's what started all that was down at Stem hall.

We had officers who were down there, some of them snuck home, they were afraid, I don't want to mention names. We found out some of them went home that shouldn't went home. So, then we had officers stayed there long beyond what they should have.

KC: So, it was a police inspired event?

WM: Yeah. Well, it was rowdy over there, there was no question that they were having a lot of trouble and torment over there. I don't even know what group was in there, but it was a big group anyhow, and that's what started it. But then that was dumb to do that.

KC: Now, when an officer does something dumb like that, that creates problems for the department, for the city, do you discipline him?

WM: I don't know what happened to that, because it was not my problem. I don't know, it depends on the circumstances, you know, it really does. If what he did was in his mind, the right thing to do, it's pretty hard to second guess that stuff. But, if it was out of some kind of fear, I mean, you could do a number of things. You can retreat, you know, you could always leave. And sometimes it's wise that, you know, you take your time.

Our SWAT team was always under the rule of time, take your time, let things work themselves out, there's no hurry, we're not going anyplace,

he's not going anyplace, and that worked real well for us, I think. We had a lot of SWAT situations that were resolved very quietly and peaceful. I imagine that's the same technique that's still available. You got time and time is always on your favor.

KC: What is your guidance in these situations?

WM: I don't think so. Common sense, you know, why get into a battle that you don't have to, why hurt somebody that you don't have to. You know, why lose an officer that you don't have to. And if you've got the situation contained, that's all you have to do. At some point in time, we had good hostage negotiators talk to them, eventually, they're going to see it your way or agree with something. Or you make a little bit of progress, make a little bit of progress, and pretty soon, the guy comes out or the gal comes out, and you put the cuffs on them and take them away. Everybody goes home. They unload all their guns, they're all unhappy, they didn't get to shoot anybody, but the city goes on.

KC: Did you ever get to pull your gun?

WM: Only one time that I was on the street that we had any gunfire. That was when I had the, what we called the Intelligence Unit. I was a lieutenant, I think, at the time. We knew that there was some stickup guys who lived on the west side, who were sticking up the joints as they closed at night. So, the night that this took place, the Moose had a big meal over on 4th Street, the Moose Lodge, had a big meal over on 4th Street. We had to wait around 'til midnight, 1:00 in the morning before we'd go out on the street, because the stickups didn't take place until late that night – we had some information. The stickup took place over on West Seventh Street and we

were on the west side and, I think, there was a crew from the Robbery Division and my crew, and there was a confrontation. The stickup guys, somehow we got onto them as they left the stickup. And, so, they came over to the west side to the housing project over there and we had gunfire there. Two officer confronted him and we exchanged shots and one of them was shot and went into the housing project and we found him in the housing project. But that's the only time that I was involved where there was gunfire.

KC: You spent a lot of time inside when you were on the street, did you ever think about the fact that you might have to pull a gun?

WM: I don't think so.

KC: You didn't take the job so you could carry a gun and it wasn't a concern?

WM: Ah – it wasn't a concern.

KC: How would you describe the culture of the department, when you came on in 1954?

WM: Uniforms versus detectives. (Laughs)

KC: Confrontational then?

WM: Yeah, there was some hard feelings in that department, you know. There was a feeling of superiority on the part of the detectives and there was resentment on the part of the uniformed brass, and that was obvious.

KC: And you're an intelligent, innovative person, why did you decide to go the –

WM: Opportunity, I wasn't promoted. In fact, I was going to leave the department. I had started out not going anywhere, so I decided I was going to leave the department. I started negotiating with an insurance

company and had been accepted and was really preparing to leave. I was working the afternoon shift and Tiny Spatgen ⁵⁶ called me, I had taken the examine for sergeant, he said, "The sergeant's list is out," and he said, "they're going to promote you." He said, "You're right up there." I don't know where I was, third or fourth. So, I thought, *well*. . ., then I talked to Marlene when I got home and she said, "Why don't you stay." So we decided I'd stay, but otherwise I'd be an insurance salesman.

KC: Would you have been able to have been as innovative as an insurance salesman?

WM: I have no idea because I don't know what they do. They sell insurance, so. They all seem to have a good living and, you know, actually, that was the issue then.

KC: What was the most difficult discipline situation that you had to deal with, as sergeant, lieutenant, captain or deputy chief or chief?

WM: Some that stand out that are kind of funny. I never got myself involved with the individual, I always liked the person, but what I didn't like is behavior, so I always tried to keep that separated. He was a nice guy, but that behavior was not right. I think probably the most difficult time I ever had was with alcohol abuse problems. We had several of the guys, one had a drug problem and I had to fire him. That was tough to do, he was a good cop.

⁵⁶ Frank L. "Tiny" Spatgen served SPPD March 1, 1937 – January 8, 1971. He was promoted to sergeant December 16, 1947, lieutenant October 1, 1954, captain September 1, 1957, and retired January 8, 1971. He died February 9, 1988.

Another officer tried very hard to overcome alcohol problems. He tried to handle it. I had him in the office, we had talks about his behavior and I never could get through to him to the point that he changed his behavior. I don't know whether he needed some other kind of help than we could help him or not, I don't know. It was tough. I remember the situation. I created a program.

KC: The Police EAP⁵⁷?

WM: Yeah, we had a help program for the men and women on the department and that worked very good. That Indian guy, Anderson⁵⁸. He was the first one. He had his own problems, but he overcame them. He went to Hazelden and that was expensive. When he came out of Hazelden, he sat down with me and we talked about the need for such a program. I thought it was a good idea, so he took over the program and he did a heck of a job. Then he left. When his cousin became tribal leader, he went to the casino I think up here in Turtle Lake and became manager. I don't know where he is now, he's probably still managing a casino someplace.

⁵⁷ Police Employee Assistance Program began June 1981. It was founded under the guiding philosophy that most effective counseling for police is by specially trained police officers, offering officer and family counseling in chemical dependency, emotional psychological, critical incident trauma, PTSD, and relationship issues. SPPD's EAP served SPPF and other agencies. Nationally SPPD's innovative model was copied by other agencies.

⁵⁸ Morris James Anderson appointed patrolman January 21, 1963; promoted sergeant September 30, 1967; resign July 29, 1988.

But then he had trained somebody, Snyder. And we sent Bill Snyder⁵⁹, to that Hazelden program. I don't know whether they still have that program or not, but it was a good program, did a lot of good, I think.

KC: What did you do to promote a different culture than one of contention, while you were in command positions?

WM: I don't think I did anything. I don't really, I don't recall that I did anything that was earmarked, *okay, we're going to solve this problem and I'm going to solve it by doing A*. I think what we did – I just can't answer that because I don't know that I did anything. Where there was a need, we implemented something, but I don't know that it was a great decision on my part, really, I don't. It was just something that required attention and we gave it the attention that it needed to get it resolved.

KC: How would you describe the culture of the Department when you left?

WM: Good. How would I describe it? Sensitive, ambitious, understanding and lots of knowledge.

KC: How is Saint Paul different than the suburb to the west or other departments?

WM: You know, I've never been able to figure that out. Tony Bouza⁶⁰ and I talked about that sometimes. It was just different. I don't know that we could figure that out, we talked about that. He came, and he realized, I think, that he had a real problem with the culture in that department. It

⁵⁹ William Arthur Snyder appointed police officer September 8, 1975; promoted to sergeant April 8, 1988; resigned January 8, 1999; appointed Ramsey County deputy sheriff January 11, 1999; deputy sergeant July 2002.

⁶⁰ Minneapolis Police Chief Tony Bouza--1980-1988

just seems to me that it's still there. They're still having the same problems. They're bigger, I don't know, it's different, we've always been different. One of the things, I thought, that was different, was that they had a lot of rotation in their top, the chief turned over a lot and ours didn't. We were six years solid and that gave you time to get in, understand what the process was and implement whatever your scheme for your term was. In most instances our chief stayed beyond the six year term to seven, eight, nine, ten, whatever it was, and so there was a lot of stability in that, because when you come on the job as a patrolman, you might be promoted to sergeant, lieutenant, captain, under the same chief. So you've got that continuity, you've got that stability that they never had in Minneapolis.

Maplewood, you know Dick Schaller was chief out there for 175 years, I don't know how long he was chief, but he was there when he was the only one and he grew with that department. He stayed with that department and I think he did an excellent job. He laid a lot of foundations. He and I disagreed on some things. He was very parochial, very concerned about his base, but he did a heck of a job.

I knew him when I was in the Park Police and he was sitting on Case Avenue waiting for a speeder. I used to visit with him, many, many times, so I knew him for a long time. He was very good, you know, it was Dick who got us the range out there, who was able to persuade the City Council to give us a hundred year lease for that range out there. We had a

first class firearms range, where we did teaching, did a lot of teaching out there. We, I think, really were able to teach people how to use deadly force, how to use force, less than deadly but more than verbal. That worked out good. We sent everybody out there to use firearms, to learn how to use a weapon, if you have to use it.

KC: Did you keep up with the required range time, when you were chief?

WM: Oh sure, I went out there. I went out and shot, did my thing, did my skeet shooting and shot with a shotgun and all that stuff, oh yeah.

When we introduced the physical training program, I took part in that, you know. We had some overweight guys and they all came wearing their foo-foos or tutus - what are they called – the first day. I went over there and I worked out with them, did my exercises with them.

KC: Now you changed the firearms.

I think you went to a semi-automatic Glock⁶¹.

WM: Yeah.

KC: What's the decision like in making that change, because that's got to be expensive for the department?

WM: One of the things that sticks in my mind. We had an officer involved in a shooting and he ran out of shells and the man that he was against still had



⁶¹ The Glock 9mm semi-automatic pistol became Saint Paul's Bureau of Police's Glock service weapon in 1988. Glock is an Austrian weapons manufacturer. Mainly known for being the manufacturer of polymer-framed pistols.

shells in his weapon. It was lucky the officer didn't get killed. So, after I read the reports I thought, *boy, we need to do something*. So, the City Council agreed that I could have the money to buy – and I think it was Bill Finney was the firearms instructor at the time. I asked him to look at the firearms and see which was the most appropriate for us and he recommended, I think, he recommended the Glock. Yeah, the Glock, and we got the Glock. Bill was really into firearms, you know, into weapons, and so it was a good choice. Everybody got a firearm and they were ones that didn't need a lot of maintenance and most guys would keep it around for years. If it got a little dirty or something, it still worked, so that was the weapon we chose. I think they went to other weapons since then, but I don't follow that. That was why we did it, because of that incident, where we were discovering the firepower on the street was greater than ours.

KC: What I hear sir, is that you were constantly assessing. Never sitting back and saying, *well, this is the way it is*, but constantly reading the reports, considering assessing what maybe could be different and then looking for ways to change.

WM: Tom Reding⁶² one time said, "If there isn't something going on, you make it. You create something to go on." He said, "You're never satisfied." But, that's not unusual, I don't think, because, you know, the world is

⁶² Thomas Lloyd Reding was appointed patrolman January 23, 1971; promoted to sergeant January 14, 1978; lieutenant February 1, 1982; captain February 23, 1987; deputy chief January 29, 1991, reinstated captain August 16, 1992; commander November 24, 1992; deputy chief June 21, 1999; senior commander November 3, 2000; deputy chief November 4, 2000; assistant chief November 18, 2001; and retired June 11, 2004.

very dynamic now, it's not like it was when I came on the job, where you could have the same patrol car for four, five, six years, its changed.

We never seem to have the time anymore that we had historically. There's always, it seems, the rush, rush, rush. Even the news, you no longer get the full story in the news, you have to watch four, five or six different channels to find out what's going on, because everybody gives you little bits and pieces. So, the world is moving a lot faster and a lot more bits and pieces.

KC: If you were to give advice to a young officer, what would your advice be?

WM: Don't be a fireman.

KC: Laughter.

WM: Oh, it's a good job, if you like people, if you want to continue your education, it is, it's an excellent job for that. When you get through, you can sit back and say, *I did something*, because you have to do something. It's not a job where you can get by without doing anything, you have to do something. And, generally, when people have to do things, they do good things. And then when you look back and you say, *I did good things*, well you only remember the good things anyhow, but you say, *I did good things, I made a change*, maybe in myself or maybe I made a change in John or Harry or Helen, whoever, I made something happen, and it's a good feeling.

KC: What would be advice to chiefs of the Saint Paul Police Department?

WM: In the history of the Saint Paul Police Department, no retired chief has ever given advice to a sitting chief.

KC: [Laughter]– Any other stories that you would like to share with me?

WM: I'll tell you one more story. You know, I was under investigation by the Minneapolis Trib. It's interesting, now this is probably 'cause I'm kind of dumb. But anyhow, the Minneapolis Tribune began to investigate me for reasons that I'm really sure of. Their two guys came in, they imported two guys, I think, from Denver, to do the investigation. And that was on the Montpetit thing.

KC: What was the Montpetit?

WM: Oh, Montpetit was for prostitution, I think, I'm not sure what it was. You know that story, I was supposed to be on the bus with the prostitutes, me and the county attorney.

KC: That may be when I was living out of town.

WM: The Trib [Minneapolis Star Tribune] investigated me for, I think, that was prostitution, anyhow, they came in and they asked me if I knew a Montpetit. I'm sitting there in my chair, I know Montpetit [he owned the Oz Bar], I've known him for years. I said, "Yeah, he's a friend of mine." And the headlines in the next paper, Montpetit, McCutcheon – something about my friend – McCutcheon is Montpetit's friend. And he was under investigation for prostitution. Well, that started it and geez, they investigated me for, I bet it went on for a year. I mean, you talk about stress. I've got to tell you, they checked my cousins, they checked with this. I went out to Las Vegas with the guys one time to play. They called out in Las Vegas to see whether I was comped or not. The Good Lord was with me 'cause I had paid for it on a credit card. They started there. Well, then they had a street guy who said that he had seen myself and, I think,

the county attorney at the time Tom Foley, get on a bus with prostitutes on Arcade Avenue. I'd never been on Arcade Avenue on a bus in my life. That was investigated, that was in the newspaper, so all this junk come after, junk and junk and junk.

I got mad a couple times. I probably accused Foley of a couple things, too. In any event, when it was all said and done, I was exonerated. It wasn't true and all that.

KC: How does your family handle when that's going on?

WM: I don't think it bothered my kids, but it bothered Marlene, 'cause she couldn't fight it. Kind of interesting to talk about that, I had an ongoing battle with the newspapers about privacy. Finnegan was the editor of the paper at the time and he and Marlene were communicating. They talked to one another I guess. Marlene told Finnegan, "I support you, you're right, that husband of mine is sometimes hard to convince." They never did convince me.

But that was one of the discussions we had in the house. She couldn't understand why I was so adamant about releasing police information. Yet, she was a counselor over at the drug rehab over at Saint Paul Ramsey, not a counselor, she was a charge nurse. And she would never tell me what information she had over there either. [Laughter] And, of course, they dealt with all the people who were coming out of prison or coming out of the workhouse or who were in the workhouse in the program. So, they'd give her a lot of information, she'd never tell me a thing. She said, "I hear a lot of things, you sure you're department's as good as you think

it is?" And, I said, "Well, what are you talking about?" She said, "I can't tell you." So, she kept giving me that. I kept looking.

KC: You didn't want the papers printing information about . . . ?

WM: Well, they wanted access to all the reports and I, under the Data Privacy Act, they weren't entitled to ongoing investigations, you know. Dick [Rowan] didn't want to take on that battle, but after he left, I took it on. And it was a battle for some time. Got to know the editors pretty good. Deborah Howell was an assistant editor and one of the reporters who was an assistant editor, she was married to one of the council members, Pat Roedler's wife, was also an assistant editor down there. We had good discussions with all of them, some of them could see my point of view, some could not.

I never got mad at them, I was never mad at them, I just disagreed with them. That went on for some time. Debbie, now, she went on, in fact, she's still in the news business, she's in Washington. She was married to Nick Coleman, Debbie Howell was Nick Coleman's second wife. In fact, I probably got the only retraction the newspaper ever printed. Debbie and Roedler came in to see me and they wanted to know if there was any way they could get any information. And during the discussion I said, "Well, one of the things I do, I read all the reports, so I can tell you when there's a report that looks like it might be newsworthy and you want to follow it up."

We worked that agreement out, where I would let them read those reports. So, there was an editorial the next day in the paper, really crucifying me. Then Debbie and Jackie Roedler went to the head man there and said, "Hey, that's wrong, you know, we agreed to this." So they gave me a retraction the next day. So, we had that battle, but I got to know a lot of them and the reporters were pretty good. They had a job to do and I had a job to do and we sometimes clashed.

KC: Did you have a public information officer somewhere?

WM: Yeah, the former WCCO radio news director, Paul Adelman⁶³ left there and he was available, so I talked to him and we hired him. He was very good. [The department's formal title was Public Information coordinator—PIC.] Then the mayor took him away from me later on, he went over to the mayor's office. But he was very good and he really relieved you of a lot of the phone calls that you used to have to take, now he took care of everything.

KC: He'd read the reports?

WM: Yeah, he'd look at all the reports and whenever there was a need to do a news release, he'd do the news releases. He had all the contacts. They called him, instead of me and that really was a nice buffer. It worked

⁶³Paul Herbert Adelman was appointed Saint Paul's Public Information Coordinator in August 1988, becoming the first professional communicator hired by a Police Department in the upper Midwest. Previously, he had spent 16 years at Twin Cities Television stations WCCO, KSTP and WTCN (now KARE) where he wrote and produced news programs and documentaries. In 1996, he was transferred to the Mayor's office, serving as the City's Director of Communications under Mayor Norm Coleman.

really good. I imagine they're still doing that, there's some kind of a front guy.

KC: Well, for a number of years they wouldn't allow the outside hiring, now they have just authorized new hire, so the new public information officer as of last Friday, is Tom Walsh⁶⁴.

WM: Oh, really.

KC: And Tom retired two years ago, but he's back in as public information officer.

What other stories will you share with me?

WM: I suppose there's a lot I could tell you more, but I'm not sure that I need to say anything, too much. I had a good crew. I was blessed with good people. I know a lot of things went on, but I don't know. There's a lot of things I know that I couldn't share with you.

KC: Why not?

WM: Well, not appropriate, I don't think. I think you learn some things that occur that don't do anybody any good if it becomes knowledge to uninterested parties, or parties who would get joy out of reading something. Some of that stuff you just keep.

KC: I may have heard some of those stories already off tape. And, yes, I just keep them.

⁶⁴ Thomas Michael Walsh was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972, promoted to sergeant February 11, 1983; acting lieutenant April 15, 1984; reinstated sergeant May 19, 1984; acting commander February 3, 2001; reinstated sergeant May 19, 2001; acting commander January 19, 2002; and retired commander June 28, 2002. Of note is Commander Walsh scored number one on all test he took for the department for police officer, sergeant, lieutenant and commander. Walsh was rehired as public information coordinator under Chief J. M. Harrington July 2006.

WM: I think it's a good idea.

We did a lot of things. We innovated the television so we were able to put out tapes, you know, we had an audio visual section and put out tapes to communicate. All those things were necessary and I think helped the department achieve its goals. But, personally, just because the nature of the office, you learn things about your people that you can't do anything about, because you're not really invited into that relationship and there's no avenue for you to get in, without an invitation, so some of that stuff, although you don't like it, you can't do anything about it. Some of that goes on, I imagine, in every large organization. Not all human behavior is good or reasonable or rational.

KC: There are special stresses that officers carry.

WM: I got to tell you this. I'm probably going to be wrong on this, but I'm not wrong in my thinking. I think we manufacture stress by emphasizing it so much. You know, we have a situation in a school, immediately everybody comes in and says we've got to give counseling to everybody, and I'm not sure that you have to do that. I struggle with that. I think we manufacture things, I think. In order to do that you've got to have a grant.

KC: [Laughter] You were the grant chief.



Chief William McCutcheon
1983