Voices from the Past

Botany and Horticulture

By Kim Black

Tape #42

Oral interview conducted by Harold Forbush

Transcribed by Theophilus E. Tandoh

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Brigham Young University-Idaho
HF: Coming to his office here in the plant science building, for the purpose of making this early morning interview. It is about 7:00 am and Bishop Black with all of his other duties has agreed to share enough so with the interviewer Harold Forbush here on Ricks College campus. Dr. Black would you be so kind as to give me the place of the birth year, your background before you came to Ricks college.

KB: I was born June 10th 1937 in Ricks Field, Utah in Southeastern Utah, grew up on a cattle range in Wayne County in Tory. Father has been a Range all his life and I am the youngest of six children. Graduated from Wayne High School, attended Dixie College in St. George for 2 years went on a mission for the Mormon Church to the Gulf State. Returned and went to Utah State where I got my bachelors degree in Agricultural Education. The conclusion of my Bachelors Degree, I was awarded a scholarship to go on to graduate work but I’d like to take a job in the Jordan School District teaching Vocational Agriculture and Botany. While there I continued my education got a Masters Degree at the University of South Dakota during the summers and 1967 came to Ricks College after being here three years took a leave of absence and went back for my doctorates at Oregon State University in Horticulture with emphasis on Physiology.

HF: Very good, now is this a new home for you, do you have Kim folks in the Upper Snake River Valley?

KB: Well, I don’t have a lot of family here; I have had family from time to time living in the upper valley. I had an uncle that lived in the Teton basin for a number of years called the Black; it has been a few years back. I had my father’s sister lived here taught school and Arch here in Rexburg for years with Alma Burns. And her family some of them are still here, Larry Burns, Farnes and works in Rexburg. He is a first cousin. I guess that is the closest Kim that I have or have had in this area.

HF: So the other Blacks with that name the Black name are not particular close Kim.

KB: No they are not their distant relatives nothing that is in the immediate genealogy. I came to Rexburg, I guess because of King Howell who is in the personal in the public relations administration capacity of the school here. His father was my Bishop when I was in Draper, living in Draper, Utah, teaching in Jordan High School. And King used to bug me about coming to Rexburg and coming to Ricks when he’d come home to visit his father. And I was plenty happy where I was enjoyed my work there, but one day he came down and saw and said they really needed some structures in the Biological Sciences here. And he kind of twisted my arm a little bit to apply and so we went ahead and submitted application and in a matter of just a few days U. Q. Banyan, who is in the faculty then, called me and asked me if I would bring my family and come for an interview. We came, liked the area and liked the valley and enjoyed the people that we met. And we looked forward to the opportunity of working with the youth of the Church and working in a college setting. So we moved our family in 1967 not really knowing anybody and other than King and his family. And it was quite a transition course, my wife probably cried bushel full of tears that first year, she was getting farther away from home, away from family and she loved it here now. We both do, we’ve had plenty of opportunity to go
elsewhere, good job offers in other areas better we’d liked to stay here because it is a lovely area.

HF: Very, very good. Our subject is indicated deals with Botany, and yet Horticulture I suppose is only part of Botany. How would you define Horticulture, what does it include?

KB: Horticulture is the applied technology and science and art. I would say of many botanical principles botany is more of a pure science. Botany is the theoretical where as horticulture is the practical in the applied. And you differentiate horticulture from other kinds of agriculture adventures because it deals with the intensively managed agricultural crops. The culture and care, horticulture is a little different and our particular case than horticulture in some other schools we our department is the department of landscape horticulture. And so it does incorporate the beautification and landscaping aspects. But the crops that horticulture deals with would be vegetable crops; fruit crops both the small fruits and the tree fruits, the ornamentals crops and then of course the landscape aspect of it deals with the designing, the installation and the maintenance of this horticulture enterprises particularly the landscape setting parks, golf courses, home landscapes as well as commercial and other types of landscape settings.

HF: Green house would be included.

KB: Yes, green house operation and production is very much a part of, and again is an area of high intensive management. Lots of people making living with just a green house of few thousand square feet of green house very intensively managed, it is very much a part of horticulture yes.

HF: Now in the organization of the department here on campus, did your scope of goals and endeavors include everything that you’ve mentioned in your definition?

KB: Yes, I would say so. Initially our scope was a little bit more narrow than that perhaps. The program got started, the department got started really out an interest that I had when I got back from my doctorates and went to the President and talked him about some things that I felt like we ought to be doing at Ricks that we weren’t doing.

HF: And that was President Eyring at the time.

KB: Eyring at the time. And when I went on leave, President Clark was President and when I returned President Eyring was President. And I spoke with him and it turns out that they had organized a task force study committee to study some things that we ought to be doing at Ricks that we were not doing. One of those committees that were organized was an agricultural committee and I was asked to work with those people as I returned, and initially we identified about four areas that we felt like we ought to be doing some things. Actually, more areas were identified but it was narrowed to four, which included farm crop management, beef production and management horsemanship, stable management, and landscape horticulture. And that was the beginning of our thinking and the scope that I had in mind at that time was…, I would say fairly heavy on
the ornamentals. That was what my doctorate train was in and felt like that was something that we could do even in our climate here particularly, as it relates to the use and realization of ornamental crops. Our initial trust that was approved by the general Board of Education, Church Board of Education was really a Nursery Management Program with heavy emphasis on retail-training students to become effective public servants if you were, in the retail aspect of gardening centers, nurseries, landscape, landscape maintenance, and those types of things. We’ve expanded that sum as we’ve got it going. But our initial desire was to keep the focus fairly narrow so that we didn’t muddy the water so to speak so that we knew where we were going exactly what we wanted to accomplish and when we got that mission well marked out and under way we could expand to these other areas.

HF: Now all of these four departments are incorporated under the division of agriculture?

KB: That is right. The stableship, the stable management horsemanship and stable management program was just transferred this last year, in fact effective the first of August. It was transferred to the division of outer education recreation and it will be administered in that department under the leadership of Bob Wilt. But we since have expanded the division of Agriculture to a department, to include a department of dairy management, dairy science, and dairy management and they are launching that program this year with the first group of students.

HF: That gives still the four departments?

KB: That is right. My department was the first to get off the ground. We began this department; we’ve had five graduating classes now. So that would have be seven years again that we began the department of landscape horticulture. And then the farm crops and beef production management started the next year followed the next year with a horsemanship and stable management.

HF: Fall of ’75 then would you say?

KB: Let’s see ’75, ’80, yeah that will be about right, Fall of ’75.

HF: And were you here on campus at that time too?

KB: Yes.

HF: Commenced the program?

KB: Yes. Actually when I got back from leave in ’72, and I spent two years, I guess it would have been the fall of ’74 we began, because I spent two years developing the program. I developed questionnaires that went out to nursery people. I visited nurseries, I started in southern California, down in Sand Walking Valley and went north to the Olympic Peninsular area, visiting nurseries all the way and crisscrossed the country to South Carolina and went north to New York. And came back across the country visiting
nurseries all along the way, asking interviews, questions about what we can best do so the industry, what we ought to be teaching young people. And then came back and from that effort, compiled a list of competencies that students ought to have as they graduate and go out into the world of work. And based on those competencies, I developed curriculum and then proceeded to do a faculty search to find people that compliment my training and interest so that we might present a package to the students and that is how our program got started.

HF: In other words, on your touring you checked with the actuality of carrying out the theory in a way of green houses and landscaping and everything like this. Did you also check to see how the theory was being taught and the program was being conducted in institutions?

KB: Yes, I visited some of the leading horticulture institutions, one of the reasons I went to Sand Wicking Valley while I was in a junior college was one of the top rated colleges in the kind of field that I was interested in so I visited them and I also went to Cal Poly, California Polytechnic Institution in California. And then a group of us here from the school fairly size of a group seven or eight of us went back to the agricultural technical institution Wister Ohio. Wister was a resident high tech school, a branch of Ohio State University and noted in plane across the country as being one of the best.

HF: Now that is where Dr. Holdman comes from.

KB: That is where Dr. Holman came from yes, he was the President of that school and good member of the Church, patriarch, and we learned of that and then we began to set wheels in motion to try and get him here. We weren’t successful for several years, he was very much involved in the building project and when he was tempted, and I guess when the time presented itself while he was lowered here to direct this program.

HF: That is really…. you know, as you mentioned these places in California, a name pops into my mind, perhaps Luther Burbank; wasn’t he who really refined this particular aspect of horticulture?

KB: Well, Mr. Burbank was a great horticulturalist. Because of his interest in fine breeding and because of the work he did the Burbank potato of course was developed. But he was a quite a pioneer I would say, in the variety improvement and variety selection of some of the early horticultural crops.

HF: But there are others who stand abreast on the faith of Burbank.

KB: There is a, he was a pioneer and like lots of pioneers there is sought of grouping in the dark and lots of the time it is not only good technical survey that they have and good techniques was lot of luck they happen on some things and I’d say the advancement today are exceeding their advancement by many…
HF: When the department was organized through by the Church Board of Education, I guess in large measure you had students in mind, who you could train and prepare for life. But you must have had a goal maybe to be ah, the college to be helpful to serve the community in more hardy plans and so forth. Is this all, would you comment on these two areas?

KB: Well, I think our initial goal was very definitely students. Trying to help students find themselves and be of service to humanity and to the Church. I think it’s always been my goal to be a leader in agriculture, leader in horticulture in the Church; to render leadership, to help direct the efforts in the Church in this area. No one in the Church Education System was doing very much in the area of horticulture. BYU had a program, still has the program but was more science, more research oriented. I had a goal to go get a practical and down to earth and something was useful. I think the community service that surface from this was initially part of my vision but not very very well focused. I think even before the department began. And even before we had hired the people to compliment me, I had a vision of a botanical garden. I had tried even before this department got under way a long time ago, to convince the department that we ought to have in our bereadim as a part of our campus. And work with the campus planning committee to try to broaden and expand our landscape planting on campus. I felt when I first came to Rexburg that the landscapes were rather sterile. There were few species used in beautification, and I through my attorney knew that there were hundreds of varieties of things that could be used here. And some of the early pioneers in the area I think had a quite a vision of what was possible and supported that Port of Park is named after was quite a landscape. Brought a lot of species into the area and I am sure others. But for the most part the public was ignorant about what was available, didn’t know what we grow here the garden centers, the people that were buying supplies and bringing them in here often brought things that did not survive, people would buy them and plant them and wonder why they didn’t live. So I felt a real need to provide a service to the community to help the community recognize things that could be used and could be planted early even before as I said before the department got started, I began writing some little blurbs and writings some compilings and little list of things plant materials that were well adopted in the Upper Snake Valley. And then of course since then we’ve expanded that a great deal and developed our horticultural plantings, our research and demonstration plot, which we will talk a little bit about later.

HF: Well, you have indicated the program was launched probably in the Fall of ’74. And what facilities did your department have in a way of structures out of which it operates?

KB: Well, we didn’t have very much I had served as chairman of the building committee. You see when this all began I was in the Biology Department, I was a botanist teaching botany, and had tried for a long time even before I went on leave to get facility with the green house because my interest was always along these lines and I guess my proposals kind of fell on deaf ears no one really paid any attention to them. And when I got back from leave and got to talking with the President about what I would like to see us do in way of horticulture, I began to talk green house and was placed on a committee, chairman of the committee to investigate the possibility. And out of that, grew a plant science
building initial and that was a pretty small building, one small classroom, a work area, small work area for students and some offices and three green houses, actually four green, well three green houses they are conservatory and two green houses.

HF: I remember those. Coming up with all the plastic, rattling and so forth in the Rexburg wind.

KB: Well, that was even before that.

HF: Was it?

KB: Yeah, I’d build plastic green houses, but these were nice green houses that were built by Davis but he was a contractor on it. And that was our initial building that plant science building. We taught botany in the area actually, the first year or two. And then when this program came on line, it was the decision of the administration that we begin in this facility and we had the other departments didn’t like it very much but they had to cut back, the botany department had to cut back on their utilization of the space and said they were told to move over unless they get horticulture started. So we started in the original plant science building and then…

HF: What was the square footage of the space?

KB: I’ll say about a, well let’s see, we probably had about, I would say a hundred by hundred and that will be what ten thousand square feet. It was a small building, very small building. But we immediately began plans for an addition to it. And I again served as a chairman of that committee, the building committee that worked with the architect and contractor in making an addition. And when we made the addition to this plant science building, we didn’t move into it until the second year of the program, so that would have been after the flood that we moved into this addition. That more than tripled the size of the building, we added five green houses and large herd house work area that served those green houses. We added three large laboratory classrooms and a computer room, some good size storage rooms and adequate offices to handle the people in the farm crops department and in the horticulture department. And then of course when we moved out, the Vautners were glad to get rid of us and were glad to occupy the space that we left behind. Now as you know there is another addition going on in this building, where it will make the original building dual by the addition because they are adding to it. All of the Life Sciences, Zoology and rest of the Botany and so this will be size of the building and probably no longer will be called the Plant Science Building but probably be called the Life Science building. But probably will be called the Life Science Building.

HF: Dr. Black who came aboard with you in the way of faculty members?

KB: Well, we brought ah… Dr. John Walker came on after we had gotten a lot of the planning under way. He came on as the chairman of the farm crops department. And he and I talked together actually and Georgian School District a long time ago Dr. Walker has gone back east, gotten his doctorates Illinois in pest control management, weed
control particularly and he came with a great strong background in the farm crops area but also had some strengths that supported what I was doing and attempting to do a horticulture. And then in addition we brought Allen Wilson who was working with Gold Smith Seed Company, Gold Smith is one of the large ornamental seed producing companies in the United States, and he had been there and doing some work with the vegetable varieties particularly. But had had a good strong horticulture background, had worked in the extension service in Florida and California. Happened to be a convert to the Church five or six years and really welcomed the opportunity to come to the Kim with a great background in horticulture. Lobster Wright, writes a garden column in a Post Register now, and he learned a lot of support and then Jim Lawn came from Hawaii. Jim had gotten his bachelors at Oregon State and a long time ago. Jim is probably fifty-five years old. But he had taught for ten, fifteen-twenty years in the community colleges and colleges in California and then had gone to Hawaii in landscape construction firm and had been there for a number of years. Read about our program in the Church News and the employment opportunities and then applied and both, I would say Allen and Jim were screened from probably forty, thirty-five, forty applicants for the employment. So they were just really well qualified and been a great addition to the department. Now they are the only full time faculty, we had utilized some of the faculty that had been hired in the other department to support our program. Larry Stevens was hired as an Ag-mechanic and he teaches small engines and nursery equipments and building construction. So he helps compliment our department. Clare Blazer who had been here for a long time teaches the soils and as I mentioned, John Walker teaches the pest control. So we’ve got support from a number of other people as well the faculty on campus in general. We teach business and communication and math and chemistry and other support courses.

HF: How much land area have you been apportioned?

KB: Ten acres. We have ten acres we’ve developed it to some extent. There is some of that we are still in the process of developing. We take on a little bit more each year and try to expand what we were doing. We are expanding it in several areas. Of course in our research demonstration gardens, we have I will say two acres and vegetables and small fruits. We have probably three acres in tree fruits. If all the apple varieties that I have ordered come at the end of this year, I will have about hundred varieties of apples on trial. I am doing some research on Rub Star Cárdenas, again on varieties that are well adopted and do well in this area. I have about forty, forty-five varieties of strawberries on trial. Several varieties of grass berries and goose berries and black grass berries and black berries, currents, in addition to the work that is being done, probably three hundred varieties of vegetables each year, different varieties of course as we screen them, approximately two fifty to three hundred varieties of annual and annual flowers and bulbs and then maybe a hundred varieties of Premier flowers on the side of…

HF: Continuing with the interview of the department of horticulture and its formation, the goals and purposes of the department, interview with Dr. Kim Black. Would you share with me the budget, annual budget, the amount and how that is broken down for your department?
KB: Okay we’ve been blessed with an adequate budget; I would say to do the job. Our budget varies of course from year to year but the bottom line, the landscape horticulture budget amounts to a hundred and sixty, about a hundred and sixty-one thousand dollars, total for the year. That’s faculty salaries and of course support activities operating and teaching supplies and students labor, we use quite a bit of student and research demonstration gardens as well as lab assistant but that would include equipment, equipment rental. And as you can imagine there is quite a bit of equipment involved in an enterprise like we’ve undertaken. Equipments for the student to get experience hands on, practical experience in the area of landscaping and construction and that of course includes a budget for green houses, so it covers a lot of area. But the philosophy of this program has always been maximum hands on exposure, not just talk about it, not just read in the text book, not just see how the other people do it but to actually do it. Students get very much involved in the work, there is enterprise projects, the students can participate in, and that all takes equipment and facilities. So that is the budget.

HF: Let’s talk about the training program, the time required to graduate a student, what goes into his training and how prepared he is to go out and find a job after the training is done.

KB: Program is very intensive; the students find that out the first semester. They take eighteen or nineteen or twenty semester hours of credits every semester. But the program begins best really begins in the fall, some start on the spring but start fall semester. We try to give them principles that they need at that first semester that is when they take their botany and chemistry and math and communications. Then they jump very rapidly into their horticulture training, their plant and tree studies and technical skills that they can use. They’re here on campus two semesters and then they go on an internship, which is probably one of the best part of their education. They go out and actually work with the green house operator or retail nursery minor or production nursery minor - a landscape designer or landscape Construction Company. Actually doing the kind of things that they will be doing as they graduate, under the supervision and tutorship of this manager and owner, this is part of the training supervised by faculty member; we visit them on the job. And that is a major part of our budget is to get out and see them and visit with them and work with them all the way from one end of the United States to the other.

HF: Is this a semester or…?

KB: They stay a full semester.

HF: Four, five months or something like that.

KB: They are there from about 15th of April when we get out of school, until about the first of August. And then they come back on campus at the end of that period for a landscape contracting and construction class, which is about a month in duration and that winds up to summer and they are ready to start for September again and for their fall semester studies. They are here two more semesters when we try to put the finishing touches on them I guess, and then they [are] ready to go on the job at the conclusion of
that second academic year. We’ve had a very good acceptance by industry of our student. We’ve never had wants for jobs.

HF: Is that right?

KB: Never; In fact I would say that every graduate of the program has from three to five good job offers every year.

HF: Isn’t that exciting? You’ve had five graduating classes…

KB: Five or six, I guess six graduating classes.

HF: Six graduating classes in terms then of numbers, what will that be?

KB: Well, we started first year we had twenty graduates, started twenty-two students in the program and graduated twenty of them. And every one of them took a job in the industry. The next year I don’t remember all the exact numbers each year, but we’ve had smallest fast thing, we had twelve graduates. We’ve gone from twelve to twenty-one or two each year that have graduated from the program, and again if they were elected to take a job; some of them had elected to do something else at the conclusion of their training. But for the most part they’ve taken jobs in the industry and if they’ve wanted a job they’d had one; some of them good jobs.

HF: Would you like to share a case history or two?

KB: You bet we graduated one student who took job with Grand Central as the buyer for all Grand Central garden stores. We started with a starting salary as I remember twenty-two or twenty three thousand dollars a year plus the percent of the profit of those garden centers. Jeff Dan who is a Rexburg boy worked out here at Daniels Furniture and Garden Center for number of years. Later they changed that name to Sherwood Forest Nursery and went to work for Porter Walton as a public relations person. He is in top management now and doing very well. One of our students decided to go on to school. I think that is a success story. Craig Ashton graduated with his first graduating class, went to Gregg Gardens in Logan as the nursery manager of that operation and began taking night classes at Utah State, and was able to finish his bachelors degree and finally his masters degree and just as last year was awarded a research grant, I think it was at Illinois it was doctorate. And just has done supper and going on of course in horticulture. But there are many of them, many of the students. I will say over fifty percent of the students are in key management positions in the companies that they work. Some of them have started their own companies, started their own businesses. And so they are doing very well, there is plenty of good job offers right now, I have in my file here people who call me within the last two or three weeks wanting some our students, and those who get a student or two of ours want more because they are honest, dependable, hardworking and trust worthy and competent, so there is no want for work for them. They have to go where the work is, you know they can’t all stay in Rexburg or Rigby or Ryrie. There is not quite the opportunity in these small communities for landscapers but in metropolitan areas Salt
Lake and Ogden and Boise, Portland, Los Angeles and so forth that one of our students went to work in California for garden center and within a matter of three or four years was the caretaker that the chief over all the landscaping of the Los Angeles Temple. He’s been.

HF: Have there been a few girls who have taken the program?

KB: Yes, I’d say we have about thirty percent girls. Most of those also find good jobs; they’re not as, don’t have as much stick to assist the boys. They go usually as cashiers, or as sales people in garden centers.

HF: They go on and get married too.

KB: They get married and rear family or something else, some of them are still working. One of our young ladies graduated three or four years ago, has her own Kim Long Track. She works for Kim Long Company and she does landscape maintenance in the Salk Lake area. But most of the young people that go into the program and once that find the most success and management I’d say are the fellow, not that the girls can do it, but I guess the bread butter part of it isn’t quite as important to them as it is to the guys.

HF: Can you point out some specific benefits that have come to the Upper Snake River Valley as a community as a result of the program here?

KB: I’d say the greatest benefits have been in educating them about things that they can grow and that they can enjoy. You know horticulture is a great therapy. Plants are great therapy, demonstrated and proven facts that people are happier as they’re laying the plants. Secretaries are more efficient as they got a plant or two in their office. You know the beautiful flowers just changes the attitude and changes your outlook on life and I think as people garden, as they grow things, they are constantly frustrated if what they grow doesn’t succeed. When I first came to Rexburg, for example there were very few people growing tomatoes, most people told me you couldn’t grow tomatoes here. I found out why, they are trying to grow the varieties that were shipped up from Utah, the Utah varieties. And we had on trial twenty-five, thirty varieties of tomatoes every year and we’ve [figured] out which ones will grow and which ones won’t, which ones will mature and which ones won’t. People now can grow tomatoes very successfully if they will select the right varieties. The same with corn some think it doesn’t make a lot of difference, any body can grow most any variety of radishes or carrots or onions or turnips or that sought of thing. But when it comes to things that are marginal here, we’ve done a lot. We’ve got in our plots this year for example fifteen, twelve fifteen variety of cantaloupe; all of them are ripening. Half a dozen of varieties water melon are ripening.

HF: I am amazed.

KB: We’ve got egg plants and… and course a number of varieties of pepper. There are a lot of things people can grow here that they didn’t know that they can grow. And we have
demonstrated that in a beautiful way and we have thousands of visitors come and visit our demonstration gardens to see what can grow and how you can culture them so they do grow. There are some things that you need to do to help that along. Black plastic mulch and clip plastic mulch where research using, biodegradable clear plastic mulch are not really researching demonstrating that it has been researched. But we’re showing how it can be applied to our situation to an event. We’ve spoken to hundreds of Relief Societies up and down this valley from Black Foot north to Ashton and up into the Teton Basin. We have many many more requests than we can meet. We have a garden seminar each spring here in the building; with the four Elvis participating in the seminar fashion. Those have been very well attended. We taught night classes, non-credit classes in pruning and grafting and budding and different techniques, last week I taught a course in crafting fruit tree, it was well attended. So we’re, I would say it had a great impact on people’s desire and people’s ability to succeed in landscaping and gardening in this Upper Valley. We’ve gotten some beautiful landscapes developed, I would say partly because of the influx we’ve had. And I think if nothing else we’re just cultivating interest and cultivating enthusiasm for all these kinds of things.

HF: Isn’t that exciting? Dr. Black I want tell you how much I’ve appreciated this sharing this morning. I would appreciate if you’d kindly take me out to these plots and describe the things that are in actuality and that will complete the tape.

KB: Okay, we will do it. We’re are standing outside of the Plant science building here to the north out of doors in the background you may hear some construction going on, the David Construction Company is in the midst of building the addition to the this Plant Science building that we spoke of earlier. But we’re standing here in an outdoor patio landscape setting. An area that was constructed by our landscape construction class I think three years ago. It is equipped with pavers that you walk upon, exposed aggregate concrete with about a thirty by forty shade structure and planted in this shade structure are a lot of beautiful flowers that are adapted to shady conditions, the gonias, tubers and fibers. The gonias we’ve got even lot of impatient, different types of impatient – collious, I am trying to think of the hanging basket, fusher, and we’ve got fushers growing here. Fushers don’t often grow.

HF: In the out-of-sight.

KB: In the out-of-sight.

HF: But they are blooming, lovely?

KB: Beautiful, beautiful lovely blooming flowers, the tubers begonias, oh maybe three inches across beautiful double flowers as well as other flowers of patio containers. We’ve got patio tomatoes here in containers, geraniums, marigold, and lobelia combination baskets of various types. And then incorporated in it is also are some trees and birch trees and flowering plumbs and flowering shrubs. But this is a typical kind of outdoor patio area that people in the Rexburg area could grow if they wanted to. And in view also to the north of that, we have what our students call forty patchy. The first landscape
construction of the program, build in a area of vertical posts that they planted in the
ground and in landscape here rounded and that landscape has grown up now to be very
beautiful. It’s sort of a hill side planting approach, although we not really on a hill,
general slope here but they’ve created a hill effect and the landscape is maturing now to
the point that it is very lovely. It is just a little waste to walk on it out to a research in a
demonstration garden so.

HF: Now at this point Kim, people of the public could come and look over. It’s an
advantage point.

KB: Yes it is. As you look north here now. You can see the boys’ dorms, you can see the
Manwaring Center down on campus to the north, and you can see the new Fine Arts
building. You can see the Hart P.E building. We are looking across a large parking lot.
You can see all of these facilities to the north. Of course we are almost the most south
building on campus. There are two above us, the auxiliary services building to the south,
to our back and the agriculture mechanic shop. Okay we’re standing here now just a little
bit farther north than we were before and we can see a better view of this forty-patchy
area that students named. And just to the north to that is a beauty landscape
demonstration that our students constructed this year as an entrance way to our gardens.
Now we are to the south of this entrance way we are not going through it. But I can see it
just a hundred feet away, this is an overhead structure, last overhead structure reed wood.
Very beautifully designed and a nice patio area again that has been created here by the
students out of red brick pavers with benches around and they have installed the plant
materials, the rocks, the mulch, the bark mulch. And it is just a lovely landscape planting
and as you see as you look to the north or to the east of this now you can see our
demonstration gardens and immediate foreground of the annual flowers all the gonias and
dahlias and solotians and marigold, geranium and a whole host of beautiful flowers. They
[are] planted in rows, short rows all the varieties are labeled with the name of the plant
and then behind that you can see the vegetables and then beyond that the perennial
flowers.

HF: It is a very lovely morning setting, just after 8: am I would guess the temperature to
be around 50 to 55 degrees. The sun is brightly shining this early morning. It is cool
you’ve heard the killed air. For example bird life that seems to really love this particular
setting.

KB: It is a beautiful morning and this is [a] beautiful setting. A lot of students come here
to enjoy this beauty. You will see the boys walking their girlfriends through here during
the day, commenting on the flowers. Just to my right now looking north, ah looking
southeast, I can see a deck structure, up a couple of hundred feet from where we are
standing; you can’t see the pond but beyond the little precipes of the hill there is a pond.
This pond was created for two purposes one was I guess the paramount purpose was to
collect the water run off from the hill in the spring, serves as a settling pond then it runs
out of that settling pond into a large drain that carries it away. But we have capitalized on
this and created a lovely landscape setting out of it. A nice backyard type of pond and we
built a deck right next to the side of it. Again one of the landscape construction classes
built that. And then they built a kind [of] fake stream bed with rocks and so forth that water can trickle down through in the spring. And that’s surrounded by landscape planting. There are often cupreous and octet wallow and mums and the mums in bloom now but it’s a nice landscape setting. And then as you look farther on to the south of that, is where we have our orchard. Our apple trees some of them are in their third year, they are arranged in a nice organized fashion, lying the east and west.

HF: Is it a typical type of apple tree or glaw bar or is it the larger?

KB: Well, we’ve got several different ones there, we’ve randomly placed them and they are equally spaced twelve feet between trees and eighteen feet between the rose. But we have some dwarfs, semi dwarfs and some standard trees at this point it is difficult to differentiate between them as they get more mature that will be easy. Now this last year, as one of our classes as part of their educational venture, installed a drip bar trickled irrigation system in that orchard. And that is how we will irrigate in the years to come. Again that is a new development; people throughout the world are finding ways to conserve water and that is one of them.

HF: Israelis have become proficient in the garden.

KB: Yes, they are doing a lot in California also on the Orchards, this kind of irrigation system lends itself very well to an orchard because you can run a meter line down along the row of trees and then have the meters add each trees one or two or three meters depending on the side of the tree. And you are watering only the root zone of the tree and particularly in the area where the water is needed. But that is another educational thing. Now something else that you can see just beyond that further to the south and to the west of that orchard is a windbreak. We’ve established rather a dense windbreak that [is] just beginning to grow, some of the trees are maybe twenty-five, thirty feet high, but ultimately this will be a nice windbreak area to our horticultural plots. So in view here...

HF: What type of trees, you’ve got out here?

KB: We have Russian olives and green ash and cotton less cottonwood this hybrid cotton wood and then we have some ginifers on the inside. This next year we gonna in and put on the windward side of that some more conifers… and some Austrian kinds. Ultimately we have a very nice windbreak to this area and of course as you look back now a little bit to the southwest. You can see our green houses and know that we have several different types. We have glass green houses; we have fiber glass green houses and poly green houses. Again an effort to show the students what is available in the industry, what is being used by different types of industrial ventures. The student as he comes here then can be exposed to these different types. They soon learn which one they like to grow in for the particular crop they are interested in. So this is a pretty good vantage point from where we are. You can see all of our plots; the thing you can’t see very well is the individual varieties you can’t see the individual varieties of Russ berries and goose berries and currents and strawberries and so forth but you can get a vision of the scope and the size of these horticulture plots.
HF: Now is the 10 acre area, all as you’ve been describing, is within the 10 acre area?

KB: Right, as we look to the north, you go maybe a hundred yards and then you come to a large green belt area that is used by the campus looking to the east. You go, or maybe two hundred yards possibly three hundred yards. This borders on the farm crops areas, some areas that they’re working on and as you look to the south, the bulk of the land lies to the south, again boarded by more farm crops area. We could expand our 10 acres if we ever felt the need to but I think we have adequate here to do what we want to do to accomplish what we want to accomplish. Our hope is that, the ongoing research and demonstration will demonstrate new varieties as they are being released of course the plant breeding constantly is releasing new and better and improved varieties that are more hardy and more adaptable to a giving condition. And that is what we are interested in trying. We know which flowers do beautifully and of course people can come here and see that for themselves. I have a little green house business of my own and I know that people pay attention to what’s going on up here, because they will come in my business and say, I want this variety or that variety, and I saw it on the Ricks college and they have their list in their hand that they picked up the gardening shops, or gardening workshops and they try these varieties and then they tell their neighbors and tell their neighbors and so forth and it soon spreads and we see that our impact is definite and very real on what people are doing in this area.

HF: Dr. Black, I’ve really enjoyed everything this morning. I will long remember in a pleasant way this experience Sir.

KB: Well, thank you.