

RICHARD LINUS FOY on OLIVER HAZARD PAYNE

Marist College

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Transcript – Richard Linus Foy

Interviewee: Richard Linus Foy

Interviewer: Gus Nolan

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Summary: In this interview President Foy discusses the history of Oliver Hazard Payne and his relationship to Marist College.

Gus Nolan: Today is July 27th, 2011. We're having an interview this morning with Dr. Richard Foy the President of Marist College from the years 1958 to 1978 the subject this morning is to do an oral interview on Oliver Hazard Payne. Good morning, Richard.

00:35 Richard Linus Foy: Well Oliver Hazard Payne is important and has become more important to Marist now that the college has received the mansion in Esopus, which was once owned by Oliver Hazard Payne. Oliver's parents are Harry B. Payne and Mary Perry. Harry B. Payne comes from a family that probably goes back almost to the pilgrims. They located mostly in Connecticut - Rhode Island. Then they followed the traditional path across the Mohawk Valley towards Ohio and that was a great migration path. Harry Payne was born in Hamilton, New York, but early on he moved to Cleveland, and he married Mary Perry. Mary's father went to Cleveland when it became a city in 1804 but he also got into the fur trade, was the second largest fur trader in the country.

01:59 GN: This is Mary's Perry's father.

02:01 RF: Yes

02:02 GN: Ok. Before this wedding does Oliver Hazard Payne go to college or is there an education part in there or does that come after?

02:12 RF: That comes after, they have to get married first.

02:14 GN: They have to get married before they go to college. Ok.

02:17 RF: So Mary's father was a big fur trader but he also ran the largest mercantile establishment in Cleveland. So that's set up so they were not poverty stricken, but they were not rich but they were affluent.

02:34 GN: Yea, It sounds like the Kennedy family running the Chicago mart fifty years later.

02:41 RF: Now, Oliver is the second of {one, two, three,} five children, to the couple. He was born in 1839 and he was christened Oliver Hazard. Maybe the name Oliver Hazard rings a Perry bell in Mary Perry's family. There was an Oliver Hazard Perry who won the victory in the war of 1812 on Lake Ontario. Another Perry is Matthew Perry who was one of the first graduates of Annapolis and was a lifetime sailor and is famous for having opened up Japan for foreign travel, both for the United States and others. But at the time Oliver was born, a time Payne was born. Oliver Hazard had died already. So he was named in honor of Oliver Hazard {Perry}. He went to grammar school in Cleveland and one of his classmates was a fellow of the name of Rockefeller. But then he went to a prep school in Connecticut, I forget the name. And he was at Yale University for two years. One of his classmates was William C. Whitney, who will appear later in our talk. The war broke out, the Civil War in 1861. Oliver had completed two years of school. He left school to join the army and never graduated. But Yale, very graciously, gave him an honorary Bachelor's in 1878.

04:46 GN: Even though he had only two years of college when-

04:48 RF: Right, but he had become very rich. So basically, he had two sisters, one is Flora and the other is Mary and they'll come in later to the picture.

05:08 GN: When he joins service with the civil war 1861, is it from Illinois or the Cleveland Ohio area? Do you know?

05:19 RF: Ohio. Most of the service in those times was voluntary. In Ohio and Illinois and Indiana were Hotbeds of anti-slavery groups. So there probably was no volunteer group yet organized in Ohio. And he went into the 8 sharp shooters, and he saw action on the Mississippi River, down in Vicksburg, and then eventually in Alabama and in Mississippi. So that kept him pretty busy until the end of the 1862. He had signed for a three-year enlistment, by the end of '62 the Ohio volunteer regiment had be arranged. And one of the deals in the Civil War was if you could get the volunteers and you could fund them with their uniforms and weapons then you could become a Colonel. So, Oliver joined the Ohio volunteer as an assistant Colonel and he very quickly became a Colonel Payne. And now their first major battle was Chickamauga, which is a very brutal battle, out of Chattanooga. And this is at the November 1863.

06:59 GN: I think you should say 18-

07:02 RF: 1863 even better. He was severely wounded, and he went back home to Cleveland to recuperate. But he rejoins the volunteers at the beginning of '64. By this time, the union army was moving down from Chattanooga into Atlanta. So he was involved in several battles on route. It was sort of a cat and mouse game. The southern troops new they were outnumbered, and they kept dodging. But eventually Atlanta fell. Sherman was in charge and Sherman did an interesting thing; he broke with the tradition. The tradition was that you, as you advance your army you had to protect your supply lines. Sherman picked about five divisions and told them that they were going to march through Georgia, and they would basically survive off the land and with the stuff on their backs.

08:24 GN: There would be no supply line for them. They had to provide for themselves.

08:27 RF: The rest of the troops he sent back to Chattanooga and because the army which had been trying to protect Atlanta also moved up from Nashville, hoping eventually to join Lee. So, at about that time, Payne's three year enlistment came up and he left. Some people say why did he leave, well it was a three-year enlistment.

08:58 GN: Was he ever hurt in the war.

09:00 RF: Very badly in Chickamauga, he was out of action, and you know it took a couple of months to recuperate.

09:09 GN: Arm, leg, head, do you know anything more about the injury.

09:12 RF: Don't know. They don't talk about that where he was wounded, there's some nasty thoughts about it. But any rate he got back at the end of '64 which is almost near the end of the civil war. He came back down in the battle of Nashville, one of his relatives was killed and he came back to pick up the body for burial. But then he basically got into business just a little earlier than the end of the war and he connected with a person named Clark and they got into the oil refinery business, but they also got into rail road business. And I'm told that one time, that they controlled almost every railroad going into Cleveland. This leads to an interesting

thing. The biggest refinery in Cleveland was owned by Rockefeller, John Rockefeller. There were 34 refineries in Cleveland. The oil was all coming up from Pennsylvania. John Rockefeller looked at the 34, said this can't go on. Most people would start with the little ones and pick them off, he went for the big one. He went Payne had the second largest and Rockefeller basically approached him, and they worked out a deal that he bought out Payne. But Payne became-

[10:54](#) GN: -associate in the business.

[10:55](#) RF: A big one of the partners. It wasn't a partnership, but you could call it a partner with Rockefeller the third partner was Henry Flagler whose famous in Florida.

[11:09](#) GN: And does that become part then of standard oil?

[11:12](#) RF: That became standard oil. Standard Oil was you might say a conglomerate of fifty or sixty different companies. Which are owned individually, and some owned by Payne some by-

[11:27](#) GN: Where does Payne settle at during time is he in Cleveland?

[11:30](#) RF: He's back in Cleveland. The three men worked out of an office about twice the size of this room. So maybe twenty by twenty. And they ran the business for twenty, until 1884, {1884}, out that room. Rocky, Rockefeller was the lead instigator. Flagler was considerably older and did some, it's not known, he did some negotiating and Payne did a lot of work with the civic or the governmental agencies that they had to deal with, so they each had a sort of role. By the end of the century, in 1884, they all moved to New York City. My concept of that is the model of a gentleman is the British gentleman, he has an office in the city. He has a town house in the city, and he has an estate outside the city. So, Rockefeller had a house in the city, in British terminology means London the city, in American terminology at that time was New York.

[13:09](#) GN: Did Flagler come to New York also?

[13:10](#) RF: Yes. He was living in New York. And basically, he was a member of the Presbyterian Church. But Rocky, I don't know how much Rockefeller was making, but it was estimated that Flagler and Payne were collecting five million dollars of dividends each year from these companies of standard oil. And they paid no tax on it, it was not taxable. There was no income tax in 1920. So, they had a lot of money to invest and after Payne moved to New York, he did a lot of involvement. Meanwhile, he had introduced William C. Whitney to his sister, Flora and they were married and had several children and Payne paid for a house. Fifty seventh and fifth he built out an apartment in a large building which included an apartment for himself so when he visited New York he had his own things right there in Whitney thing. Whitney was no slouch himself. They had the transportation as typical transportation in New York was by horse cart they might have been called buses, but you had two or four horses pulling a cart and a lot of people. There are a lot of different carts and Whitney arranged to conglomerate the whole thing into a simple Metropolitan Transportation and he and Payne were involved. Most of the time Payne wasn't a hands-on person, he was the person who was financing and coming up with the planning. Another thing that Payne did was support Harry Camden, who was building a railroad from the West Virginia coal mines to Baltimore. And the ruminant of that is the Camden Yards outside the Baltimore Orioles, set up. Payne used a broker in Baltimore by the name of Grant Schley, and through the broker he got heavily involved in Tennessee coal and oil. But also, Schley was heavily involved and it looked like Schley might go under so Payne arranged a merger with US Steel and it became the largest steel manufacture in the world.

[16:27](#) GN: This is all in the end of 1890s? When would this be taking place-

[16:31](#) RF: Right after 1884 in the 1890s some place. Another story about him, a young man came to him and indicated he was from North Carolina and said he had gotten into the tobacco business because they forgot to burn down his father's warehouses. So right after the Civil War they were the only ones allowed tobacco. But he had invented an acute way, not only to distribute tobacco but distribute it wrapped in cigarette form, before that time you rolled your own. And he was looking to introduce it into New York. But he had two competitors down there. Payne said well what are you gunna do about it, well he didn't know Payne says buy them out. And he says I have no money. Payne said I'll get you the money. So, Payne became a big stock holder in American tobacco.

[17:39](#) GN: What's the name of the young fellow who has the grandfather's tobacco.

[17:42](#) RF: James Duke from Duke University, Duke Medical School, the American tobacco company.

[17:50](#) GN: The triangle at North Carolina. Raleigh triangle.

[17:54](#) RF: So, these fellows didn't really trust stocks they were really like investors in other company. And he probably invested in 30 or 40 other ones. Now politically, Harry B. Payne, Oliver's father was a bit of a loose cannon. He announced that he was going to run for president. And this upset William C. Whitney and Oliver Payne because they had focused on Grover Cleveland who had a squeaky-clean records. And he had done a lot to clear up the troubles in Buffalo. So, they the story is that Oliver went into a hotel one day with a suitcase full of money. And he met with each of the senators from the state of Ohio. And low and behold the Senate elected Harry B. Payne as the senator of the United States. This is how he became Senator Payne. Well, this is probably not that unusual. But you call the Senate was not elected by the general public then. When the founders of the-

[19:36](#) GN: Constitution

[19:37](#) RF: Constitution. They decided the Representative Houses would be elected popularly, but you needed a smart upper class people very much like the British House of Lords and that became the Senate. Now it's not thought of that way but that's the way it was then.

[19:57](#) GN: It's the origin of it. So I see a number here a hundred and seventy thousand that by today's standards would not be a lot of money to buy a Senate seat.

[20:06](#) RF: No by today's, well they separately they gave that money to Grover Cleveland Campaign. The rumors is that it took him, Payne about a hundred thousand to get him elected but that got him out of the way and Cleveland got elected. Cleveland was so appreciative that he wanted to make Whitney secretary of the Treasury and he was advised not to because he would be, he would be accused of caving into Payne's money. So instead of being secretary of the Treasury, they made him secretary of the Navy. Whitney

took over the Navy. Nothing had been done with the Navy since 1865 and now talking the late 80s so he basically renovated the Navy. Got a lot of steel ships and did that so immensely that when the Spanish-American War came the American Navy was to modernize. You both here in and the Philippines.

[21:29](#) **GN:** We want to move ahead here. Though focusing in on Oliver Payne and his charitable contributions and then the building of the mansion. And we only have about seventeen in years left in his life. When we come to 1900s because he's going to be dead in 1917. So where does his charity begin, how does he get into Cornell Medical for instance.

[21:55](#) **RF:** Well. There was a faction of Bellevue School of doctors that a certain set of doctors were not welcomed and one of those doctors treated Payne. Remember he had been severely wounded-

[22:13](#) **GN:** Oh yes in the civil war.

[22:14](#) **RF:** And we're not, nobody's saying exactly where he was wounded.

[22:20](#) **GN:** He never married.

[22:22](#) **RF:** He never married, draw the dots. Basically, these doctors got into their minority and what Payne did was donate money to establish a separate medical school. Which he attached to Cornell up in Ithaca, but it operated out of New York right now it operates around 70th Street on the east side. Eventually he wound up giving Cornell five million dollars. Not at the initial but basically in other items, and he gave Hamilton College, which is where his folks came from his father came from that area, gave it about a half a million.

[23:14](#) **GN:** Where is Hamilton, in Ohio?

[23:16](#) **RF:** Hamilton, New York. Harry B. Payne came from that area, his folks. He gave a million dollars to Yale University. He gave a lot to New York Public Library, I don't know how much, but his name is listed as one of the founders. If you go into the main entry you see Oliver Payne there.

[23:44](#) **GN:** Now was the New York Public Library constructed by this time, were the lions on the street already the famous mansion look to the library.

[23:56](#) **RF:** The lions were on the streets later by an Italian group that had its shop in Mott Haven, the Piccirillis. They did the lions and by the way the Piccirilli, there's a Piccirilli's sculpture in Donnelly Hall, the seal. It's one of three they did. There were three libraries, one was the aster I forget the other two. And somebody said it would be wise to make a central library. When there was a pretty headstrong head librarian, and they gave it out they asked for proposals for about ten architectural firms and eventually they willed it down to three. The obvious one was McKim, Mead, & White that was the society group. The one that made it, was Carrère and Hastings, and another one I forget but basically the trick was McKim, Mead, & White designed a building for you and then they put the stuff inside. The librarian wanted them to start with the inside design of what the library wanted and then work outside and that, that was played right into Hastings who was the lead architect to Carrère and Hastings so to everybody's surprise, they got the bid. However, they've done a lot of work they did over five hundred estates in Jersey, Connecticut, and New York. They did the couple of senate office buildings in Washington. They did the amp theater behind the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They've done a lot of decorative work it was they just a lot of the bridges in the Bronx River parkway they, how did Payne get to them? Well Payne's friends and his favorite was Stanford White. And one of the things that Stanford White used to do and McKim, Mead, & White, he used to do a lot of the interior decoration and he could travel to Europe. There's a whole batch of carbon copies of White's correspondence to Payne saying I could get a Monet; I could get not a Picasso but early Degas at a good price. And basically he would buy them for this clients and bring them over and use them to install the thing. Stanford liked art but he also liked women. Evelyne Nesbit in particular and after Evelyne got married she confessed to husband that she had an affair with Stanford. So the husband walked into Madison Square Garden, in the dining room and shot him. But before that time let's backtrack a little to William C. Whitney and Flora. When he was secretary of the Navy, they had a place in Washington and Flora became the Perle Mesta of Washington. He gave her tremendous number of parties and celebrations and so I lost my thought we were saying-

[28:21](#) **GN:** When you went back Whitney and he was in the navy...

[28:26](#) **RF:** Flora died suddenly and William Whitney about two years after remarried. This infuriated Payne. He thought that it was a disservice or disloyalty to the first one. So, the Whitney's had four children and Payne told the children, you either stick with him or you stick with me. If you stick with him, you don't get my money and the children split two and two. And one William Payne Whitney changed his name to Payne Whitney and began living in Oliver's house in New York. He also took a couple boat trips on the Aphrodite. He married the daughter of the, I think his name was John Hay who is the biographer of Lincoln, and Payne had when they got married, he gave them a house on fifth avenue which was designed by Stanford White. It's gorgeous it's one of the few town houses still in existence, because it's owned by the French cultural society but almost all the others have been replaced by high rise apartment's there's more money in them. That's how he basically got to almost have his favorite nephew Payne Whitney. What Payne liked; he liked boats. In the late, 1895 or so he leased a boat called The Endeavor from the Bath Iron Works. And he'd liked it very much so he commissioned Bath to build a boat for himself, which is called the Aphrodite and it was largest steam yacht in the world.

[30:54](#) **GN:** Now that was built in New York?

[30:56](#) **RF:** It was built in Bath Iron Works in Maine and basically now, it got fitted out in New York. But its speed trials and so on were done in Maine. And it was just over three hundred feet long. It wasn't the longest for very long because two years later J. P. Morgan launched the course there which is even longer. And. But basically it was a fantastic boat was very well done. And the other thing Payne liked were horses, apparently during the Civil War when you were the colonel, you got up on the horse and you directed your troop's right in the field. So, he always had this love for horses. And eventually he wanted to build a building to take care of horses and to breed them and also to run horse shows that never came to pass the building did, but Payne died.

[32:13](#) **GN:** Ok but the Payne Whitney family in Long Island they're into horse business aren't they? That's there.

[32:30](#) **RF:** Well, let's see how we got the architects of for the building in Esopus. Flagler, when he came to New York, got interested in Florida. And he nobody went to Florida everybody went to, the rich went to Georgia. Because Florida was a swamp. Right. So,

Flagler says I wonder if I could get a railroad through there so he began railroad, he hit Jacksonville. He was a member of the Presbyterian Church in New York after services one day he mentioned to the pastor that his favorite architect Stanford White had been killed. And he's looking for an architect for some work down in Jacksonville. Well, the pastor said, my son is an architect the son was Thomas Hastings. Flagler, what could you do you know, so he hired and career and Hastings who had trained in Europe they were good. He hired them to come up with some designs, but then indicated local architects down there cause they knew the materials and so on they-

[33:56](#) GN: -now this is to build the Esopus mansion.

[33:58](#) RF: No this is to build some hotels in Jacksonville Florida. And they came back to Flagler, and they said, we can do everything. So eventually he gave them everything. Gave them a couple hotel a couple churches and was very pleased with them when Stanford White died. Flagler and Payne were in New York and Payne said what am I going to do I used to use White. Flagler said well these two guys are very good, give them a shot. So he chose a career and Hastings for the mansion in Esopus. Hastings designed the mansion. Career did most of the landscaping, but he also was the, the architect's representative with the builders and the contractors. He was somewhat of what we used to call the clerk of the works.

[35:04](#) GN: -on the job-

[35:05](#) RF: -gets it done. Hastings love design and there are touches of the Hastings design in the mansion. For example, most of those, most of the buildings built had- you went in to front entrance and you ran into a grand staircase, you don't see that in the front entrance. The front entrance of the mansion is the great hall. The staircase which is grand is tucked behind it. Now another example of that would be in the New York Public Library. When you go in the main entrance. You do not see the staircases their staircases are to the right. So, he had a little touch that way. So that's basically how Payne got to use them. Now, so he used Stanford White for his own house on Fifth Avenue. He used the house for Helen Hay and Payne Whitney. He had a hunting lodge at Thomasville, Georgia, which a little place of three thousand acres... And towards the end, in 1914 when he couldn't sail his boat, he didn't want to sail it into the Mediterranean, or in a war zone here-

[36:40](#) GN: -because of the war had broken out.

[36:43](#) RF: He worked out of Newport. But he used an eight-hundred-acre estate on an island off Newport. I don't know if he owned it, I've never seen anything, but he must have leased it or rent it and then Esopus was like his estate up north. So, he used Esopus, he intended to use Esopus during the good weather, Thomasville during the bad weather. But then during the good weather he used to sail his boat during the summer so he used it mostly in spring and fall. How much did he use of for? It wasn't built until, properly ready by 1912. And he was dead by 1917. So the chances are-

[37:38](#) GN: -five years would have been a lot-

[37:38](#) RF: -very little. But basically, but he did a good job on it.

[37:46](#) GN: How much time did he live in the mansion would you say. It's only starts to be constructed in 1903 or so 1913 maybe it's finished.

[37:56](#) RF: Maybe 1913 – '17. And it was his country home. So he really lived in New York. He died in June of '17 and he died in a New York house. So, he spent. He didn't spend much time here but the time he spent he must have enjoyed.

[38:20](#) GN: Did he die of the wounds as a result of that. Do we know the detail of that-

[38:24](#) RF: No we don't know the details but he was 78 [years old].

[38:28](#) GN: So he was an old man.

[38:39](#) RF: He might have died of old age. He was not, some of the pictures make him look huge you. But the pictures of him as a soldier show him very thin.

[38:43](#) GN: He's mounted on a couple of horses. John Ansley has some pictures of him. Yeah, horses and his military garb.

[38:51](#) RF: But his passport applications in the 1880s and 90s list him as five foot nine. Not a dwarf. But sometimes when you see those pictures on the horse you think he's a giant. You know he's a reasonable man. And then he died June 27th, 1917. So he probably didn't get to see the mansion. In 1917, he might have been sick the whole time. Three - four years. Is all he really had the use of it

[39:39](#) GN: Where was he buried. Do you know?

[39:42](#) RF: In Lakeview cemetery of Cleveland, he's buried.

[39:45](#) GN: Oh, he went back to Cleveland, and who immediately then got the mansion on his death was at the nephew's?

[39:56](#) RF: He left his favorite was Payne Whitney and he left the Thomasville Georgia State to them. He also left the Aphrodite boat to Payne. I mentioned Payne was Flora Son. The other the other girl in the family was Mary. And she married a Bingham. And he left it to Harry Bingham who was her son, and he basically inherited the estate.

[40:40](#) GN: So, Flora and William Whitney just had two children.

[40:45](#) RF: There were other children but there but Payne his two favorite nephews were Payne and Harry Bingham right and Payne was his most favorite nephew. Now. They he left two million to each to each of them. But chances he had transferred a lot more to them. His estate was valued at some place around three hundred million. He's considered the twentieth richest Man in the history of the world.

[41:15](#) GN: At that time.

[41:17](#) **RF:** In the whole history of the world.

[41:19](#) **GN:** On the occasion of his death, when he died three hundred million that would be impressive. Not by Yates or Bates or Gates or Jobs today but nevertheless for that day it was significant.

[41:35](#) **RF:** Well consider that the whole eight hundred acre estate Esopus was constructed for under two million.

[41:43](#) **GN:** Oh well that's another-

[41:47](#) **RF:** You know whoever took all these rich men they sort of somehow got the money equivalents at some period in time, he was rich.

[42:06](#) **GN:** Ok. Is there anybody in the present time descendant of Payne, Oliver Hazard Payne, who has shown any interest in him? Is there any scholarships are there any biographies are there any booklets on him, what have you found?

[42:27](#) **RF:** He was a very private man. I've never found anything. There are a couple of histories of the Payne Family and Oliver typically to genealogy Oliver just gets a half a page on that. So, it's not, no there's nothing really big done on it.

[42:54](#) **GN:** Do you know, is a mausoleum in Cleveland where he's buried in or is it just an ordinary-

[43:00](#) **RF:** I haven't been able to get a picture of it, I've got a picture of the entrance to the cemetery. But you have to get out there to get in. Its Lake View is nice cemetery. You know. An affluent cemetery.

[43:15](#) **GN:** Then the nephew's family in Long Island, are they still there in the Manhasset area or I am not sure exactly where I heard they're from.

[43:23](#) **RF:** They're from, Payne Whitney got into horses very heavily and a lot of other things because he had a lot of money. One of his daughters became the owner of the Mets, notice the name Helen Payson [Joan Payson; daughter of Helen Hay] Yeah. So, she. And they have their estate was very close to the brothers to St Mary's in Manhasset so their well known. But they had a lot of interests and it's hard to say.

[44:00](#) **GN:** It's diffuse, I guess or a number of-

[44:02](#) **RF:** yeah, I don't know if anybody even either of the two of them who were that interested. You might say they should have been grateful and did something. But yeah...

[44:17](#) **GN:** Stepping back a little bit just take a thread out of this. The ascension church in Esopus, say something about that. At what time did he make this contribution, would be in the early 1900s, the electrification of it and what else did you say there-

[44:35](#) **RF:** Well. He only got involved up there about 1911 so it probably would have been in second decade of the 1900s. The church itself was, there weren't too many Episcopalians up there. It was mostly Dutch reformed and not the prestige, the prestige religions were the Episcopal and the Presbyterian. And there weren't too many. You would more during the summer when the people came up from New York to their summer homes. They used to go by boat across the river to St James.

[45:25](#) **GN:** In Hyde Park. Where F.D.R. went to church.

[45:29](#) **RF:** Yes and on one occasion. One of the people drowned. I don't know all of the circumstances. And this is like in the 1840s - 50s, so they decided their build a church and they, they got the money from the Rutherford Watts family in New York. Helen Rutherford was married to Archibald Russell who owns a property under the mansion and Russell, very interesting person but any rate. They the mother donated most of the money for the church and she went to Ascension church which had been newly constructed at Eleventh Street and Fifth Avenue. So, she asked that it be called Ascension Church. Which it was, and as an interesting orientation, it faces east. It faces across the river; it faces exactly St James Church.

[46:45](#) **GN:** -mirror image.

[46:59](#) **RF:** So, when you drive past it on nine w you see the back of the church you don't see the front. Yeah. Now. Several people the Russell's obviously donated to church. John Jacob Pastor who also owned that property donated some things. Jerk, Jerky the seasonings that family donated there. And eventually, by the time Payne came electrification was coming in, so he paid to get to church electrified. And he built the sexton's house. Next to-

[47:38](#) **GN:** -you know if the church vibrant it. Do now what kind of active goes on there today.

[47:43](#) **RF:** They were cut there's a woman pastor. And she's also the pastor of the church in Highland. So, she takes care of both of them. She's been there almost ten years now, nice lady, works hard many of these churches are struggling.

[48:08](#) **GN:** You certainly are doing this research. How come up with some changes in your own thinking from what you were told the youngster as regards Oliver Hazard Payne, his name would be the one thing straightening his name out because we call him different things over the years, What do you think now, what was perhaps the most surprising thing, in your study and your research on this man that you didn't know about but now you'd like to put it as one of the focuses of his accomplishments and what he did.

[48:50](#) **RF:** Well, the biggest correction I made I heard about him Brother Francis Xavier. Wrote a very interesting essay about the Esopus property which is published in the Marist bulletin of studies and it's a classic. And he tracked Oliver Hazard Payne and he indicated to me that he thought Payne was a deserter because Payne's name doesn't go up after 1965. That's incorrect. But Brother Francis pointed out the library even at that stage. Had the complete history of the civil war published by the government. And I used it later for reference for many things. And that's not true. He was a volunteer. And his term was up and having been severely wounded I guess he-

[49:58](#) **GN:** why he left service before the war was over then. {That's right} that's the issue

[50:03](#) **RF:** Well, we see again. You have to take your thinking of now. Now when somebody is drafted or he volunteers, he volunteers for the length war plus six months. In those days you volunteered for three years, and a lot of volunteers said my volunteer time is up, so I found that he I really didn't know that much about him when we were in the juniorate he was just a rich man.

[50:37](#) **GN:** Well, there's was one myth. Do you remember the story about the railroad.

[50:43](#) **RF:** Well, the story, the legend is that Payne was so powerful that he made the railroad go away from the shoreline and go behind by his property. He was so powerful. Well, it's interesting because a road went through in 1881 and he bought the property in 1910 so there's a disconnect there. By the way in terms of ascension church that. Where is ascension Church located?

[51:27](#) **GN:** I guess it's in West Park

[51:29](#) **RF:** West Park, why is it called West Park. {I have no idea} well if you go across the river. Where do you get {Hyde Park} and if you go up to Dorsey Lane, {East Park... Hyde Park} East Park so it's the connection. So, you have. The so intimately the same story is told about the railroad about Robert Livingston Pell who owned the property that's on the Redemptorists that's even wilder because Robert Livingston Pell virtually went bankrupt in 1865.

[52:16](#) **GN:** So he has nothing to do with it.

[52:18](#) **RF:** The other thing, which is weird, the railroad did not go behind Payne's property. It goes right behind- It goes across the other side of Route 9W but it goes through his property.

[52:37](#) **GN:** Oh, in the northern part

[52:41](#) **RF:** So maybe you could say he just he didn't mind it going through his farm he didn't

[52:48](#) **GN:** But he didn't want it in his front entrance

[52:50](#) **RF:** The reason why it went if the railroad went up along the river it would have had to have trestle about a mile long. When it got into Kingston, and it would have blocked the round out creek which was the exit for the Delaware and Hudson Canal. And they would have had to have some arrangement. So they decided to turn left and go up the hill and go across the round out. Then it went right through the middle of Kingston and wound back at the river at Saugerties.

[53:28](#) **GN:** But you thank you very much. It just shows you what a little research will do and how you can have your own opinions, but the facts are a little difference sometimes and when we do the research, the facts will tell you another story. Ok thank you very much.

[53:42](#) **RF:** Ok Thank you.