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Lillian "Rusty" Brown

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Lillian Rusty Brown Black.

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This is an interview with Miss Lillian "Rusty" Brown being taped in Kansas City, Kansas in Miss Brown's home on March 11, 1974. Present for the interview, Miss Brown and Dr. Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff.

DR. BURG: Now, Miss Brown, the first thing I would like to ask you is, where were you born?

MISS BROWN: I was born at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

DR. BURG: Right here in the state?

MISS BROWN: Yes.

DR. BURG: And educated here in the state?

MISS BROWN: That's right. I went to schools in Lawrence, Kansas, in Oberlin, Kansas, and Leavenworth, Kansas, at various stages.

DR. BURG: Now, when did you leave the state?

MISS BROWN: We left Kansas in about 19--it was 1941. My dad was with civil service and he was transferred to Fort Omaha right before the beginning of World War II, and we moved up there. And at that time then I went to work for civil service while we were in Omaha.

DR. BURG: In what kind of a job?

BROWN: I went to work as a clerk-typist; CAS-1; that was just the lowest rating you could have. And I worked at VII Corps Headquarters, I think was the name of the unit, and I worked there about two years.

BURG: About how old were you when you went into that work?

BROWN: I was twenty-one years old.

BURG: Had you had training courses, secretarial training courses--

BROWN: Yes--

BURG: --before you did that?

BROWN: I finished high school in Leavenworth, Kansas, (we lived in Leavenworth several times in our lives), and my dad was army before he was civil service. When I was born at Fort Leavenworth he was a Technical Sergeant, I believe at that time, and he was in charge of the station hospital at Fort Leavenworth. He was transferred several times but he left the army shortly after I was born. We eventually moved back to Leavenworth and I graduated from Leavenworth High and I went to a business school there. Then about that time we

moved to--I guess we were there two years after I graduated from high school--and I worked for a while at Cushing Hospital as a receptionist. And then we moved to Omaha and I went to work for civil service.

BURG: And in VII Corps Headquarters as you recall?

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Two years on that job and then what was the next move for you?

BROWN: Well, then I went overseas with the American Red Cross as a recreation worker.

BURG: What year was that?

BROWN: 1945. And I went to the Philippines while the war was still on, and I was stationed at Tacloban Air Base on the island of Leyte with the Thirteenth Air Force. And I was there, oh, six months I guess. And then shortly after the war ended, well, about two months after the war ended, I was transferred to Japan and was assigned in the

Second Marine Division Headquarters at Sasebo, Japan, and we were the first American girls into that area of Japan which is on the southern island Kyushu. Sasebo was a very large naval station for the Japanese. It's about, oh, twenty miles north of Nagasaki, which, as you know, was the second place hit by an atom bomb.

BURG: Did you get down there to see the--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --the city?

BROWN: I went down there in January, '46, and, of course, nothing had been done at that time to rebuild the city. As a matter of fact, I never kept in touch; I don't know whether they ever rebuilt Nagasaki very much or not.

BURG: I believe they did.

BROWN: Did they?

BURG: I think so.

BROWN: I hadn't thought about that till now.

BURG: I think the situation was that much of the structure damage was to very lightly constructed wooden houses, and that could be repaired easily enough.

BROWN: Of course most of their homes were wooden, and it was very horrible. But Sasebo itself was so badly damaged, and when we went to Japan we landed right outside of Tokyo at Tachikawa Air Base. Tokyo was so badly damaged, the parts that we saw, that, even though it was shocking to see Nagasaki, you had to keep reminding yourself that it was one bomb and not a series of bombings that did it. But of course the big shock was when we saw Manila, about eight months before that, we landed in Manila, that it was so badly damaged.

BURG: That hadn't occurred to you that--

BROWN: Well, we had known it, but when you've never seen bomb damage it's, it's a great shock. And we had to disembark out in the bay because there were so many sunken ships in the bay. We went in on--I never remember whether it's LST or LSM, one of those little landing ships--but they couldn't bring our troop transport in any closer than that, about two miles out.

But that was a great shock to see Manila. And, of course, there was so much sympathy for the Filipinos, they were our allies, to see their city bombed and everyone reminded us that Manila had been the "pearl of the Orient." I found later that every city you went to in the Orient was referred to as the "pearl of the Orient." But at that time of course I believed everything I heard.

BURG: Now, Manila, also, I suppose would have shown the marks of shelling and machine gun fire, rifle fire, too, because it had been fought in as well as bombed.

BROWN: Yes. In fact, as I remember it, there were troops outside--there were Japanese remnants outside of the city limits when we got there in June, 1945. Although the fighting was really over in Manila but there were scattered snipers, sniper fire outside the city and little incidents that went on with the Japanese at that time. But it just seemed to me like the town had been destroyed. There were so many huge buildings--some of it was stone and brick and instead of just a block being leveled there would be a chimney standing or a wall or something

which, when you see it for the first time, it impresses you more than just seeing a block that's leveled. You have to say, "That block's leveled," because there were buildings there, but they'd disappeared. But when you see little remnants, it seemed more horrible to me at that time. And I felt the same way later on when I went to Germany and saw those towns; there's something about seeing walls or a bathtub hanging up on the second floor that's much more horrifying.

BURG: Being connected with human occupancy--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --and make the tie-in. What was your reaction to Nagasaki when you saw it for the first time, do you recollect?

BROWN: Well, I had to keep reminding myself that this had happened in just a few seconds. I had seen some bombing prior to that so it wasn't the shock that you have when you see it. I kept saying, "This was just a few seconds and this happened." We didn't stay very long. We just went, as I remember it, we didn't go right into the heart of town--I don't think we were allowed. As I say, this was January of '46 and the bombs were dropped in August. And it seemed to me like people were a

little leery of, nobody knew for sure--

BURG: Radioactivity perhaps.

BROWN: --yes, what would happen if you went too close in; so we didn't go very close in. But that part of Japan is rather hilly; it's on the coast, and it's really very beautiful. And, as I remember, we just went in where we could see some of it and you were just sort of stunned. I don't think the human mind can quite comprehend it.

BURG: Were you traveling in Red Cross vehicles or American military vehicles?

BROWN: Well, I think at that time I was with some Marine Corps officers. I believe at that time we weren't permitted to go any place without an escort. In the Philippines, all the time I was on Leyte we were supposed to be either escorted by MPs or with an armed officer. In Japan, I think it was only maybe a month or so after I arrived that that continued; we arrived in December, and I think some time in January, why, it was just sort of ignored. However, we were all rather careful.

BURG: Do you remember any reaction from any of the Japanese in and around Nagasaki?

BROWN: We didn't see or talk to any around there. However, as I say, Sasebo wasn't very far, and the Japanese people were extremely friendly. I became very attached to the maids and they became very attached to all of us. There were four Red Cross girls there: a woman who was in, maybe, in her fifties and then there were three of us in our twenties. And the Japanese maids were very attached to us. The Japanese men and the girls who worked at the Red Cross club were very attached to us. They never seemed to have any strong feelings against us because of Nagasaki and they were within the distance where they could walk or ride their bikes over there if they wished. And I'm sure they were all aware of it. And then as I said, Sasebo itself was very badly hit. We lived in a Japanese-style house; the Marine Corps headquarters was in, I guess it was navy barracks where the Japanese--

BURG: Probably would be in Sasebo.

BROWN: --they were masonry buildings. But they had been quite badly damaged and had been repaired.

BURG: By the way, I should add here for the benefit of my transcriber, I think Sasebo is spelled S-a-s-e-b-o.

BROWN: That's right.

BURG: I keep forgetting that; sometimes it drives her to distraction to talk about foreign place names and never mention how they're spelled. Well, how long were you there in Japan? All your service was in Sasebo?

BROWN: No, I was transferred in about May of '46 to Tachikawa Air Base. I had served with the Thirteenth Air Force in the Philippines and I wanted back with them. There were two of us who were together for most of our time overseas; Florence Gibbons and myself were assigned to Leyte together and then we were sent to the Marine Corps together and then we were sent to Tachikawa together.

BURG: That's T-a-c-h-i-k-a-w-a.

BROWN: That's right. Were you in Japan?

BURG: No.

BROWN: Well, you sure know your Japanese--

BURG: Well so many Nisei out in the Seattle area that we're pretty familiar with some of the spelling and the names out there. And my aunt was out there; she would have been in Japan, Okinawa, Korea, about the same time you were with the American Red Cross.

BROWN: Oh, what was her name?

BURG: Burg. B-u-r-g, Mildred.

BROWN: She was Mildred Burg.

BURG: I'm not sure whether she hit Japan; I believe she did perhaps on leave, but she went first to Okinawa and then to Korea, and I know was in Japan a part of the time because I have been given things of hers that she acquired there.

BROWN: Well, isn't that interesting.

BURG: I wanted to ask you if by any chance you had run into her.

BROWN: The name doesn't ring a bell. But you know sometimes

you don't think about people for many years and we may have met.

BURG: Well, if you have pictures of that period it could be that she might appear in some of them; there wouldn't have been that many of you there.

BROWN: No, there weren't too many of us in Japan. As I say, we were the first American girls down on the southern island, but some of the girls went up in early October of '45. See, the peace was in September, and in October some of the girls went right up. But they stayed mostly Tokyo, Yokohama, and I was assigned Kyushu, no, not Kyushu, Kyoto. Kyoto. But there weren't a great many of them. We landed in Okinawa, but I didn't see any Red Cross girls when we landed there. I knew a number of girls who had gone to Okinawa and came to Tokyo, at least two sisters, the Gaillard sisters, it runs in my mind they were with me in Germany. But I'll have to kind of rack my brain as we're talking to see if I remember.

BURG: It'd be fun if you did.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Well, then, you go then to the Thirteenth Air Force

for similar duty?

BROWN: I did want to mention one thing before I left the Marine Corps. In the spring of 1945, we had great excitement in Sasebo because the army chief of staff was coming to inspect Second Marine Division Headquarters. I think by that time the Second Marine went home and we were, no, I guess we were still Second Marine Division Headquarters, I'll correct myself. But the army chief of staff was coming to visit, and of course in those days [Douglas] MacArthur was our hero. Everybody complained about MacArthur was so rough on everybody and he was arrogant and proud, but he was our hero, and we were very proud that we were serving, so to speak, under General Douglas MacArthur--and the army chief of staff was coming to inspect us. Well, he was from the other area of war, the European Theater, and his name was Dwight D. Eisenhower. So I met General Eisenhower when I was with Second Marine Division Headquarters.

BURG: Were you introduced to him there?

BROWN: I was introduced to him, and it was kind of funny because

he came--we had a little parade and the marines turned out the band and their best troops welcomed him and he inspected some of the military facilities--I don't know what all. But the Marine Corps general asked if they could come by and inspect the Red Cross club and have coffee and doughnuts. And of course our club director was delighted and for the occasion we were permitted to wear skirts, wear our uniform skirts and our jackets instead of the nurses' slacks which we usually wore. But in the Marine Corps, the Red Cross club was for enlisted men only and officers were not permitted in the club at any time. And the Japanese girls who were the waitresses were given strict instructions that they were never to give coffee and doughnuts to an officer in the kitchen or in the front or in the office or any place else. And the day of the inspection we went out and watched the parade and then when General Eisenhower went on to see some of the other facilities we went back in the club. And I was about the youngest girl on the staff and I started playing ping-pong with one of the marines. I had my back to the front door, and the Red Cross clubs are usually pretty noisy, a lot of boys in them and this was a day off for them so there were more than usual. And suddenly I was aware that the only sound in that

club was that ping-pong ball. And when the ball came back to me I grabbed it and I looked around the club and everybody had stopped doing whatever they were doing and there was total silence. And they had finished their inspection early and the Marine Corps general was bringing General Eisenhower to the club about fifteen minutes early, and I was there without my jacket and I just had my blouse and skirt. And I was the only Red Cross girl on the floor. So I went over and introduced myself and asked them if they'd like some coffee and doughnuts and they said, "Yes," and they looked around. The marines were very cold; nobody even smiled; they just stood or sat where they were and watched these officers parade across their club. We got over to the bar where we served coffee and doughnuts and I asked the little Japanese girl to bring us coffee and doughnuts. "Oh," she said, "Rusty, we can't serve officers. Why you silly Rusty." Well, of course I was young anyhow and I felt like a fool, all these generals, and she wouldn't serve them. And I tried to give her orders and they were watching me, you know, General Eisenhower--I'm sure didn't know why they wouldn't bring coffee and doughnuts. And finally

I went back in the kitchen and got the coffee and doughnuts and brought them out myself--I was very embarrassed. By that time the club director was down and she took over and I was very relieved because--

BURG: Good Lord, yes!

BROWN: --I felt, I felt very badly. But when I read about all these riots in, not riots, but all this trouble over in Vietnam, first I reacted with disgust; then I started to remember some of the things that happened when I was overseas and the fact that when the troops were going home from the Philippines how there'd be trouble in the camps where they were staying before they embarked. And I was with the Marines. The Marines were very hard men, and I am very proud that I was with them even though the war was over. But they weren't the kind of troops that I had expected, you know, apple pie and mamma we were fighting for there. They had fought and many of them had become very bitter and they were very selfish about their club. The officers had their club and the enlisted men had their club, and they, the enlisted men, didn't want them in the club. And even on this special occasion, they were not able to be gracious about officers coming in to inspect their club.

BURG: Did Eisenhower talk to any of those men that you recall?

BROWN: He tried to but there was no reciprocal feeling. You know, President Eisenhower had a great warmth and even at that time he smiled and talked to them, but the Marines held back. And whether he sensed it, I never discussed it with him later. Well, for one thing I thought maybe he didn't notice it as much as I did because, you know, they were moving fast--they came into the club, and what seemed to me like a long period, I'm sure it didn't take me long to get that coffee out of there, but at the time I felt as though as I had spent half an hour getting that coffee out to them. And the Marine generals weren't too anxious to stop and talk with their own men as I remember. I don't mean that they deliberately did that, but they were on an inspection tour and they were moving fast to get everything done. I remember that I thought of him as being very friendly, but I don't remember that he talked to anyone in particular.

BURG: Did you tell him that you were from his home state when you were introduced to him?

BROWN: No, I didn't. I just introduced myself, because as I say, I was the only girl on the floor. As you know when people, when

officers are moving in a group like that, they really kind of barrel through. And I was just kind of trotting a little ahead of them to get them over to the bar and get them some coffee and doughnuts, praying that my club director would get down there as she was more mature and she knew what to do. I was ill at ease because I didn't have on my jacket, and we had been instructed, you know, to have your jacket on and your Red Cross pins all straight, as well we should have. I think I was more concerned about being caught without my jacket than anything else until I got the doughnuts. But he did not stay very long; they left and the incident was over, and I didn't see him again until I went to the White House. But the Marines were different than the Air Force.

BURG: Yes, I can well imagine. They'd gone through a very, very special kind of war.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: And many of them were. I met some myself in 1945; they were very kind to me on a troop train going down to California, and they were Iwo Jima veterans.

BROWN: Well, that was--

BURG: Just happened--

BROWN: --Second Marine--

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: --amphib.

BURG: Amphib.

BROWN: I was with--

BURG: And these men were very, very kind; very nice guys; very funny men. But I saw some of the others too who had been down there too long and had seen too much. Well then, how much longer were you then in Japan?

BROWN: I stayed until November of '46 and I was stationed at Tachikawa and then I was stationed at Yokohama, a city club for the last couple months before I came home.

BURG: So you then came back here, came back to the States.

BROWN: Well, my parents were living in Omaha.

BURG: So you went to Omaha. Stayed in the Red Cross?

BROWN: I was out on leave for a couple of months and then I went back to Washington and was sent to Germany.

BURG: With the Red Cross, again?

BROWN: With the Red Cross.

BURG: And where were you sent to then in Germany?

BROWN: My first assignment was in Erlangen, Germany.

BURG: How is that spelled?

BROWN: At an air base. E-r-l-a-n-g-e-n. Erlangen, It's near--I wanted to say Munich but that's not right--I told you my memory is failing me. What's the town north of Munich, or are you very good at geography in the large cities? Where the--

BURG: Not Nuremberg.

BROWN: Nuremberg, where the war trials were held.

BURG: I see.

BROWN: Erlangen is just a little north of Nuremberg. I had about four stations in Germany. At, oh, about six months after I arrived there they started closing up Red Cross clubs and folding up the operation, and by March of '48 all the Red Cross clubs in Germany, in the world, were closed up and the Red Cross program was phased out. And I stayed and was fortunate enough that I was assigned to various clubs as they closed, the Erlangen club and Bamberg, Weiden, Ansbach were the four and--

BURG: Weiden, is that W-e-i--

BROWN: d-e-n. So I was over there then until, well, I took some leave and toured Europe and I got back in the States on June the 6th of 1948.

BURG: How much were you able to see of Europe on your tour?

BROWN: Well, I didn't see as much as I would have liked, but I went to Holland; I saw most of Germany, except Berlin. I had left Berlin till the last, and then the Berlin airlift started and we weren't permitted to go up there. I got to Czechoslovakia before the communists took over and Austria,

Switzerland, Italy, France--that's about it. It was very interesting then because all the Europeans loved us and I understand it's quite different now.

BURG: It seems to vary sometimes. Some years and some places it'll be very bad for tourists, and other tourists can go there a few months later and the reception is totally different.

BROWN: Is that right?

BURG: It seems to fluctuate a little bit. Paris, I've been told is like that. Well, I suppose you can have a bad experience in the same season that somebody else had a very good experience too. Well, when you came back from there, you had used up your leave and where did you come back to?

BROWN: Well, my parents had moved to Kansas City. The club program was over with Red Cross, so I came back to Kansas City and went to work for a bank, the Union National Bank.

BURG: What kind of work was that?

BROWN: Secretarial. And I was there about a year and a half I guess and I wasn't too happy working in a bank. It was very dull and very quiet. And one of my friends had gone over to

Japan again with the Red Cross, so I decided I'd give it another whirl and I--

[Interruption]

BURG: So this would be about 1950.

BROWN: Well, I went over in June of 1950 and I was over there about two weeks when the war in Korea broke out.

BURG: Oh, yes. I'd forgotten my timing. You were there just at a time when the American Red Cross would be expanding in that area?

BROWN: That's right. And General MacArthur, one of the things he did in the first month of the war--of course, it was all very hectic after the start of the Korean War--was, as I remember it was a Sunday, he asked that the Red Cross start a club and club-mobile program. Of course right away I started trying to contact some of my old friends who were in the recreation part of the Red Cross, because I was then in the swimming and life-saving program and I don't swim, but I was doing secretarial work. And my boss supervised the program and his assistants did the training.

But we would go around to various bases and train the troops in survival, because, as I say, the war started or the police action as President Truman called it, started shortly after I got there. So right away we got in to this survival course. And the only time I got back near Sasebo why we went down to Beppu to train the paratroopers, and one of the things my boss and his assistants did was to teach them how to jump, say, off of a ship into the water without breaking their neck if they had to and how to get their pack off and into the water and save all their gear and save themselves. And also they were trying to teach them to go off with their helmets which has to be done, you know, in a particular way otherwise you do break your neck. And I understand in World War II, they had a choice--jumping off with their helmet and not being hit in the head with bullets and breaking their neck because of the helmet or taking the helmet off and maybe being hit by a bullet or shrapnel or something. But they had found a method of jumping off and holding onto the helmet. The strap under your chin, like this, and it was supposed not to break your neck. And that's how they trained the troops in how to do it.

It took me quite a while to get back in the recreation program though. In the first place my boss didn't want me to

leave, and, in the second place, they had recruited fifty recreation workers and only fifty including their supervisor, Marie Van Vechten and--

BURG: How's that name spelled?

BROWN: V-a-n V-e-c-h-t-e-n.

BURG: Was the Van and Vechten run together?

BROWN: No, it's two.

BURG: Two separate names.

BROWN: And she's still with the Red Cross. She's now married and her husband's International Red Cross. But she was the supervisor and then there were forty-nine other workers, and they recruited them in the United States, and they came over in a group, and that's all they were authorized to have. And I was trying very hard to get with them, but they didn't have any billet for another individual. Some of those girls went right over to Pusan, Korea, and then they had to be evacuated, because the North Koreans came so close--that perimeter was maybe twenty miles around Pusan?

BURG: Yes, right.

BROWN: Something like that. So they had to be evacuated back to Japan. But eventually, in December 1951, I got back in the club and recreation program. I had to go in as a secretary, then I was sent to Korea as Marie Van Vechten's secretary.

BURG: Where were you assigned there?

BROWN: At Fifth Air Force Headquarters Advance, which was in Seoul, Korea. Maybe you remember, Seoul changed hands about, oh, five or six times as I remember.

BURG: Yes, as the fighting came down from the north and back up, the MacArthur invasion of Inchou.

BROWN: Yes, but all of that happened before I got there. The Americans had retaken Seoul about a month before I got there I believe, maybe November. I had been doing volunteer work in Tokyo where I was stationed. When I wasn't on duty I went down and helped with the plane loads of wounded, and you maybe

remember that the Chinese communists had come into the war when we were way up in North Korea; we had hundreds of troops who were being sent back to the United States with frozen feet, hands, great many Marines so I worked with them again, with the wounded Marines. Then I went over and was stationed at Fifth Air Force Advance, and I was there six months. You were only supposed to stay six months and then go on recreation leave, but by the time my recreation leave came in June they were closing up the Red Cross clubs; they closed them out in June. And my recreation leave came about two weeks before they closed up the clubs. So when my leave came, I came on home, back to the United States.

BURG: Now, is that in '51 or '52?

BROWN: That was '52. I went over in December, '51, I was there six months, till June, '52.

BURG: Now did you return to Kansas City?

BURG: Oh, that's too bad.

BROWN: But then in August of '52 I went back to Washington and went to work with, still with the Red Cross, with their public relations department.

BURG: Had they contacted you about that job or did you--

BROWN: No, I contacted them. I've kind of forgotten. I was pretty upset, and I believe I went down to St. Louis. They had asked me to come down and talk about maybe continuing work, and I think I went down there at that time to talk with them about just a temporary job for a month or two. Then I really don't remember now whether they contacted me about that job in Washington, but I think maybe I went there and contacted them

and they said come on in and we'll put you to work with our public relations department. I think that's how it happened. I had two very close friends who were living there, the girl who was with me on my first tour of duty and another girl who had been stationed with us when we were with the Marines. So the three of us got an apartment together. But I only worked for the Red Cross for about, oh, September, October, November.

BURG: Of '52?

BROWN: Yes. It was a public relations publication, that was our main project. It came out once a month and for about three days we were busy, then the rest of the month there wasn't a thing to do. As I say, I was kind of upset anyhow and I wanted to be busy. So I went out to the Pentagon--I just took a cab out there one day and went in and started applying for jobs. And they gave me a test and hired me a week later, and I went to work for the army chief of staff, for a member of his staff. And that was General J. Lawton Collins.

BURG: That was who you were working for?

BROWN: Well, I didn't work directly for him; I worked for one of his assistants, a Colonel Bradley. But the army chief of staff at that time was J. Lawton Collins. And Colonel Bradley was his speech writer. So I went to work for him as his secretary. And let's see, I went there in December '52--yes, I'm keeping my dates right.

BURG: That sounds right.

BROWN: December '52. And that was very interesting because the speech writing wasn't just speeches that he made around the country but it also included his presentations to the congress. And I went there in December and congress comes in in January and right away we were right in the middle of budget requests for the coming budget, well, it would have been the '54 budget. We'd work until two or three in the morning and go home in a cab and take a shower and eat something and put on some clean clothes and be back at work at seven-thirty--if he had to be at work. But it was just what I needed at that time, you know, to be real busy.

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: It was interesting. And we had a lot of reports from Korea on what they were doing to our prisoners of war. Of course, I was vitally interested in that; it was hard for me to take, but it also was something that made me realize that if a person is killed at once they're sometimes better off. General Collins is a real doll. We didn't see too much of him, but when we'd work most of the night, his wife would send over something to eat about one o'clock in the morning. He'd tell her he wanted to go over and see how his speech was coming or how his statement before the congress, if we had it finished, you know he'd maybe be a little nervous about it. He'd say, "I'm going over and see how they're doing." So she'd fix up some food for us, cookies or cake or sandwiches, oh, about five or six of us, and then he'd bring them over and see how it was coming along. So they were very nice people.

BURG: What was your civil service rank at that time, do you remember, having started as a one?

BROWN: I went in as a five. Well, I think by the time I left Omaha I was a three; I had gotten a couple of promotions. And in my job in Omaha I started out working for a general,

paratroopers. (Paratrooper by Bradley and Wood)

BURG: His name sure sounded familiar to me.

General Raymond Briggs. At that time he was past retirement age, but because the war had just started they kept him on. He was a doll too. I'm very fortunate in most of my bosses. I have always been interested in horses and I used to ride up at Fort Omaha. He had one horse that was assigned to him particularly, Betsy. And sometimes he'd say to me, "Well, don't you think Betsy needs to be exercised this afternoon?" And it'd be a beautiful day. But that didn't last very long because pretty soon our staff got big and people couldn't just wander in and out. But he was a real doll to send me out to exercise his horse.

BURG: By any chance do you remember Colonel Bradley's first name?

BROWN: Francis X. Oh, yes, I remember him well; he got me into the White House.

BURG: Was that Francis with a c-i-s?

BROWN: c-i-s. He was a paratrooper and he wrote a book about paratroopers. (Paratrooper by Bradley and Wood)

BURG: His name sure sounded familiar to me.

BROWN: Francis X. Bradley. Were you in the paratroopers?

BURG: No, I was not.

BROWN: I got his book some place here. He was a real fine young officer. I guess he's about my age. But he and Major Furey and Major Ellis were the working speech writers for the army chief of staff. And Colonel Throckmorton, wait a minute, Colonel Seedlock and Colonel Throckmorton were right above them and then General Collins.

BURG: How would Seedlock spell his name?

BROWN: S-e-e-d-l-o-c-k, Seedlock.

BURG: And we mentioned a Major Furey. Is that F-u-r-i or y?

BROWN: F-u-r-e-y. Major Patrick Furey, who's a friend of John Eisenhower's.

BURG: I see.

BROWN: It was a good staff.

BURG: You say that Colonel Bradley was instrumental in getting you into the White House?

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: How did that come about?

BROWN: Well, in about September of '53, sometime in there, we had a change of chief of staff and General Collins left and, gee, my memory is so awful. Who was the general who always wore the grenade around his--

BURG: Matthew Ridgway.

BROWN: General Ridgway became army chief of staff. At the same time they had a RIF, reduction in forces, in civil service. Well, I hadn't been back in civil service even a year at that time; I had gone in December and this was September I think, August or September of '53. I had been promoted from my five to a job six, but I was just sitting at the desk until my year was up so I could get my six. But I was bumped by some girl from the department of the interior, some woman, who had about twenty years' service; she was a grade eight or nine and they had to find a spot for her so they bumped me out of my job.

But Colonel Bradley and I got along very well, we were friends, and when General Ridgway came in he brought in his own staff and Bradley went to the secretary of army's office. And the general who came in and sat in that office, just sort of temporary sat in there not really doing that type of work, was Tony Biddle, General Anthony Jonathan Drexel Biddle. I'm sure you've heard his name.

BURG: Sure have.

BROWN: And he and I kind of hit it off right away, just sit around and gab because the girl came in and I had to break her in, and I was hardly been broken into the job myself. But then she would do the work and there wasn't anything for me to do but they wouldn't let me go because I had no place to go. And General Biddle was saying, "We're just going to juggle you around for a while until we find a spot for you." I think one of the reasons was because, when it was time to work overtime, even if we weren't going to get paid for it, I knew it had to get out, and I couldn't see standing there quibbling about whether we were going to be paid for it or not; somebody had to do it and I'd stay. And a couple of times the other girls would say, "No, we're not paid, we don't work." And they'd leave. And

you know the army chief of staff had a budget and they were permitted only so much for overtime; well, it didn't make that much difference to me. I liked to get my work done, and if I had an eighty-page speech to be retyped, why, I'd stay until it was done or else I fell asleep. And I think that was one reason. And the officers always stayed with us, you know. Now they didn't have a thing to do a lot of times--they would proofread for us. Colonel Bradley and Major Ellis and Major Furey would sit there and proofread, see that we didn't make any typos and things. And there was a WAC sergeant there who worked for Major Furey, and she usually would stay. So I think one of the reasons they felt loyal to me was because I had put forth a little more effort than some of the girls. And I think that's why I got the promotion. But I'm digressing.

Anyhow, Colonel Bradley had gone to the secretary of the army's office and General Biddle was sort of my boss and we were sitting around drinking coffee and talking most of the time, because I didn't have much to do and he was just getting into whatever his new job was going to be. And it was a kind of a hard time for me because I really didn't know when I'd come in the morning whether civil service was going to say,

"This is it; you're going to have to let her go; there's no money to pay her." I had never been through that situation before. And this went on until in December, about the fifteenth of December, Colonel Bradley called me over to his office and asked me if I had any luck finding a job and I said, "No."

And he said, "Well, I'm keeping you in mind, and if I find out anything I'll sure let you know." So a couple days later he called me back over and he said, "Would you be interested in going to the White House?"

And I said, "Why, sure." That sounded like heaven! Not only that I didn't have a job really but here I was going to a place that was even better. So he called General Schulz who was then a Colonel, Bob Schulz, and they set up an appointment for me I think that afternoon. It just happened like that. It was that afternoon; it was a Friday. And I went over and was interviewed by Roger Steffan who had been interviewing a lot of people about working in the White House. And Mr. Steffan wasn't there too long and he's now dead. Maybe not many people have mentioned him, but he was in charge of personnel, very fine gentleman.

BURG: Was he part of the permanent White House staff, Miss Brown?

BROWN: No, he came in with President Eisenhower. And he interviewed me and he said, "We want you to report on Monday morning."

And I said, "I'd like to but I have to give notice."

He said, "Well, don't worry about that. We want you to come by Monday."

Well I really wouldn't commit myself. I said, "I'll come as soon as they'll let me go, but I can't just walk out on them."

And he thought it was kind of funny and he said, "Well, don't you worry about that, Rusty, you let me worry about that." So we sort of left it hanging fire. Well, I was so excited I couldn't go right back to work, and his office was in the Executive Office Building. So I left there and I walked over to the state department and one of my roommates worked over there--I had to tell somebody. And I called her out of her office and she thought I'd gone crazy because I'd been sweating out, you know--what am I going to do; I've got to get a job. And nobody was hiring because of this reduction in forces. I told her I was going to work there Monday. And I was going to work in this secretarial pool, or stenographic

pool. But I didn't care. I was glad to have a job that I knew was going to be there on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and overwhelmed with going to work at the White House.

BURG: Did they hire you in at the grade that you had with the Chief of Staff?

BROWN: Well, you know, they really didn't have grades. You never could really pin down the White House on grades.

BURG: Oh, you couldn't!

BROWN: But salary, yes, that salary was the same as I remember it; I think I went the same, but not a promotion.

BURG: When Mr. Steffan hired you, do you remember much about that interview? Do you remember, for example, what he seemed to be emphasizing most of all with you?

BROWN: Well, he wasn't so interested in whether I could take dictation or type, I guess he took that for granted, although I wasn't the best in the world.

BURG: So he assumed that you had the capacity to do shorthand--

BROWN: And typing. It seemed to me like he was more interested in my attitude toward work and in my personality; there was no politics involved. In fact after the interview was over and I was getting up to leave I said, "By the way, I'm a Kansas Republican."

And he laughed, he said, "Well, we don't care what your politics are."

BURG: Now, when you say he was interested in your attitude toward work, how was that revealed to you, Miss Brown?

BROWN: Well, I don't remember his specific questions but I remember leaving with the impression that he wanted to know whether I was interested in coming there for glamour or if I had an interest in doing the job and if I would mind working overtime. Well, I didn't and I told him that I didn't. And he says, "Sometimes your work will interfere with your personal life."

And I said, "Well, if it's interesting I don't mind that, and if isn't interesting well, then I'll try to find a job that is interesting." But I said, "I'd talk to you about that first; I wouldn't start looking for a job and then tell you

that I'm leaving."

BURG: You felt that that your personality had been measured during this interview too.

BROWN: Yes, I thought he had. I don't know, I sort of took to him and I felt like he took to me. Now he was a gentleman I'd say about sixty or sixty-five, very distinguished and very dignified and very reserved. But he had a warmth about him that I found--now there were other people who thought he was rather cold, but he proved to me later on and I'll tell you as we get along if I ever get past this stage of my life.

BURG: We don't want to hurry past this stage of your life.

BROWN: Well, he proved to be a good friend. And my first impressions of him I've never regretted; I thought they were right, that he was warm and kind and understanding and that he was also a very sharp person. I don't think that anything was put over on him.

BURG: But during that interview there was no attempt to--how should I put it--to put across to you the idea of involvement

in the administration and anything of this sort. What he was saying to you was that here was a job, a professional kind of job and he wanted to be sure--as a matter of fact, his reaction was almost the opposite, wasn't it? He didn't want you to thinking that you were going to make policy for--

BROWN: That's right.

BURG: --for the federal government.

BROWN: And that I had to believe in everything the administration was doing. He wanted to know whether I was a good technician so to speak, and whether I was a dedicated worker, but not dedicated necessarily to a political belief but dedicated to doing the job whatever the job, whether it was scrubbing floors or typing.

BURG: Your recollection of your impression of him and of that interview is a very good one as I understand it then.

BROWN: Oh, yes.

BURG: You look back on that, you were impressed with him and impressed with the way he put all of this to you.

BROWN: Very much so. And I was rather surprised--of course I felt secure because I was a Republican and my mother and dad had worked for Landon and everything so we were a little politically orientated. So I wasn't concerned about him saying to me, "What are your politics?" You know sometimes you go into an interview--oh what if he asks me this? That never occurred to me. But he didn't ask it, so I volunteered it.

BURG: And you did not see Bob Schulz at this time?

BROWN: I didn't see Bob Schulz; I don't think I saw him for another maybe a week until I was sworn in I think. He took me over to somebody who swore me in, Mr. Hopkins, I believe.

BURG: Bill Hopkins.

BROWN: Bill Hopkins. I think he swore me in. Yes, I think he did.

BURG: So you were able to clear yourself with the chief of staff's office Monday?

BROWN: Well, when I got back to the chief of staff's office I

stopped to see Pee Wee [Florence Gibbons] at the state department.

BURG: Oh, you made it back that same afternoon?

BROWN: And I went back to work, yes. I had asked them for a couple of hours leave and I told somebody there I was going for an interview but I didn't tell them where, because, you know, I didn't know whether they'd take me or not. I didn't want to say that I went over to the White House and they wouldn't have me. So I went back and when I walked in they knew that I was going to the White House and they knew I was going Monday morning.

BURG: That may have been what Mr. Steffan had in mind.

BROWN: Yes. I really didn't take too long to get back there. I stopped to see Pee Wee and have a cup of coffee and I called my brother who worked for the Department of the Navy and told him and he couldn't believe it and then I went back to work. I didn't do much that afternoon. I was in charge of some classified things in there and I got those all squared away. I had the duty the next day. At the chief of staff's office the duty consisted of, on Saturdays you go in, be in there at a quarter to eight, and the secretaries would be in General

Ridgway's office, in his outer office so that they could answer the phone and take any dictation.

[Interruption]

BURG: When we stopped, you were talking about having been told to report to work on a Monday on Friday afternoon, and you said you had the duty then the next day, Saturday, at the chief of staff's office.

BROWN: That's right. They offered to arrange for somebody to take the duty for me but, you know, it's kind of hard to juggle around and I don't think they could get anybody very easily so I said, "Oh, I'll go ahead." Because it usually amounted to work until noon, that was the end of it. And it was overtime money, that was paid so I figured, well I could use four hours' overtime pay. So I went in and I had never met General Ridgway up to that point; he had been there several months but I didn't meet him. So I introduced myself to him when he came in. "Oh," he said, "you're that gal that's going over to the White House." And, no, I don't think he called me "gal", not General Ridgway; I think he said, "You're the young lady who's going over to the White House."

And I said, "Yes."

He said, "Well, I think you're going to like it there. General Biddle has told me a little about you and I think you'll find it fascinating." So he dictated a few letters to me and I worked till about one o'clock that day; then I went in and said good-bye to him and he wished me luck again, and I left.

BURG: Then you were due at the White House at what time in the morning, do you remember?

BROWN: Eight o'clock, I believe. Eight o'clock I'm sure.

BURG: Mr. Steffan told you to whom you would report?

BROWN: Well, I went to him and then he took me downstairs and introduced me to Corinne Daugherty, who was supervisor of the stenographic pool.

BURG: Did she spell her last name, D-a-u--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --g-h--

BROWN: Yes. I think she's retired now. But she had been at the White House since the year one. I think she probably started in the Roosevelt administration as a steno and had gradually been promoted.

BURG: Let me ask you where Mr. Steffan's office was, by the way?

BROWN: It was second floor of the EOB I think, the second floor. And the steno pool was in the basement of the EOB right up at the front, windows overlooked Pennsylvania Avenue. But it was just a little below ground level. And I would say that the day I reported there were maybe twenty-five stenos in there, typing on electric typewriters. There was another room across the hall that had maybe ten men and women stenos in there. They composed the letters and they typed them up in rough on little five by eight pieces of paper, abbreviating almost everything. And then those would be attached to the letter they were answering and they would bring them in in stacks to us. And you'd just sit there all day, type letter after letter.

BURG: Now the twenty-five of you, were you also mixed as to sex?

BROWN: There was no man in there at that time.

BURG: All girl staff.

BROWN: I think at various times they had one or two. But I don't remember any at that time.

BURG: The other group mixed, men and women.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Let me follow this line just a bit. What would happen, would people as part of the White House staff compose these letters and then give them to those ten? How did the letters that you were handling come from the ten people, roughed out on five by eight pieces of paper with as many abbreviations as possible? What was the source from which they got--

BROWN: Well, that was the general mail. It came in and was sorted, and the mail from the general public, the routine mail, was sent to this office and these composers would compose the letters.

BURG: The answers to that mail.

BROWN: The answers, yes. Now they also had these machines that would throw out several hundred letters a day or a thousand letters a day, form letters. But they would be typed on the machine. I never went in there to notice that but later on at Gettysburg we had one of those IBM machines that my niece ran.

BURG: It could be programmed.

BROWN: That could be programmed. But these were a little different. They were form letters but they were typed. They would program that letter on the typewriter and put in the name, "Dear Mr. Jones" I think was usually about the only thing that they'd have to type in by hand; then the letter would type out.

BURG: So for example, Miss Brown, just seize an example at random, the White House might receive, say, two thousand letters this morning that dealt with the St. Lawrence Seaway which could be answered by a machine written--that is this programmed typewriter could write answers to those two thousand, but you might

have also received another one thousand letters that inquired about things other than that and these were the ones then that the ten people composed answers to.

BROWN: That's right. And then we typed those out.

BURG: You typed them out.

BROWN: Yes. They composed the letters--and I don't know what the mail ran in those days, I never did know--but I do know that twenty or twenty-five people in that room typed at full speed all day. Later on one of the girls who sat in front of me and I had a contest going. The only way we could endure sitting there for eight hours was to have something going for us and we'd see who could type the most letters during the day. And of course you couldn't have any errors, naturally. Although if you did you probably started all over, no erasures. The young lady who came in, she had the idea and I went along with it. Her name was Delta Bates. She later became Kevin McCann's secretary.

BURG: I see.

BROWN: And later she went to Korea as Ambassador Lacy's secretary and then she married one of our intelligence agents over there, and he was killed in the service. But she was quite a girl, and we both were redheads; I had red hair in those days. We'd sit there and just type, type, type. You had to ask for permission to go to the bathroom; you were told when you could take your coffee break and it was rarely the same time for two days. And you were told when you could go to lunch, whether it was going to be 11:30 or 12:00, 12:30 or 1:00. And you were told just a minute or two before it was time to go.

BURG: Corinne Daugherty told you?

BROWN: Yes, I believe she did. And you know there was somebody over her, Mrs. [Rena C.] Ridenour. Has anybody mentioned her; does that sound right to you?

BURG: Well, the name sounds familiar to me, R-i-d-e--

BROWN: n-o-u-r. Mrs. Ridenour.

BURG: I think so.

BROWN: I think she was over--it kind of comes back to me a little--I hadn't thought about those people--I believe she was over Corinne, and then Corinne later took over her job. But Corinne would come around and tell us, "You take coffee break now." I don't know if there was some reason for it; it seemed rather ridiculous to me at the time.

BURG: I was going to say now it sounds quite awkward.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: And given the nature of the work you were doing, why not just send all of you out for fifteen minutes or twenty minutes. I assume you had a coffee room or a--

BROWN: There was a cafeteria.

BURG: It's an odd way to do it.

BROWN: Well, I thought so at the time. Now the day I started, another girl started from the Pentagon and she was there about three weeks. And because we started the same day we were seated next to each other. I could do my share of complaining, but that woman complained more than any human I've ever known

in my life. And she was very bitter in it. I could see what she was complaining about, but I have found out that most of the time if you give a situation a little time you either understand why it's being done in this particular manner or you find out there's no rhyme or reason to it and then you do something about it. But I usually try to give a situation a little time to see what's going on. Maybe I'm not quick at making decisions, but I didn't like that situation and it was kind of difficult for me. When I was younger I was quite uninhibited, and to be tied to that desk and have to go up and say to Corinne, "I am now going to the restroom," and have the feeling that they're watching the clock, it gives you a very restricted feeling--I didn't like it. But this other lady who started the day I did, complained bitterly constantly. And sometimes I think the reason that they switched the coffee hours and the lunch hours around was to keep new people from getting tied together so closely and maybe complain more than they would if they were paired off with some old timers. Maybe it was just a way of trying to keep morale a little higher, although at the time it seemed like it was a way to lower it. But this gal

didn't last very many weeks; they fired her, sent her back to the Pentagon, told her she wasn't the type of person they wanted in that office.

BURG: Well, now let me ask you this, was it your impression from your co-workers that this is the way that office had been run during the Truman administration?

BROWN: Oh, yes, I think it was an old--I don't think any administration that came in did much to disrupt their routines.

BURG: So it is not the system put in when General Eisenhower became President?

BROWN: Oh, no. I don't think it had anything to do with President Truman or President Roosevelt or President Eisenhower, and I'm sure it was running the same way with Kennedy and Johnson. Maybe they had their reasons or maybe it changed when the supervisor changed, because most offices get their morale from the top down.

BURG: But it didn't change while you were in that?

BROWN: I didn't stay there very long. I really shouldn't dwell on that point too long because, well, I started there on a Monday and I went on vacation on Wednesday. I had asked for Christmas leave and they let me have the couple of weeks as I had arranged with the Pentagon. And I went on my vacation for a couple of weeks and came back, and the first week I was back, about the third or fourth day, they started sending me out on what they called "detail"--you would be assigned either on a day-by-day basis or on a sort of a semi-permanent basis to an office in the White House. And my first and only assignment out of this pool was to Governor [Sherman] Adams' office. One thing I would like to mention before we get off--I just mentioned briefly being sworn in. It wasn't a fabulous ceremony. As I remember it, Gwen King, who is now Mrs. [Richard] Nixon's, one of her top secretaries, and I were sworn in together. I had never met her before, and she was working in General Schulz's office; she was a personal friend of General Schulz and his wife. And as I remember I went to General Schulz's office in the East Wing and then he took us--I may be wrong on this, it's a little hazy--but either he or somebody on his staff took us then to be sworn in, and it was not Mr. Hopkins; it was Mr. [Frank K.] Sanderson, who swore us in, he was in charge of personnel.

BURG: What's his first name, do you remember?

BROWN: It'll probably come to me after while. Nobody's mentioned him, huh? Sanderson?

BURG: Well they may have.

BROWN: He was in charge of personnel.

BURG: Well, I'll check it out.

BROWN: Yes, I can't remember; I never called him anything except Mr. Sanderson, although we got to be good friends. But either General Schulz or somebody, maybe somebody else, maybe Major [Richard W.] Streiff or Sergeant , but somebody took us back to the West Wing and we went up--the personnel office was then on the second floor in the West Wing. And we went in, it was back there behind where the telephones were, the switchboard, and they swore us in. It's one time in my life my knees were really shaking because I was very moved by the opportunity to work at the White House for the President of the United States and to be part of an administration and this historic old building. Of course I had never even gone in the

White House up to that time as a visitor to tour it, and to go in on my first visit and be sworn in as a member of the staff--I was very moved. And Mr. Sanderson was very sweet; he took his time giving us the swearing in; I don't remember what we said now but we gave our oath of allegiance to the United States and to the Constitution and I guess that's where the

BURG: Sounds almost like the oath one takes when you're going into the military service.

BROWN: It probably is quite similar.

BURG: I'm a little surprised; I didn't know that was done.

BROWN: Yes, it was.

BURG: Right down the secretarial level and all people concerned with them. That's very interesting. I wanted to ask you too before you moved on, when you typed your letters you typed them on White House stationery?

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Now was there any kind of--I'll use the word coding system, Miss Brown--that is, would the letters that you typed be on a particular size of White House stationery that would in a way to an insider give a clue as to the importance of the letter?

BROWN: While we were in the pool we had different sizes of stationery, but it depended on the length of the letter.

BURG: I see.

BROWN: It had nothing to do with the importance of the letter. I think they tried to hold on to the fact that those people writing in were writing in about something that was extremely important to them. And even though the letter might come from someone whose handwriting was very poor and you could tell they were uneducated, they were writing for information or to express an opinion that was of value to them. And they tried to keep that feeling, be aware of that all the time. Well, it's easy to lose, you know, when you're dealing with thousands of letters. It's awfully easy to become lackadaisical about things like that. As I remember, the size of the stationery meant only

that somebody had asked a number of questions and the drafters had drafted up a longer letter; so we used the larger stationery and then we used small stationery for a short letter.

BURG: What kind of a signature block were you putting on those letters, Miss Brown?

BROWN: Governor Adams'.

BURG: They were all prepared for the signature of Governor Adams?

BROWN: Yes. The majority of them. Now there would be times I think when a special--somebody would get maybe a thousand letters, let's say one of the legislative men, Bryce Harlow or General [Wilton B.] Persons--maybe somebody would get out a bunch of postcards and write in and tell the White House to pass this legislation, and they'd get a thousand letters. Then the pool would do that for General Persons' signature or Gerry Morgan's or somebody. There would be other signatures, but the run-of-the-mill work was for Governor Adams.

BURG: Do you happen to know whether Governor Adams signed those

personally or, you don't know? You doubt that, though.

BROWN: I doubt it. I didn't know how frank I should be.

BURG: Well, as frank as you want to because any of this can be sealed.

BROWN: He didn't sign them.

BURG: Someone in his office or someone that was just assigned to do that.

BROWN: That's right.

BURG: Now you say that after your vacation after a very brief time in the steno pool, within a few days returning, you were sent out and it was to Governor Adams' office?

BROWN: I was assigned to his office as a secretary but my desk remained in the pool. And I would go over there and--boy that was a hectic office. Let's see, Alberta Harrington was in there; Ilene Slater, who was Governor Adams' secretary; there was some cute dark-haired girl who was in there, I don't remember her name; and the Negro girl who was someone else's secretary--I'll remember it in a minute and I'll come back to that. There were

four secretaries sitting in that little office outside of Governor Adams' office. I don't know if you--well it's changed so much.

BURG: I remember seeing diagrams of the location of his office, so I have in mind where they were.

BROWN: It was a rather small office and there were four girls in there and one man. Well, I would go over and take dictation from Alberta Harrington. And oh, boy, she was what they used to call a "career woman." I don't know what that means exactly but she was a short of a high-pressure person and she would dictate a great number of letters to me, watching my shorthand all the time, and asking me--she'd point to some of my shorthand and say, "What's that?" Well she took shorthand herself, but I guess I used my own method because she didn't like my shorthand. But anyhow she would dictate the letters to me and I'd go back to the pool and type them up and take them over to her as soon as I got them finished, and they were all rush, rush, rush. And that went on for a couple of weeks, and then Mr. Steffan had me moved up to his outer office. And by that time Gwen

King who had started with General Schulz had moved over to--I believe she started with Schulz, maybe she was only there for a week or two--had moved over to Steffan's office as his secretary. She sat right outside of his door and then they had room for another desk and they put me at that desk. So then I'd go over and take dictation from Alberta Harrington and go back and type my letters up there; so I had my own desk and shared an office with another girl which was very nice.

BURG: So you were in the White House proper now?

BROWN: No, we were still in the EOB.

BURG: Still in the EOB.

BROWN: Steffan was still in the EOB; I'd go back and forth. But I was very pleased because, I guess proud, because some of those girls stayed in that pool forever. And I got out of there pretty darned fast. I don't remember exactly how long I was in the pool, but I'd only worked there straight for three or four days. But when I was still at the pool, I would

do Governor Adams' letters, and then when I was through with his, I'd do pool work; I'd do both. That was January and maybe early February. Also the President was getting ready for his budget message and his State of the Union message and all those things, so we were working at night too. But I didn't get in too much overtime late at night, maybe an hour or two. And once in a while they'd ask for volunteers and I'd usually volunteer--I could use the money. I was excited about the job; I was an eager-beaver. So I'd work.

BURG: Well, I can understand that. Now, Alberta Harrington never got used to your shorthand.

BROWN: No, she and I never got used to each other. She didn't like the way I dressed, she made some comments about some--I dressed kind of feminine then and most of the girls dressed a little--I don't mean I wore party dresses or any of that, but I liked soft blouses. I didn't wear shirtwaist and skirts and jackets, but I'd wear a suit with a little dressier blouse. And I wore earrings; I tried to look very nice, as nice as I could. And she wore very tailored things, and she made comments

a couple of times about my clothes--well, I'd never had any complaints about them before.

BURG: To your face?

BROWN: To my face. They might have been behind my back.

But I--

BURG: She did say them to your face.

BROWN: Oh, yes, she'd make some comment.

BURG: That was kind of her, wasn't it? To take that interest in you.

BROWN: We had little difficulties. In about, let's see, in about April she really put a lot of dictation on. A lot of this was letters that came to her that she prepared the answers for Governor Adams; some of it was stuff that Governor Adams would dictate to her and she would redictate to me. Well, I've been in that same spot before; I don't mean that critical of her. Sometimes I'd have so much dictation and so many letters to compose that I'd put them on a dictabelt after work at night--my letters at Palm Desert and in Gettysburg--I'd put them on a

dictabelt and give them to anybody that I could get hold of who would just type them up for me because, you know, you're under so much pressure. That's the one thing I didn't like about my work is that I never felt like I could do as good a job as I'd done before, because I was always under so much pressure to get so much work out--I mean when I was in Gettysburg and particularly in California. Way in the back of my mind I think if I just had a couple more hours a day or a couple more hands or a little more help, my letters would have been better composed and maybe there were mistakes in them I didn't--when I'd proof I was going so fast I didn't catch them; you know, that worries you later. You know you could have done better. Well, I didn't mean to go off on that.

But anyhow, Alberta and I worked our way together for a couple of months. I guess I started there in February and sometime in April she was putting more work on me, giving me more than my--putting off I guess is the term I want to use--putting off more and more of her work on me. And I was working harder and harder to get it done and maybe not getting even all the letters she'd dictate to me done to get them back to her in the morning. I've forgotten the routine; I'd bring the letters over

in the morning that I'd typed up and then she'd dictate to me for a couple of hours or however long she had and then maybe call me back in the afternoon. I was having trouble getting all the work done without working overtime and Mr. Steffan, he quit at 4:30, he didn't want me working overtime in his office unless I had to--I don't mean in his office--he didn't want me working overtime unless I had to. His secretary didn't and he didn't think I should have to and one of the reasons that they were getting more help was so that the girls wouldn't have to work such long hours. I wasn't quite getting my work done, and I went home leaving two or three letters and sometimes they were the very letters that she wanted and then I didn't have them. I was misjudging which ones took precedent. About that time I was having some difficulties, physically, and one day I took over some letters--I had worked the night before and I was in some pain and quite ill--I had gone to Dr. [Walter] Tkach and gotten some medicine and I went back and finished as many letters as I could. And there was one letter she told me specifically to get done and I had--in going back and forth to the doctors and to take dictation from her it had slipped my mind until the last minute--you know, about 4:25 I remembered

that letter. So I typed it up and I had made typos in it, and about four of them, not one but about four. And I was tired and there's no excuse for that kind of work, but there's a reason for it. And the reason was that I was tired and I was ill and I had corrected it the best I could and I thought it'll go and I put it with the other stack of mail, and I took that mail over to her that night; for some reason she had to have it that evening; they worked a little later. And the next morning I came in and shortly after I came out and started working--and I was really sick that day--she sent for me and I went over and she asked me to go with her into the Fish Room. You remember where the Fish Room is? It's that conference room that the President's door opens and it kind of faces that room and the Fish Room opens right across from that; it's a sort of a conference room.

[Interruption]

BROWN: She told me in that Fish Room--it's a big conference room--and it was named the Fish Room when Roosevelt was there--he had aquariums around there I understand.

[Interruption]

BROWN: She had asked me to come into the Fish Room with her; she wanted to talk with me for a few minutes. And because the outer office was so noisy and people were constantly coming and going into Governor Adams' office, I thought maybe Alberta just wanted to discuss something with me that was a little off the routine in the way of dictation and needed a little privacy or maybe something that was classified. And we went into the Fish Room and sat down, and she pulled out that letter I had typed the day before. Well, of course when I saw it in cold, clear dawn I realized how foolish I was, and it was inexcusable to send a letter like that in to any boss, not to mention a boss in the White House. And I was so proud of working there and I was sure that Governor Adams was just as proud and even more proud. But when I saw it I just cringed. It was one of those times in your life that you wish you could live over the day before. And I started to explain to her that I hadn't felt well and I knew it was inexcusable. Really there's, there's not much you can say in a case like that; you did something; it was wrong; and we all make mistakes. I think I said something to her about--"I hope you'll understand." And she said it has nothing to do with whether she would understand or not but that Governor Adams had caught it and he had told her that I was to be fired. And I'd

never lost a job in my life, and I was so stunned I don't think I said much of anything. I think I did gather myself enough together to get my wits about me to ask her if she meant fired and she said, "Yes, he said you were to be fired and you're not to come back tomorrow morning." This was in the middle of the week sometime.

And I picked up my notebook and whatever I had taken into the White House with me and I went back to Mr. Steffan's office and I went in and told him. And he became very angry and he said, "Governor Adams doesn't hire and fire in the White House; I hire and fire in the White House and you're not fired. One letter with mistakes is bad but it's not something that should call for dismissal of someone who's been working hard." And he said, "You just go back to your desk outside my office and Gwen will find something for you to do to help her." And I was in pretty bad shape by that time.

BURG: Sure, I'll bet you were.

BROWN: And I went back out there and I think that Gwen got us coffee and calmed me down. I wasn't crying or anything, but I think I was shaking pretty much. I don't think I did anything else that afternoon in the way of work unless it might have

been some filing, something that didn't take any concentration, and I probably misfiled a lot. But I went home that night and then the next day I was--I believe it was the next day--now I may be wrong a day or two here, but either the next day or the day after that I was even more ill. I went back to Dr. Tkach and he examined me--you know he's back at the White House now (1974).

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: I'm sure you knew it. And he wanted me to see a friend, a doctor friend of his, a surgeon, and he called up and made the appointment right then and sent me to the doctor. And the doctor said I was to go, after he examined me, he said I was to go right home, they were putting me in the hospital on Sunday. That was either Thursday or Friday. So I went home and on Sunday I went into the hospital and was operated on Monday. And I was in the hospital a couple of weeks. And then I came out and I was in my apartment in Washington a couple of weeks, my sister came back to help take care of me. And then she brought me back here and I was home for at least a month. I didn't get back, and of course I didn't know what was going to happen to me when I got back there, because I had been fired just a few days before by

Governor Adams. But Mr. Steffan loaned me the sick leave because I'd only been in civil service, by this time only a little over a year, maybe fifteen months, sixteen months. So he loaned me sick leave for all of this. And I went back right after the Fourth of July and reported in to Mr. Steffan. I still didn't feel too strong, but I was able to go to work.

BURG: Was that 1954, Rusty? July--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --of '54.

BROWN: July of '54. And I got back there and Mr. Steffan said, "I have a temporary assignment for you, a couple of weeks, one of the girls is on vacation, I'll send you over to a Mr. Earl Chesney. When his secretary comes back, why then we'll find another place for you. But," he says, "your headquarters will be right out here with Gwen." He never sent me back to the pool, which accounts for, in some part, my strong affection for Mr. Steffan.

BURG: Of course.

BROWN: He realized I guess, even more than I did, how ill I was before I went to the hospital. And he went out of his way to make a way for me to stay on at the White House. So he sent me over to Mr. Chesney who was over in the East Wing. Now Mr. Chesney was Special Assistant to the President, I believe that was his title, and he was under General Persons, who was then Deputy Assistant to the President, and he was in charge of the congressional relations. There was General Persons; Bryce Harlow, who's back at the White House; Earl Chesney, [I.] Jack Martin; and Homer Gruenther. I believe that those were the only men, but they were all men who worked with the congress. Mr. Chesney and Mr. Gruenther worked over in the East Wing of the White House and they were sort of "at large." They had wide acquaintanceship up in the Capitol, senate and house. And whenever there was something, a bill to be pressed a little, they went up and they ranged all over. Usually Mr. Harlow and Jack Martin--Jack Martin particularly was senate because he had worked with Taft, Senator [Robert A.] Taft. And Bryce was sort of with the leadership of the house and the senate. But Earl Chesney and Homer Gruenther were sort of with the rank and file, Republicans and Democrats. And when there was

a big push on for a bill they were all up there. But Mr. Chesney, I guess next to President Eisenhower, he was the best boss I ever had, not only as a boss but as a human being; he was a very kind man. There was those in the White House who worked in the West Wing who looked down on Mr. Chesney and Mr. Gruenther. They were treated as sort of second-rate assistants to the President, not by the President--I never knew his relationship with those two men--and not by General Persons or Bryce Harlow. But, you know, that sometimes the secretaries set a tone and the staff assistants, and they didn't have much patience with Mr. Gruenther and Mr. Chesney. But I felt then and I still feel that they were invaluable.

BURG: Why do you think that they were downgraded, if I can use that term?

BROWN: Well, I think that's a good term. I think it was because we secretaries sometimes and some staff assistants--as you get into a position in which you're secure and maybe you have some influence with your boss and you certainly have influence with the people who want to see your boss who need

to get to your boss by letter or by other means--and you have means of influencing both sides of the fence so to speak, the people coming in and the people in. I think you get carried away with your own importance, and I think it's easy for all of us to do that. I think I've done it. And I think some of the girls who were at the White House at that time--and from what I've heard from some of my old friends who are still around there it's happened with the following administrations--they're very secure in their own jobs and their boss is one of the top men in the United States, power and all of this. Maybe this is part of the Watergate thing too that people start getting this feeling that they're above the run of the mill, even if they're his secretary, that they and the people they're working with are above other people even though maybe six months before they would have given their eye teeth to work for the other man. But I always had the feeling that some of the people who were secretaries and staff assistants got carried away with their own importance.

BURG: Now, let me ask you this question which is difficult at this distance to answer--is it at all possible that (a) the secretary or staff assistant took on the same coloration as the

boss, or (b) is it possible that the boss instinctively picked an assistant, a staff assistant or secretary who was something like himself. The reason that I ask, Rusty, is because it sounds like Alberta Harrington might have had some of the same qualities I've heard attributed to Sherman Adams.

BROWN: Well, I think that it is a little of both. In Sherman Adams' case maybe he did pick people, because his secretaries-- although with Ilene Slater I later became quite friendly, well, friendly, I'll put it like that; we never were close friends but we were friends and we had a good working relationship. And Alberta later was fired herself or was asked to leave.

BURG: By Sherman Adams or someone who came later?

BROWN: Well, I doubt if he asked her himself. I think probably somebody else did, but she was asked, she was forced out by some means; I never did know who did it. I think he may have picked people who were similar in nature to his own nature. But I think sometimes very nice men, now General Persons was one of the most charming humans that--I don't know if you've talked with him yet or has somebody else?

BURG: I've never met him, no.

BROWN: Well, I'm raving about everybody but he--well, if I had to grade people of course I'd always start with President Eisenhower, then Earl Chesney and John Eisenhower, maybe then Colonel Bradley and then General Persons. General Persons had a lot of southern charm, and he never had a harsh word for anybody. But he picked, his top secretary was a very hard-nosed person who treated--I'll probably get into this a little later--but she treated everyone who came into that office, with about five exceptions, she treated everyone with the greatest of contempt and rudeness.

BURG: Who was this?

BROWN: Ferne Hudson. Now she was one of the best secretaries as far as her work was concerned I have ever seen. I think she was as good as Ann Whitman, or I think she was better than Ann Whitman and a lot of us. And if I had never worked under Ferne Hudson I never would have been able to handle the job as General Eisenhower's personal secretary later, because she taught me a lot of the things to do to keep order in the midst of chaos. And when she wanted to be charming, she was. But

she had a sharp and wicked tongue and there were a few people in the administration she treated with respect. Of course the President, Vice President Nixon, Governor Adams, Secretary of State [John Foster] Dulles, Attorney General [William P.] Rogers, oh, Senator [William F.] Knowland, Senator [Lyndon B.] Johnson she treated nicely. But she would talk to some of the cabinet members as though they were privates who had just wandered in off the drill field and had forgotten to change their clothes after the drill. But I thought that there were several girls in the White House who had that attitude, which was rather shocking to me. Now later on in my career after I had worked under the kind of pressures that they were working under, I would catch myself doing some of the things that I found so obnoxious in them, being short with people or talking down to people. I didn't like it in myself and when I think about it I'm very ashamed of it. The only way I could explain it is maybe when you work under pressure for several years at a time, why, you lose your perspective.

BURG: And it's your feeling, as you look back on it, that these people were under sufficient pressure to help explain their abruptness.

BROWN: I think so. I think Ann Whitman had a reputation around there for being abrupt and having her favorites and people she didn't like. Maybe no one else has mentioned that, and I didn't work that closely with her at the White House. I didn't know her well at all. I knew her, but she didn't know me. The talk around the White House, she had this reputation of being short with a lot of people. And there were some people who could get into her, into the President at any time and there were other people who there was no way under the world they could get by Mrs. Whitman. I don't know if that's true.

BURG: Would you speculate as to how much of that was simply Ann Whitman's personality and how much of that might have been orders from the President himself? Since you had worked really in that similar capacity yourself?

BROWN: I don't think the General--well, of course, you know I never worked for him when he was President, but the only orders he ever gave me was that when someone called him he wanted to be put on the phone before they were put on the phone. If they came to see him, he wanted to see them. And he didn't like it

when I put people off if he found out about it, which he did. Later on when we get into it when Mrs. Eisenhower and I were trying to protect him from seeing so many people out in California when he wasn't feeling as strong as we thought he ought to feel, I quite often was putting people off on the phone, interviews, coming down to visit with him. He did not like that; if somebody wanted to see him he wanted to try to arrange it. He might grumble about it and complain about having so much to do, but he wanted to see them and he wanted it worked in some way or other.

BURG: So your thought is that there might be some reason to think that that's the way he would feel in the White House too and that Mrs. Whitman may have been blocking off people? I've heard of this happening in state offices, in the governor's office too, where someone down the ladder was actually blocking access on some fairly important matters.

BROWN: I got to know her a little better in Gettysburg; I would think that she was doing some blocking, and, as I say, I think after you work for someone for a while you start feeling like

you know more about the people they should see and the people they should talk to and you start maybe protecting them because they're good natured. And maybe one reason, the thing you brought up a little earlier, maybe the one reason some men pick certain secretaries is because they block for them. Maybe they instinctively want someone who will do some blocking and you do have to do some. Every time a nut calls in you can't set up an appointment even though the President has said he wants to see everyone or he wants to answer every letter; it's an impossibility. So you have to have some discretion of your own. And it's difficult to know where to draw your line. There are some people you know you have to let through. But there's a gray area. Maybe the appointment I could set up and check out with the General and then set up, and the one Mrs. Whitman would do, well, they'd be two different people, we might have two different names.

BURG: That's right. Well, we may be talking about a standard problem all secretaries would have--

BROWN: I think so.

BURG: --but it's perhaps a very crucial issue in that very high office.

BROWN: Yes. Well, of course, in the Eisenhower administration, there were several ways to get to see the President. They said a year ago that the only way you could see President Nixon was to go through [H.R.] Haldeman. Well that didn't work in President Eisenhower's administration. Congressmen and senators usually came through General Persons and then through the appointment secretary. And cabinet officers, and some senators I'm sure called up; a few of them called up Ann or they'd call the President; some went through Governor Adams. But usually anything that was congressional was channeled through General Persons. Civilian people I think usually either went directly to Tom Stephens or to Governor Adams, depending on their own contacts, the individual's contacts, and what subject he was going to discuss and what organization he was representing. So there were a number of ways you could arrange for an appointment with President Eisenhower; you didn't have to go through a single individual who could either block you or let you in. I mentioned Mrs. Whitman supposedly blocking people or letting them in and out and having favorites because that was one means

of access to the President was through her office. But I think Tom Stephens ran a pretty tight ship most of the time, and everybody tried to work through him because you can't have everybody coming in to the President saying, "I want an appointment for so-and-so." You have to go to Tom Stephens and set up most of them.

BURG: Now you rated Mr. Chesney as second only to Eisenhower himself as being a fine man to work for. What made him so, Rusty, if you had to enumerate?

BROWN: His qualities were a little different than the President's, although they both had the quality that I guess maybe I really liked in any individual, a warmth for other people and an interest in other people. No matter who came to see Mr. Chesney, he took the time to listen to them and to tell them he'd try to help. Now Mr. Chesney had been with the Veterans Administration congressional office for maybe twenty years; so he really had thousands of contacts all over the United States. And he had a lot of people coming in; he couldn't help all of them, but he always did try. And he didn't have the mind that President Eisenhower had, but he was intelligent; he

wasn't brilliant. He was dedicated. He knew how to work with people. And when they were working with the congress, there were many of the congressmen who the other liaison men could not discuss things with that he could go off and joke with them and turn on his own brand of magnetism or persuasion and get them to come along. He would do things for any member of the staff; if they needed help he would try to help them. I don't know, he just, he had a nice personality, friendly and warm. He was devoted to President Eisenhower. He was a little in awe of him as all of us were. He didn't get to see him as much as I think he would have liked; I think they had a congressional meeting once a week when leaders of the congress came down and then men who worked with the congress met with the President. I've forgotten; I think it was Tuesday.

BURG: So his actual contact with the President was roughly on a once-a-week basis?

BROWN: Yes. And once in a while if a veterans group came in, VFW, or the American Legion, then he went along with the veterans group. And if there was anything that, any special veterans

legislation, why he was in on that. He saw the President occasionally but it wasn't an every day occurrence for him to see the President. He worked in a very relaxed manner, as President Eisenhower worked when we were in Gettysburg or when we were in California, very relaxed. Mr. Chesney sometimes we'd take two-hour lunch and the members of the staff in our shop would all go out to lunch together and things like that. And he made a point out of taking me up to the Capitol and introducing me to the congressmen who were our particular contacts and the ones from Kansas because I was from Kansas and the senators from Kansas. He always went out of his way to be nice and not just to me but to everyone, other members of the staff. It didn't matter whether they were people who could help him in any way, but if they wanted help he'd help them whether or not they could help him. I saw a lot of people help others but always with that little wheel going on in the back: "Well some place along the way, he's going to give me a boost; or, I might need him, I'll scratch his back and he'll scratch mine." But Mr. Chesney wasn't like that. Very fine.

BURG: Were there many like Chesney at this time?

BROWN: I think he probably was the most relaxed man in the White House. And I think maybe one of the reasons that some of the lower staff members resented him was because he was so relaxed. Now they were tensed up; there was a lot of pressure. I wouldn't say there was any more pressure there than I felt at the Pentagon, but it was a little higher level. But some of the pressures you put on yourself. And I think maybe sometimes you see somebody comes around who smiles and says good morning to everybody, from the little gardener to the President himself who has time to smile and who has time to say, "hello," and say, "how's your uncle, I understand he was in the hospital,"-- I think sometimes people who are driving themselves even more than they're being driven maybe kind of resent that he had that time or he took that time. Because I think most of us can take time to say hello even if we don't.

BURG: Well, I was going to ask you if there was pressure, was that pressure as a result of pressure placed upon them from outside. Was it Governor Adams, for example, who was putting pressure on the staff? Was it the President who put that kind of pressure on? You seem to be saying though that a good bit

of, this kind of pressure and tenseness was self-induced.

BROWN: Well, I think some of it is. You can't deny that there's a great deal of--in the first place there's pressure being on the White House staff. I felt and I think everyone else there, even people that I have--may sound as though I'm criticizing and I am in a way criticizing them--you feel that your work must be better than anyone else's. If you're sending out a letter and it's on the White House stationery you don't want any mistakes in it--I made four in one letter. When you go out socially, if somebody knows you're from the White House, I always felt like I didn't want them to say, "Well, that girl's stupid," or "That girl's had too much to drink," or "That girl doesn't know how to dress." I think the men felt that too. I always felt that we were a little bit on display, and you wanted to be a little--you didn't mind the display, you wanted to be a little better than you could be even--

[Interruption]

BURG: . Moving on then from Mr. Chesney, how long were you with him?

BROWN: Well, I was originally sent there for two weeks, but at the end of two weeks he asked me if I would stay.

BURG: Had his regular secretary come back?

BROWN: Yes, she was coming back the next week. And he asked me if I would stay as his permanent secretary and I told him I'd be delighted; I'd never worked for anyone who was quite that relaxed since I'd left Red Cross. And of course there you didn't really have bosses. So I said I'd be very delighted if Mr. --

BURG: Steffan.

BROWN: Thank you--Mr. Steffan agreed and if it wouldn't cause any hard feelings with the girl. Well, Mr. Chesney said she'd only worked for him for a couple of months and he didn't think she cared--I believe she was getting married in a few months--so it was a matter of no importance to her where she worked for that time. Anyhow, it worked out and I stayed with him--let's see, that was 1954 I started with him wasn't it--yes. And then in 1956 Ruth Harris, who was the second girl in

General Persons' office, broke her arm. And while she was out, they asked Mr. Chesney if I could come over there and work with FerneHudson. So I went over there and worked about a month.

BURG: Did you go over there in fear and trepidation?

BROWN: Oh, boy! That's one of the understatements of the year! Yes, I went over there; I did not know Fernebut I had heard that she was a perfectionist. Now I had also heard General Persons was a doll! So of course you know how women are--they're always much more critical of each other than they are of a man, except now that liberation has started. But anyhow, people had said that she demanded perfection and that he was a doll, and I went over there and Ferneand I hit it off very beautiful.

BURG: Right from the start?

BROWN: Right from the start. I didn't really have any great responsibility to be truthful with you. One of the things I did, I went through the newspapers and I clipped out the

things of interest on what was going on in congress and news of the world. And I made up a little kind of a booklet of about five sheets that I just stapled together, and General Persons would get a rundown on the news. Now I understand they have a staff that sort of does that for President Nixon. I read that in the paper, that his news was all predigested. Well I predigested General Persons' news to some extent. He also read the papers, but I think he probably would just look at the headlines. And I'd try to get past the headlines and into the back pages to see what was going on in the world. And I had to keep track of what was going on in the congress so I'd know what bills we were concerned with at the moment. Well, of course, I'd been working with Mr. Chesney, and I was up to date on the legislation that the President was interested in. We kept a voting record over in Mr. Gruenther's office and his secretary, Betty Schwesinger, and I shared an office. And she kept a chart of the legislation. And we kept a voting record.

BURG: A chart of the legislation, Rusty, sort of a progress chart tracing--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --it as it went through committees and through--

BROWN: Where it was--

BURG: --the house and the senate.

BROWN: --any particular day, in committee or already passed one of the houses.

BURG: Did you say her name was Schwesinger?

BROWN: Schwesinger. S-c-h-w-e-s-i-n-g-e-r. She was a very hard-working secretary, and she went out as a volunteer to Denver during the first campaign.

BURG: In '52?

BROWN: Yes. So she had been around for a little while. So when I went to General Persons' office, I had a background of what was going on in legislation. I just kept up with that and helped Ferne out with a little dictation from General Persons, although he didn't dictate much, mostly we composed letters. Ferne did most of that then. I'd take the coffee in for coffee break to General Persons, and most of the times it was General

Persons and Attorney General Rogers. And I'd see that they had natural buttermilk--big important duties.

BURG: They conferred a good bit together?

BROWN: Yes, almost every day, those two. And the Vice-President was there very frequently. Vice-President Nixon and Attorney General Rogers and General Persons were together quite frequently.

BURG: If we had to estimate how many times a week, Rusty, could you do it?

BROWN: Well, I'd say the Vice-President maybe twice a week, I may be exaggerating that. You know that's quite a few years ago and I'm sure you could find that out from General Persons' appointment calendar. The attorney general, boy, it seemed to me like he was there about three times a week or maybe more; they just seemed to be in and out. Of course there was a cabinet meeting once a week; there was a National Security Council meeting once a week; there was a legislative leadership meeting once a week. And they--let me see, I have to think a little--I'm not so sure the attorney general was in on that

national security meeting, but he was at the cabinet meeting and usually was at the legislative meeting. He probably was at the National Security Council, but I'd have to do a little deep thinking to remember who was on the National Security Council at that time. But they were usually there at least twice a week and usually one or two other times. And I don't think they ever came into the White House that they didn't come to General Persons' office; now this was both before he became the assistant to the President and while he was still deputy assistant to the President--in other words before Governor Adams left and after Governor Adams left. Who else was there? Fred Seaton was there a lot, the secretary of the interior and Postmaster General Summerfield. The secretary of defense and Secretary Dulles--I rarely saw Secretary Dulles; he didn't come in there very often. Some of the others were in and out, but Attorney General Rogers and the Vice-President were in there an awful lot. Jack Martin and Gerry Morgan, I'd forgotten Gerry Morgan; at that time he was one of the legislative men and also counsel to the President. They were in and out constantly. Ferne used to say, "They don't do a damned thing."

BURG: Who used to say that?

BROWN: Ferne she's from the South. She'd say, "They don't do a damned thing; they just walk up and down the halls."

BURG: Talking about Gerry Morgan and--

BROWN: And Jack Martin. But they did a lot. They really did a lot of conferring I'll say that, and most of it was in General Persons' office.

BURG: Would these sessions last for, say one hour or more than that?

BROWN: Well, some for an hour and some just in and out. President Johnson, Senator Johnson then was in, excuse me; if they had a bipartisan leadership meeting he usually came in; [William] Knowland, Charlie Halleck, [Joseph] Martin, not so much. He was sort of, well, I guess he wasn't quite as social or I don't know what, but he didn't come in so much, but Charlie Halleck an awful lot, and Arends, Leslie Arends, who was the whip. And they would have--sometimes it'd be just fifteen or twenty minutes, and sometimes a lot longer. General [Andrew J.] Goodpaster was in an awful lot. Oh, boy, there's

a man! He was brilliant! He was and is brilliant! He sure is a fine man. I keep hearing myself saying, "He sure was a fine man," but President Eisenhower really picked a fabulous staff to my way of thinking. They were men who were devoted to the United States and to President Eisenhower--the Republican Party, comme ci, comme ca, they were devoted to the United States. Some of them were former Democrats--General Persons was a southern Democrat. Bryce Harlow had come up from Oklahoma to work for the Democrats and had been over at the Department of Defense and then I think he went to one of the committees of the congress on the Democratic side. I'm getting a little confused--you know they have a committee staff and some of them are appointed by Republicans and some of them are appointed by the Democrats--he was appointed by the Democrats, as I remember. I'm going to say that this is as I remember it--some of these things I may be wrong, but I think I'm right on this. So anyhow these men weren't, they weren't political people. There's nothing wrong with being political; I'm political myself, devoted to my party. But these men were more interested, were above party, they were interested in the United States, and

that's the way President Eisenhower was.

BURG: This was obvious enough so it was obvious to you?

BROWN: Oh, yes.

BURG: And demonstrated you felt in many ways I presume?

BROWN: Yes. I'm speaking of an impression, so I guess if I had to say how I knew it I would have to think a little of the ways they showed that they were interested in the country more than their party, other than the fact that they weren't all Republicans. A lot of them were formerly military--General Persons, he'd come back from NATO with President Eisenhower. Well there weren't so many former--there was General Persons and General Goodpaster. That's two. And the military aides, every President has those, and they really weren't involved in any kind of policy. So there were only two military. Mr. Chesney and Mr. Gruenther were staff people up at the Capitol, Mr. Chesney representing the Veterans Administration. Homer Gruenther, I believe, had been on Senator [Kenneth] Wherry's staff, so he was more politically orientated than Earl Chesney.

Jack Martin was from Taft I believe. I think Gerry Morgan had been an attorney. So I started to say that there were a lot of them military, but when I start to enumerate, there weren't so many who were military. I think the President, I guess as we'll say many times, he had an intuitive manner of picking people for their strong points. And he had a way of not being aware--he was aware of their bad points or their drawbacks, but he would be able to work with them as far as their good points were concerned and sort of slough the things that concerned their bad points, their weaknesses.

BURG: So he was playing to strength, as much as he could?

BROWN: Yes, that's a good way of putting it. He was playing to strength. I don't think he ever thought about, now this person is good with working with people, or this person is good in doing brain work, or this person is good doing thus and so, I just think he did it. I think it was sort of intuition. Maybe he knew ahead of time, maybe he planned ahead of time-- this is the type of person I want and this is that type of person. He got me kind of accidentally; so maybe once he got a

person on his staff he just used them to the best advantage, and he drew from everyone around him the type of work that was better than they ordinarily could do, to my way of thinking. You'd be an ordinary speech writer, or an ordinary typist, or an ordinary janitor, or secretary, or orderly, and in a few months you found out that you were doing work way beyond your own capacity or what you had ever thought of as your capacity.

BURG: Did you hear others speak of that, Rusty?

BROWN: I only heard them speak of the fact that he seemed to be able to use people at their best advantage or to go to their strength. I've heard other people say that. Mostly I've heard people say that he was able to get people to work together. You know that's a great conversation point about World War II. They always say, "Well, Eisenhower was the man who could mediate between people, opposing personalities and get them to work together." I don't know that I ever saw that very much because when I was with him he wasn't working with great personalities; he just had a staff. But I saw him draw from his staff the best they could offer and maybe a little better than they thought they were able to offer. They'd come forth with things that

they didn't realize they could do. But he never demanded it as long as I worked for him; he never demanded anything.

BURG: Then how did he get it?

BROWN: I've thought about that a lot of times, because I put in long hours and there was something about him that inspired people. I think the members of his staff in Gettysburg, they used to say, when we were out in California, that the days and the weeks would drag.

BURG: While all of you were out there, the Gettysburg people felt that they were away from the center of things.

BROWN: That's right. But when he'd come back, boy, everybody would brighten up and--.

BURG: So maybe force of personality, I mean just the kind of personality he was then?

BROWN: Yes, I think that was part of it. Of course he'd change; I understand he'd changed quite a bit by the time I was working for him. He was more relaxed I'm sure than he was at the White House. He was always very considerate of his staff,

sometimes almost to a fault--he'd be more concerned about staff members than they needed to be, you know be worrying about their work conditions and things like that. It was all very well taken care of. I'm kind of getting off the sequence of this.

BURG: Well, we'll get back to that sequence, but I think it arises because of the people that we were talking about, Wilton Persons and Fern Hudson and Earl Chesney and the others. It's good to get an impression at this stage. You felt at this stage that you were working beyond yourself, partly maybe because of Earl Chesney, partly maybe because of the kind of person Wilton Persons was, you've rated him fairly high too.

BROWN: Yes, oh, he was a fine man.

BURG: And partly maybe because of the man at the top, Eisenhower, partly perhaps because, as you pointed out, it's the White House.

BROWN: I think that was part of it.

BURG: It's the honor of being there at the center of things and in the highest office of the country.

BROWN: And the most powerful country in the world. And the greatest country in the world. I didn't think I was working beyond my powers for Mr. Chesney though. We worked pretty hard there, but there was none of the great challenge. It was interesting and it was fun, but there was none of the great challenge of striving to keep up and to get the work done and to get it done as near perfection as you could as I had later when I was working for President Eisenhower. General Persons, we worked very hard and it was very challenging, but the only time I really felt that I was working beyond what I ever thought I could do was when I was President Eisenhower's secretary. And I thought that even though my work wasn't as good in quality many times as it had been in prior years, it was usually because I had to do ten letters in the period I had done two before. So that if I might make a typographical error or leave out a word or something like that I'd hate to go back and see it now. But I still felt that I was doing way beyond any capacity I ever thought I had. And I felt that both President Eisenhower and Mrs. Eisenhower brought that out, because it would be hard for me to choose between the two of them if somebody said to me, "Well, which one is your favorite?"

BURG: I see.

BROWN: I don't know that I could choose between the President and Mrs. Eisenhower.

BURG: Now you spoke of Fern Hudson as having in part trained you--

BROWN: Oh, yes.

BURG: --for that later work, and you spoke briefly about some of the things that she had done for you and that one of the things I believe was the ability to recognize that which had to be done and single it out and get it done. Can you tell me a little bit more--now you say you were there for a month, Rusty?

BROWN: Well, I went there for about a month just to cover for this girl who had broken her arm. But she and Fern weren't getting along. I went back to Mr. Chesney then, oh, September or October of '56, and was there a couple of months. But Ruth and Fern were kind of bickering, and Ruth finally managed to get a job working for Jack Anderson, who was coming in as a new member of the staff. And she was going in as top girl; so that left her job open and Fern asked for me to be assigned to

her office as the second girl in her office. And I liked Ferne at that time and I liked General Persons, but I adored Mr. Chesney and I didn't want to leave him. But you know, it was his boss asking for me, so to speak, General Persons and his secretary were asking for me, so it was kind of a little ticklish and it was the better part of valor for me to go and so I went. But I sure hated to leave Mr. Chesney. And that was about November or December of '56 I went to General Persons' office. And I stayed there until we left the White House. And I don't remember when Governor Adams left the White House, now maybe it was that next fall.

BURG: Fall of '58?

BROWN: It was an election year. Well, it must have been the fall of '58, yes, because it was an election year. That's what brought about his--

BURG: The congressional--

BROWN: --ouster, yes. Gee, that was dirty. Ferne and I got along very well those two years; we worked very well together.

We shared an office with Gwen King, who was my old buddy from Steffan days and another girl, those two girls worked for Tom Stephens, and they sat there all day typing up letters saying, "Sorry that we can't arrange your appointment with the President because his schedule is full." They were two very nice girls. We had a nice little office for a couple of years. Then all this rot about Governor Adams came up, taking that vicuna coat and borrowing a rug and using somebody's hotel suite for a while and he had to leave. Well, in the two years I had worked for General Persons, we were right next to Governor Adams' office, Alberta had left. I guess Ilene Slater was still there, yes, she was, and Governor Adams was in and out of our office quite a bit too and he and I got to be kind of good friends--

BURG: Oh, really?

BROWN: --he didn't know who I was. I don't think, you know when I used to go in there and take dictation from Alberta I don't think he even knew I was around. And I'm not so sure he fired me, maybe Alberta took it on herself, I don't know. But

we got to be kind of joking back and forth about baseball, I was a great baseball fan in those days. When the series would come up in the fall, the world series, usually General Persons would turn on his television set and he and maybe the attorney general, Governor Adams would be in and out, and a couple of the other men would get in there and start watching that baseball game. They'd usually call me in to watch it, or I'd go in and take them some buttermilk and they'd insist that I stay. And if I didn't have too much work, I would. But I grew quite fond of Governor Adams. He was a, well, a lot of people say a New Englander is cold, and that's the impression that he gave to people that he was cold and hard. He was very abrupt; so abrupt that I think he made a lot of enemies up at the Capitol. It's too bad that [John] Ehrlichman and [H.R.] Haldeman didn't read about that before they started being so abrupt. Because I don't think it was that he was so terrible and so rude--he wasn't that rude--but I think that the congressmen and the senators get sort of in the position of secretaries and start feeling their power after a while and they don't want anybody to talk to them as though they're mortals. And Governor Adams had served with them up there, congressman I believe; yes, I don't

think he was a senator, I don't remember. But anyhow, he had been up there so he knew a lot of them and he treated them just as another human being and they didn't like that, whereas General Persons always treated them as though they were, treated them with great respect. Now he never kowtowed to them or anything, but he was very courteous; he had that southern courtesy that's bred in them from the cradle, and he would have been courteous to anyone who came into that office and he by all means would be courteous to a senator or congressman. If he had to say, "No," he had a very nice way of saying it. Not that he was sweet and gushy, he usually let out a string of curse words on the phone and say, "I couldn't get you in," or "The blankety-blank so-and-so was such-and-such that this can't be arranged," but they understood him and they knew that he had tried. And he had.

BURG: I meant to ask you too, did your work assignments stay the same with Persons on that second--

BROWN: No, I got a little more work. We went in usually at seven o'clock; so we alternated--Ferre would go in one morning at seven and I would come in at eight, and the person that came in at eight worked until the General went home. The girl

that came in at seven went home at five, five-thirty. But the other one stayed until the General went home, which could be seven, six-thirty or seven. But I did some of the composing of the letters, she started me on that and we kept a telephone--I don't know what-you-call-it--but anyhow it taught me how to keep track of what the General had going for him. We had a little list of telephone calls that were hanging fire.

BURG: A telephone log in effect.

BROWN: They were hanging fire. We also kept a log of appointments and telephone calls. And I did most of the--oh, God, I don't know whether to say this or not--well, you know we covered the telephone calls and--

BURG: I see; one of you listening and taking stenographic notes so that you'd know what decisions had been made and what business was being transacted. Well, it's a concomitant of a telephone age; you've got to have some kind of records of what's going on. Did you cover all incoming phone calls, outgoing too? So one of you had to be there all the time--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --to pick it up. Now was that kept in a regular, like a notebook?

BROWN: You know how President Eisenhower's was kept up?

BURG: No.

BROWN: Did you ever see those logs that--well, I kept them in Gettysburg.

BURG: Actually I think I've seen them for the Nixon administration and not for--

BROWN: Well, they're in a black looseleaf notebook. And usually it'll say, "President arrived 7:15, 7:20; he talked with Senator Knowland re such-and-such a bill; 8:00 o'clock appointment with the Veterans of Foreign Wars," and that sort of thing. Well, that was the general idea. We kept the same thing on General Persons. Maybe he still has those. I wasn't so sure I should tell that.

[Interruption]

BURG: Now with regard to keeping that log--we both know that that was the usual routine. Now, Rusty, is it safe to say, or

contradict me if I'm wrong, that those calling in to General Persons' office would be well aware that running notes were being kept of conversations?

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Or would you say that's incorrect?

BROWN: No, I think it was a standard operating procedure in Washington. If you call a senator, his secretary was usually making a note. For instance, if General Persons would say, "Well, I want to see you and so-and-so and so-and-so as soon as possible," he may go right on out to another meeting and never mention that again. Well in the meantime, usually Ferne and if she didn't then I would arrange that appointment.

BURG: He would never say on the phone, "Did you get that, Ferne?"

BROWN: Yes, he did, sometimes, yes.

BURG: So my point in this line of questioning then is that, by and large, there was no attempt made--let's put it this way, because we can safely say this, you can speak as to General Persons' office--he was not making any particular effort whatsoever

to hide the fact that notes were kept, even to the point of saying over the phone while the other party was still on the phone, something to the effect of, "Did you get that, Ferne?" or "Be sure that's noted down." Because my impression is that that's the way it was done and that most people calling in would be well aware of that.

BROWN: Well that's the way I understood it too. And then, as you say, sometimes he would say to one of us--you know he was from the South--he'd say, "Fun, did you get that?" or, "Set that up." So I guess everybody knew that, but that was one of my duties. I still kept on with the keeping in touch with what was going on in the headlines and newspapers as far as congress was concerned and bills. Then, I guess I was starting to talk about Governor Adams' tragedy--General Persons called it a Greek tragedy. As far as I ever knew, Governor Adams was an extremely honest person, very forthright, very truthful, and if memory serves me correct again every congressman and every senator was given a vicuna coat by this same gentleman who gave him one. I think that was in the record. But they made a big issue

out of that, dishonesty in the Eisenhower administration. Now I don't know this, but I assume it's because they didn't like Governor Adams; they were irritated with him; it was a good political issue for that year. You know President Eisenhower had run against dishonesty in the government. So Governor Adams was the victim of all this. General Persons then was assigned to take his spot, but Governor Adams stayed on for about two weeks, maybe, cleaning out his papers, getting ready to leave. General Persons never did move out of his office; he stayed in that office. The last day that Governor Adams worked, President Eisenhower had a little cocktail party for the men of the staff, and they all went over about 5:30 to visit with Governor Adams and say good-bye to him. And it was my night to work late--Fern had already gone home--and General Persons came in and signed the last letter or two that was left on the desk and left. And I was getting ready to get rid of the mail, clean off the top of my desk, and Governor Adams came in the office. And it was really--it was very sad. He didn't want to leave; he loved his work; he had the greatest admiration and respect for President Eisenhower. He was a staunch Republican

and here it would seem to him I'm sure that they had all turned on him, if not turned at least turned away; if they hadn't turned completely their backs to him they'd at least turned their heads away from him so that he was being rejected and leaving something that he really loved doing. And he was such a changed human when he walked into my office that night. As far as I know no one else was around except maybe the usher, secret service. And I said, "Good-bye," to him and that I'd miss him, and he leaned over and kissed me on the cheek and he says, "I'll miss all of you and I'll miss the White House very much." And I walked just outside the door with him and he says, "If there's anything in my office that's left there that anybody wants, they can have it." And he went on.

BURG: So you haven't seen him personally since that day.

BROWN: No. A couple of times I sent them Christmas cards. The short time I worked with Alberta in his office, Mrs. Adams had had us out for dinner one night and entertained us, so they were very nice people. But after he had gone the next day they were cleaning out his office; he had a very large picture of President Eisenhower when he was chief of staff. I guess his

first leg of his journey to Japan was to stop off in Hawaii-- somebody had taken a picture of him--and I had always liked that picture when I used to sit there taking dictation when I went over. So when they were cleaning out the office the next day and somebody was saying, "Where shall we put this picture or shall we leave it."

I said, "I'll take it." So I got it. I have it hanging right out in the hall.

BURG: That's where he's leaning against the tree--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --just out here in your hall.

BROWN: I really liked that. So I got that.

BURG: Did Governor Adams say anything after all of this blew-- he was coming in and out of General Persons' office from time to time--did he ever say anything in your hearing about this whole affair or his evaluation of it?

BROWN: No. The only evaluation I heard was things that General Persons would say. And the main thing that stuck in my mind was that expression about this is a real Greek tragedy. And General Persons referred to the fact that Governor Adams was an honest man and truthful and that it wasn't right to crucify him. There was a little feeling I think on the part of some of the people like General Persons and--I was trying to think--well, I guess Jerry Persons, that maybe the General--I'm talking General Persons and President Eisenhower, I keep getting mixed up which. General Persons and Gerry Morgan I think felt a little that maybe the President should have supported him, Governor Adams, a little more at the beginning. But I think later on they switched and felt that the President should see that he should not cling to him and hold him into the administration because it was going to hurt the election. Those are just little things I picked up from conversations. They may have just been impressions, maybe they were just trying to put their feelings into words. But I got that feeling that at first they felt that the President should come out and support him more and then later on they felt that it

was time for him to get out and that he should move pretty fast, because it was going to hamper the legislative program and the elections that were coming up.

BURG: Did you know Charles Willis, by the way?

BROWN: Well, yes, he wasn't around there too long--I don't know when he was around there but--

BURG: Well, actually in the first administration, but I'm not sure--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --how long into the second.

BROWN: Did he stay in the second; I didn't realize that.

BURG: He may have; I don't recall myself. He and I have not yet done the interview that we're going to do.

BROWN: I knew him slightly while I was taking dictation from Alberta. I was sort of about the "eighth" girl in that office you know and I just came and took dictation and left. And Charley Willis had one desk in that outer office--I had forgotten that. And his secretary was a Negro girl, I believe.

BURG: That could be.

BROWN: Golly, what was her name, she was, oh, she was nice. She was about the only one who was friendly to me in there. But he had one office right outside of Governor Adams' office and then he had one upstairs. I guess he was wearing two hats.

BURG: May have been.

BROWN: But I didn't know him very well.

BURG: When I talk with him I'll ask him about the secretary's name just to get it into the record.

BROWN: I should know it, because she was a very nice person and I believe she was the first Negro girl to work in the White House. And of course President Eisenhower brought the first Negro man to work in the White House in a staff position, not in a position as a servant you know.

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: And, oh, boy, I know, Fred Morrow.

BURG: Fred Morrow, sure.

BROWN: Have you talked with him?

BURG: No, we have his book, of course, which is a big help. He's one of those who has set something down on paper.

BROWN: He was a very nice person.

BURG: Now I get the impression that with General Persons, Persons would sketch out what it was he wanted put into a letter and then leave it to you or Fern to actually compose it and type it for his signature. Is that true?

BROWN: Some he'd sketch out and some were just automatically, you knew what the answer would be.

BURG: So he didn't dictate too much?

BROWN: No, he didn't dictate too much; he'd dictate some but not an awful lot. He really, it was just one meeting after another. And his desk was stacked up like this--he could never find anything, and it'd be right in front of him. He'd say, "Fun," and if she didn't answer, "Rusty," and we'd go running in there, "Where's that--." And one of the first

things we would do in the morning, we'd go into his desk and you'd go through every paper on that desk, and they were voluminous, and you'd memorize what papers were there and where they were and you'd shift some around--the important ones you'd get right in the center, not that it did any good. He got everything done, but I never could figure out how, mainly because Ferne was such a good secretary. I'll give that to her, she was really a top secretary. "Fun," and she'd go running in there. But she did most of the letter writing. And boy she'd sit at that typewriter and those letters would just come sailing out. I handled the phones and did some of the letters and some of the retypes, and it was very good training. We kept our list of the telephone calls that were still outstanding. In fact we had a little tiny black notebook on his desk and those were all--well, I think she kept a month's phone calls in there--and we'd cross them off after we'd answered them. And every day we made up a new sheet, and the ones from the day before, the day before, the day before, that were still not answered we'd put on that, because that phone was ringing constantly. Did I confuse you?

BURG: No, I don't think so. Legislators on the Hill conferring with Persons as to what the President's wishes might be on a particular piece of legislation--

BROWN: Well that and--

BURG: --and his calls to try to--

BROWN: That's right.

BURG: --try to get things lined up.

BROWN: And the calls to various executive branches of the government on the bills that they were trying to get through, and the budget on what they were coming up on any particular bill, every branch of the government. We didn't deal much with the judicial but the various executive branches of the government--the secretaries and the under-secretaries and all the members of congress, the house and the senate, it was just constant on both sides of the aisle, the Democrats and the Republicans. And we had to keep track of the phone calls and also the newspapers. General Persons had a wide range of friends; there were a great variety of friends in every field; a great number of newspaper men were his friends--Duke Shoop,

who used to be the Kansas City Star Washington correspondent; he is now dead.

BURG: How is his name spelled?

BROWN: Duke Shoop, S-h-o-o-p. The present Kansas City Star representative is John Cauley, that's C-a-u-l-e-y, and he was a friend of General Persons. Felix Belair of the New York Times, Bill Lawrence of--

BURG: Belair is one word?

BROWN: Yes, B-e-l-a-i-r. And Bill Lawrence were just a few of the newsmen who called on him quite frequently.

BURG: So there, in effect, was one office of the executive branch of the White House itself which transacted almost all of its business not through the written word per se but through telephone.

BROWN: Oh, yes, there was a great deal of phone calls and a lot of it on the phone. They had a lot of meetings, General Persons was constantly in meetings. If he didn't have a meeting in his office with legislators, members of the staff, cabinet, sub-cabinet, then he was in the cabinet office with a cabinet

meeting--he sat in the cabinet meetings, the National Security Council meetings, the legislative meetings. Then the White House had a general staff meeting once a week, I think it was Friday, or he was in with the President on various things. He really put in a full day's work. As I said, we usually got there at seven and he was there shortly after, within about five minutes of his entrance into the office things were going in all directions, people were coming and going. And he usually left quite late, 6:30 or 7:00, and we were in Saturdays, we alternated Saturdays--Fernewould come in one week and I would come in the other. Then when General Persons took over from Governor Adams, we got a third girl. I can't remember her name; I hadn't even thought of her since I was at the White House I don't believe. Fern didn't like the way these drafters were working over in the Executive Office Building, remember I told you way back--

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: --about these--

BURG: The ten--

BROWN: --ten or twelve people. Well we happened to run across a letter--somebody had written in on one subject, say they had written in and said they didn't like a certain piece of legislation, and somebody had accidentally drafted a letter saying: Thank you very much; we are glad to hear your opinion of something else. And the letter was ready to go out and it had been drafted for General Persons' signature--Margaret Berryman was her name--she took care of those letters, signed them, and she caught it. She'd look at the subject of the incoming letter and then she'd look at the answer. So Ferne didn't like them; so Margaret then had to go through all those letters and check on them to see that they were putting out the right replies. And that was her job. And Ferne and I kept on with just about the same duties we'd had before; we kind of shared the dictation and the phone and the typing and appointments. But after the third girl came--I don't know if this is of any interest or not--but Ferne and I didn't get along so well. The first couple of months things were nice but after a while, you know, they say there always has to be an office goat--did you ever hear that expression?

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: Well, I think I kind of got to be the goat in some ways. There was some jealousy on Ferne's part because--well when they'd have baseball or football games on television, General Persons would have me come in and watch them. I liked to do it but I didn't want to do it because I wouldn't want to be sitting out typing a letter and working my head off and some new girl who had only been there a year or two would go in and sit there and watch television. You know that's not very good for morale, but it's not very easy to always say, "No," either, especially if you wanted to see how the game was coming out--not that I was that much of a martyr--but I thought it was a little wiser if I didn't stay in there too much. And I sat at the front of the office and everybody that came in would stop and talk with me; instead of going back to Ferne, they'd ask me the questions. So she moved me then behind Margaret; the other two girls moved out so then Ferne was on one side and she put me behind Margaret so that when people came in--I've heard of people having a fight about being one inch farther from a window in an office, and it sounds so silly and a hundred years from now somebody listening to that tape is going to say, "My gosh, is that all those women had to worry about, who said, 'Hello,' to the people who came in!" But I think it kind of bothered her.

And there was a third person and I think maybe she just didn't like me or maybe my work wasn't up to what she thought it was; she never said it wasn't but--

BURG: Well, someone new had come in too. Now did you pick up any of Governor Adams' staff?

BROWN: No.

BURG: They went elsewhere when he left, other assignments in the White House.

BROWN: Yes. One of the secretaries became Gerry Morgan's secretary. And Ilene Slater left.

BURG: Oh, she did.

BROWN: But I think he only had two secretaries at that time in that office. I've forgotten why his work slacked off. But it must have that last year because when I first started working there he had--wow, I don't know how many people were doing that typing of those letters, about four, about three in the outer office and then I was working in the EOB. But we had all of Governor Adams' work and still General Persons kept his finger in the legislative pot so to speak. But Bryce Harlow

and Gerry Morgan were the top men then, Gerry Morgan the top man, Bryce Harlow next.

BURG: Now how about the nature of the work that you were now doing with General Persons, he takes over for Adams, what happens to the routine that you gals followed? Do you just pick up Adams' work and add it to Persons'?

BROWN: Yes. We just got the one extra girl and she handled the, I don't want to call it "junk" mail, but the routine mail, the mail that was thrown out by the bushel basket out of the steno pool, she handled that. Fern and I still handled the rest of the work. But I wouldn't say that General Persons had that much correspondence either before or after he took over. He had enough correspondence to keep the girls busy, his own correspondence. As you said earlier we did a great share of our work was on the phone, and it was keeping track of what was going on on the phone and in the meetings. And when something would come out of a meeting, usually, if he didn't tell us, probably it would be Bryce Harlow would stop on his way out and say, "Rusty, so-and-so and so-and-so meeting, there's going to be a meeting such-and-such a date, these people are to be there." Or Gerry Morgan might tell us or somebody else or Jack Martin

or somebody. And then we'd go from there.

BURG: Now Persons' own work routine did not alter significantly at this time either?

BROWN: No, and he didn't change his personality; he had gone at that sort of feet-on-top-of-the-desk--he didn't put his feet on the top of the desk--but that was sort of the way you would think of him sitting there with his feet propped up doing business, very casually and most of the time quite calmly. But when he left that office he was always on a half-run. He usually moved pretty fast. And it all got done. But I say I'll give a lot of credit to Ferne because she really got those letters out, and she was on top of everything. She had the request for appointments, and she had the telephone calls coming in and coming out; she kept track of every--as I said we covered all the phones, calls coming in and out and all the appointments; we had all those typed up. And you had that all done before you went home at night in case anything happened to you during the night. If the bicycles ran over you why the other girl would come in in the morning and she knew what telephone calls were to be taken care of, they were listed in priority. And if you knew

the subject you'd say, "Felix Belair called about that civil rights bill." That's the way I remember it.

BURG: How about his conferences. Now it had been Rogers who would drop in, Mr. Nixon would drop in, various people were dropping in to see him, sometimes for fairly long periods of time. When he takes over for Sherm Adams, did the cast of characters now in his office conferring in and out, did that change in any significant way that you remember?

BROWN: No, I only think they came more often. And when I said two or three times a week, I think probably that was more during the time he had taken over than prior to that.

BURG: You think the conferences increased in number?

BROWN: Yes, I think they increased in number.

BURG: After he had taken over.

BROWN: I think that he was always given a great deal of respect by the cabinet members and--

BURG: General Persons?

BROWN: Yes. And they dealt with him a great deal on their legislation, and I believe on other items that they were trying to take up. He was a man's man; it was easy for the men to deal with him and to talk frankly with him. They knew where he stood, and they could tell him where they stood, and it usually stayed in his office as far as I ever knew. And yet he would present their case fairly to the President when he thought it was the thing to do. And I think they came to him with a lot of problems. Sometimes I believe when they couldn't get through Governor Adams, they would come to General Persons, which I assume put him on a spot. Governor Adams was over him in those days so he couldn't circumvent him. And yet sometimes the matters--I'd be hard pressed to think of a particular issue at this moment--I might think of things as I go along.

BURG: Do you ever recall hearing Persons lose his temper?

BROWN: Well, irritated, but anger, no. He'd get irritated with us sometimes. He never did cuss at me, but he used to cuss quite a bit at "Fun." But he and "Fun" had been together for quite a few years, she had been at NATO with him. And she was very close to him and to his wife and they were extremely

fond of her and I understand after they left the White House, she went down and worked with him without pay for a number of months to get his papers in order. Well, you know, she was quite a person. At the last I didn't like her at all, but she was a good person. She didn't like me, and you can't always help it in those sort of things.

BURG: That sort of thing can happen.

BROWN: Personality clashes, as my sister says. He could get irritated and use his army language. I've seen him kind of scared--now let me see which illness that was--oh, darn it, I may be getting a little tired because I'm having a hard time remembering. The President became ill one morning--as I talk maybe I'll remember--and I was on duty that morning; I came in about 7:00 and the President became ill shortly after that. Now maybe we'll remember which illness that was, and it's kind of embarrassing but I'll talk about it anyhow, embarrassing to General Persons. General Persons always went in the little boys' room first thing when he came in in the morning and closed the door. And he had a very large office, very, very nice, impressive office and at the far end was the little boys' room, his

private one, and he went in there. Well, you know, his secretary has--

[Interruption]

BURG: Let's finish off this story.

BROWN: General Persons was in his little private room and Jim [James C.] Hagerty--I hope this is right--he telephoned and he says, "Get Jerry Persons on the phone."

And I said, "I can't right now, Mr. Hagerty, may I have him call you back?"

He said, "Get him on the phone!"

I said, "I can't right now."

He said, "Where in the blank is he?"

And I said, "In the little boys' room."

He said, "The President's ill, get him out of there!"

So I opened the door to the big office and I called to General Persons and there was no answer. And I called about three times and finally I said, "Mr. Hagerty says it's urgent." And a minute later he came out, and that's one time I did see him when he looked angry. But then when he got on the phone,

Jim told him that the President was quite ill and they were thinking of taking him to Walter Reed. And General Persons left and ran into the White House proper. And I still can't remember whether that was the--must have been his attack of ileitis.

BURG: I wondered if it wasn't because that sounds like the situation at that time.

BROWN: Yes. I believe that's what it was.

BURG: And this was before Sherm Adams left the White House.

BROWN: Was it? I kind of forgotten my sequence of events but--

BURG: I believe so, but I suspect you're right; that's when this occasion came up.

BROWN: I've kind of forgotten whether Governor Adams was there or not. But that was one time when General Persons was angry, but he changed in just a minute.

BURG: Angry at you for--

BROWN: For interrupting him.

BURG: --for winkling him out of the bathroom.

BROWN: Yes. We were both quite embarrassed but it didn't last very long because when he realized it was an emergency--and then he ran over to the Mansion and I didn't hear any more for maybe half an hour or so. I think they took the President then right out to Walter Reed. In a very short time they took him out. You had asked me if I ever saw him angry; I'd forgotten that he was pretty peeved then.

Then he was pretty angry after the 1960 elections. He and Vice-President Nixon and Attorney General Rogers, Bryce Harlow, Gerry Morgan, starting the morning after the elections, they started meeting. And there was great discussion, and I'm sure a lot of people have told you this about the fraud involved in the elections and should we fight it. The feeling the first couple of days was let's fight it; it's not fair to the American people to let the this theft of thousands of votes go unnoticed and to put into the White House a man who was not really elected. The feelings were running pretty high as I recall. Now who would temper that feeling I don't know. The feelings were

pretty high at that time, and some of the men felt that there was grounds to challenge the election. And they took it to the President on--well I believe at least two occasions that they went in with that purpose. Now what happened in that Oval Office, I don't know. And you probably heard this from better authority than I.

BURG: General Persons being one of those who took it to him?

BROWN: Yes. And the Vice-President was in on it. Now I have to think real seriously before I could remember whether the Vice-President went in with General Persons or not, but I would imagine he did, but I wouldn't swear to that. But they met in General Persons' office. And they really felt that the election had been stolen; and it was a fraud on the American people; and that it should be challenged; and that, if the elections were challenged by the President and the Republican party and the Vice-President, Mr. Nixon, that the investigation would prove that Kennedy had not been elected. Well, sometime in those first couple of days, three days maybe, someone cooled their temperatures and it was decided that nothing would be done about it.

BURG: But you don't know who it was that cooled it down--

BROWN: No.

BURG: --and General Persons never told you or spoke--

BROWN: He never--

BURG: --in your presence of--

BROWN: The only reference I've heard later was from President Eisenhower and he said that he thought--I'd have to try to remember when I heard this from him, it may have been when he was dictating one of his books--he felt that it would tear the country apart to challenge a presidential election. Even if the fraud was proven, it would be such a close election that the country would be almost torn in two. He felt that it would be too damaging to the country to do it.

BURG: Now, Rusty, did you remain with Persons and with Ferne and Margaret, even though there was an unfortunate feeling between you and Ferne, for the remainder of the administration?

BROWN: Yes, until the last day of the Administration. And it was the most difficult working situation I ever endured. It was even more difficult than getting along with [General Robert]

Schulz because her desk was on one side of the room and I was right across from her. And Margaret was right in front of me. And Margaret was--I wish I could remember her last name, Berryman, I will eventually--was trying in a way to be a go-between. But like most of us women, why, when we learn something you can't keep it in, you have to spill it out. And if Ferne would say something about me, she would tell me and I'm sure than when I said something about Ferne, which I did, she told Ferne. So the situation didn't ease off and after the election in November, of course all the girls were concerned--and most of the men too--about where they would go and what they'd be doing--some of them were more concerned than others. I know Mr. Morrow was pretty upset; he wanted to get a job that he felt was in line with his abilities and his experience and he didn't think that people were helping him. But there were a great many people who needed some assistance in getting jobs, some of the people wanted to stay, mostly secretaries and the staff who had been there in the Truman and Roosevelt administrations wanted to stay on. And General Persons and the other staff members were trying to do the best they could

to locate a job for everyone, to have everybody at least one place they could go when January 20th arrived. And they were having some difficulty because, as you probably know, the middle echelon of government is hard-line Democrat. They had got in there during the Truman administration and then he made a lot of them--they were appointees and political people--and then they were made permanent civil service. All during the Eisenhower administration we would run into this problem of orders going down to a certain level and then people "putting salt in the sugar jar" at that level, so to speak. It wasn't a great problem but it was a little annoyance that came up from time to time. And when it came time to place the people who were leaving the Eisenhower White House, there weren't that many jobs that were offered. Ferne eventually wound up working for a distillery up in Hartford, Connecticut, some personal friends of General Persons took her. But her first job, she had to work for three lieutenant colonels at the Pentagon, as a stenographer and not a secretary; and that was way beneath her capabilities. She was too good a secretary to go down to that, but that's what had happened to a lot of the girls.

Some of the girls were fortunate enough to get jobs up at the Capitol but then we lost the congressional election so we'd lost some seats up there too. So there weren't that many Republicans coming in who needed staff members. And when you went out to the executive branches, the Department of Agriculture, Interior, why they dragged their feet, because when you got down there you were working with the personnel people who were staying on and some of them were those hard-line Democrats who were-- . And they said, "Why should we take on some"--I assume this is what they were saying--"Why should we take on some Eisenhower Republicans and give them jobs that are equal to what they're holding over at the White House." But I was fortunate, I was offered three jobs other than the job I took-- the new congressman from this district of Kansas was Congressman Ellsworth, Bob Ellsworth, and he asked me to be his personal secretary at the Capitol. And I was offered a job, Colonel Bradley told me through a friend that if I needed a job that he'd get me on at the Pentagon; by this time I had civil service status. And I was offered a job at Interior. So I was thinking, well, which shall it be, but I was leaning toward Ellsworth

because he had offered me nine thousand a year, and his administrative assistant said, "Well, don't say yes yet, he'll come up with more." She happened to be an old friend of mine so she said, "Rusty, just hold on a little while." And I'd had dinner with him and we had gotten acquainted, a couple other people he was hiring, and we got together and got acquainted. So I was feeling very secure in that I had a job to go to. And then one day, right before Thanksgiving, John Eisenhower walked into the office. John had always come into our office, and I'd always been very friendly with him; he was such a nice person--he's a real doll. And I didn't know him very well other than I just spoke to him and I ran into him one time down at the driving range, I was down there with some friends, and he was down there by himself driving golf balls. And we just talked for a few minutes, but I thought he was a very nice person, trying hard to do a job and not be just the President's son.

BURG: Working under General Goodpaster I think at that time.

BROWN: Yes. And he was trying very hard to do a good job and, as I say, try not to just be riding his dad's coattails. But

anyhow, he came in the office this one morning right before Thanksgiving and asked me if I'd go into the Fish Room with him and it--just about killed me. I thought, my gosh, I've never done anything to him, because the first thing I thought of was Alberta.

BURG: Of course.

BROWN: And we went in there and sat down and he said, "I don't want an answer today, but would you think about coming to Gettysburg as my secretary?" Well, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. He said, "Now I want you to come up and I want you to see Gettysburg and know what you're getting into and then you decide; I don't want you to answer today."

I said, "I can tell you today, I'll go."

"No," he said, "I don't want you to tell me today; I want you to go up with me."

BURG: Had he told you what he himself would be doing?

BROWN: Yes, he did. I'm sorry; I kind of jumped over that. He and I would be working for Doubleday and Company and he was going to be doing the research on President Eisenhower's one or

two volumes on the White House years, probably two volumes.

He said, "It's not a life-time job; I don't know how long it'll take us to do the research. But I think it'll be interesting, and I think we'll get along and we'll work very well together." I said a couple of times I'd go, and he said, "I don't want you to tell me you'll go; I want you to see Gettysburg; you don't know what you're getting into." And he said the President had asked Alice [Boyce] to go as his secretary. There was a little hanky-panky about Ann Whitman, you know. Nobody knew exactly what she was going to do and President Eisenhower was thinking about taking Alice Boyce as his secretary.

BURG: Is that B-o-y--

BROWN: B-o-y-c-e. She was Goodpaster's secretary, and she'd been at NATO. And Polly Yates was also being considered as a member of the staff. He said that we had a meeting and we talked about various people who needed jobs and various members who did not want to stay with Kennedy. And I thought you might like it, and we understand your niece is living with you and she's in college, maybe she'd like to go to Gettysburg College. We might be able to work that out if she wishes that, and maybe

we'd like living in a small town, but he said, "I won't take an answer till you go up there," words to that effect. That's not exactly what he said, but he didn't want me to answer that day. So he arranged for me to fly up there a few days later in a helicopter. And I flew up with Alice and Polly and they took us through the office in Gettysburg and showed us the layout. And then we went back to John's house and Barbara had coffee for us. I never did get to know Barbara very well; I never knew why. She had us in for coffee that day. And I was out to their house a couple of times for a party or luncheon, but that was the first time I had met her. The Secret Service showed us apartments and houses that were available and a duplex that was available that was new, a real nice two bedroom. And then the next day I told John I would be very happy to work with him. In the meantime I had talked to Barrie Ann at home and asked her how she felt about moving to a small town and maybe going to college up there--she was in junior college then. And she said she'd love it, she thought; she'd always lived in a small town until she had come to stay with me. So I told John we would go. And basically from that day forward Ferne never spoke to me except to give me orders, and it was a very difficult situation. That's

why I sound like I went off the subject when I was talking about Ferne, but it was very difficult on Margaret, who was ill. She had an anemia that eventually killed her, but it was very difficult on her, and it was very difficult on me, except all the time I was built up inside because I was going to something that was very exciting, very thrilling. And even though it was difficult going in day after day and not have a member of the staff speak to you other than to say, "Get this," or "Do that." Still you could get through it because I knew in a couple of months I'd be gone to something I thought was even more exciting than anything I had ever done. And it turned out that it was.

BURG: Well, I can understand that feeling.

BROWN: On the 2nd of December, John came in and said, "Now, Rusty, you ought to get your niece up there and decide on which place you want." And he said, "You can fly up there with dad tomorrow in the helicopter." So Saturday morning--I had met the General in Japan; I had seen the General on occasions going to and from the office and been to a reception or two that they had had in the White House where there were hundreds of people there.

But I had never really sat down and talked to him or been with him. But Saturday morning Barrie Ann and I got all dressed up and we went down--I didn't have the duty--Fern did. We went in and waited by the helicopter and we flew up to Gettysburg with President Eisenhower and Captain [E.P.] Aurand, who was the naval aide. And Barrie Ann was so excited, but she says now she can barely remember it, she was that keyed up; she was eighteen I guess. And, no, she wasn't that old, well, anyhow I guess she was eighteen. Anyhow when we got out of the helicopter, the President got out first, the secret service with the President, and Barrie Ann started down the steps and she fell right into the President's arms. She was so upset!

BURG: I'll bet she was.

BROWN: So we looked at the one house that I liked and one apartment that I thought we might be able to live in and the duplex, and we decided on the duplex, which was very attractive and clean and new and had a little yard. And we were very excited about it. I don't remember much about that last month or so at the White House. We were very busy. I left up my Nixon signs on my desk even when [President-elect John F.] Kennedy came in to be briefed. He came in, twice I believe,

and came into General Persons' office each time. And I was very much against him, and I see no reason to change, and his policies. It was a great tragedy that somebody is killed like that but, as far as his politics and his administration, I'm very much against it. But I left the signs up in spite of the fact that Ferne asked me to take them down; I couldn't care less, I figured I was leaving.

BURG: All right, let's pick it up next time at that point, a little bit about the transition, and then we start out all fresh and go to Gettysburg on this new adventure. So I think we'll do that then. And I thank you very much, by the way, for the interview.

This is an interview being taped in Kansas City, Kansas on April 22, 1975 with Miss Lillian (Rusty) Brown. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff. Present for the interview, Miss Brown and Dr. Burg.

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DR. BURG: Rusty, when we finished the last time, we had moved you physically from Washington, D.C. down to Gettysburg and you were about to start out the new life under the changed circumstances there. Now, as I recollect the conversation, it was John Eisenhower who made the contact with you and, at first at any rate, you were to assist with the writing project that was going to be done, I think, with Doubleday and, would it have been under the editorship of Sam Vaughn?

MISS BROWN: Yes.

DR. BURG: So you went down there with that as the plan of action. Now is that in fact what you did when you got down there?

MISS BROWN: Yes. John and I were both employed by Doubleday. And we were to work on the two books that the President planned to write.

DR. BURG: The White House Years.

BROWN: Yes. The White House Years. Mandate for Change and--

BURG: Waging Peace.

BROWN: --Waging Peace. I've almost forgotten. Isn't that terrible?

BURG: I usually get them mixed up, too.

BROWN: And I went as John's secretary and sort of an assistant. So John and I opened up the office in Gettysburg, although it had been set up physically in the home of the President of the Gettysburg College.

BURG: So actually, when you got there, that decision had already been made. The President of the College had, in effect, vacated the college housing which he was given so that a fairly substantial building was made available primarily for your group; or was there only a part of that building that was for you?

BROWN: No, it was a nice older home that had been turned over to President Eisenhower and his staff. The President's

office was on the second floor and Bob Schulz and Ann Whitman and Bob's staff were on the second and third floor. And John and I were on the first floor. And they also had a big file room which had been a sun porch and they'd glassed it in--or it was already glassed in but they fixed it up in a permanent fashion. And then the kitchen was the mail room, and the dining room was the conference room. And John and I had what had been the living room, which was John's office. And I had a little sort of a reception room for my office, and then behind my office was the study, which was used by John and me also. And we had a considerable library in that study of books and manuscripts that we had and files that John had collected to be used in these two books we were researching. But when we opened the office it was only John, the janitor, and myself, because Schulz and Ann Whitman stayed in Washington, oh, I'd say maybe three months--

BURG: From January the 20th--

BROWN: Yes, until March, April--I've kind of forgotten now-- before they moved up to Gettysburg. And Schulz hired a staff

of people; some of them were just hired while they were in Washington and some came on up with him. My niece, for one, was hired by him.

BURG: That would be Barrie.

BROWN: Yes, Barrie. And he also hired Priscilla Markley as his personal secretary and she was a Gettysburg resident, but she commuted to Washington, lived in Washington during the week till the time they moved up, the office. In the meantime, President Eisenhower and Mrs. Eisenhower--first they went to Augusta for a brief time, and then they came back to Gettysburg for two or three days, and then they took off for California. And that first winter Mary Jane McCaffrey went out as secretary.

BURG: Now Rusty would that be the winter '61-'62.

BROWN: No, it was from January the 20th, '61 I'm talking about--

BURG: Oh, I see.

BROWN: --now until maybe May of that year. And Mary Jane went out with them. I don't remember now the reasons. I wasn't that interested, I guess. But Ann stayed in Washington, she and Schulz, and worked on whatever transition was left and correspondence that was left and getting files separated. The great many of the files went to an army installation, secret army installation near Gettysburg, about thirty miles up in the mountains. And the remainder of the files were removed up to our office.

BURG: So part of the President's personal file went to this army installation, or part of the Central Files.

BROWN: They were part of his files; they were the very highly classified--the ones the kids make fun of now, you know. Classified "Eyes Only" and COSMIC. Was it COSMIC? Yes, I think that was one of the--and some top secret. And some of the classified files were brought to Gettysburg. But most of those that went to the army installation had to do with national security, and then John and I used those over the months as we worked on the books. We would go down there and do research. We rarely would take a file from there,

if ever. No, I don't believe we ever took any files from there. We would go down there and they had set aside a building for this, and it was rather complicated getting into it. We both had to be together, and we had to check through the security officer at the base, and then we had to check out when we left the building. But we would usually go down there and make notes.

BURG: Were those notes ever examined by anyone on the site when you were getting ready to leave?

BROWN: No.

BURG: They were never--

BROWN: No.

BURG: --never looked at. Had you yourself been given a security classification at that stage?

BROWN: Well, I had been given high-security classification when I was at the Pentagon, and I guess it was just kept up to date.

BURG: Oh, I see.

BROWN: They did review my record when I went to the White House; I don't know if they upgraded my classification or not. But at the Pentagon I had been in charge of security for our office, and so I had had my clearance for a number of years by the time we went to Gettysburg.

BURG: Now, if I understand then, when you and John went there, was this shortly after the 20th of January or was it a couple of weeks before the two of you physically set up shop in Gettysburg?

BROWN: No, it was right after the 21st. I left Washington on the 22nd,--it seemed to me like it was the 21st--the 20th that year was a Friday, I believe. It was near the end of the week, anyhow--and that weekend I moved up. In fact, John had hired a couple of the GIs from the White House and he paid them out of his own pocket to move me up. When he hired me he said that he would arrange for moving my furniture; so he hired a couple of the GIs and they rented a truck, I believe, and they moved my furniture for me. I didn't have much--I lived in a

flat. And I believe that was on that weekend, Saturday and Sunday. Then Tuesday of that week we went in and bought stationery and thumbtacks and carbon paper and pencils and set ourselves up to start in our research work.

BURG: Now was the office equipped with the major furniture, for--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Now how about typewriters, for example, Rusty, or did those have to be--

BROWN: We, I had a typewriter, I believe, that Doubleday furnished us. I really can't remember right now where that typewriter came from, but I think it was a Doubleday typewriter. But as far as the typewriters for the girls upstairs, there weren't any in the building at that time. They didn't move them up until they came up, as I say, later in the spring, April or May.

BURG: Had the college furnished the desks and chairs?

BROWN: No, it was all GSA. [General Services Administration]

BURG: I see. So this is part of the President's budget as a retired President.

BROWN: Yes. But I do think that--well I believe that everything that we had in our offices were furnished by Doubleday, but I'll have to admit that I don't really know. I didn't pay much attention to that. I had a desk. I don't remember ever getting anything from GSA. I bought my own typewriter ribbons. We had an account at one of the stationery stores in Gettysburg. So I just kind of assumed that our furniture-- either we paid rent on it or else Doubleday had furnished it. John was very adamant in not wanting to have any--well we were separated--

BURG: No lap-over of--

BROWN: No.

BURG: --of money for the, or rather anything that was being used in the construction of those books had to come out of the Doubleday budget. It wasn't drawn from the President's

budget.

BROWN: That's right. Anything that he and I used. Naturally, when the President was dictating, Ann did that upstairs when she came. I'm sure all that paper and stuff--I don't know where that came from--but I'm sure it just came out of the President's stationery fund. But John set us up as a separate unit, and at the beginning it was just the two of us. We even kept our french doors closed to the hall so that there wouldn't be a lot of gabbing back and forth--not that he was against gabbing but, well, I guess we'll get into it later on, there was strong feelings between him and Schulz, and he didn't want us to get involved with Schulz's operation in any way.

BURG: And would you say that he had forseen that well before Schulz and Ann Whitman came down?

BROWN: Oh, yes. Oh, I'd say so, yes.

BURG: Did he discuss this with you before they ever appeared on the scene?

BROWN: Oh, yes. And he was very nice but he made it very clear that we were separate and we weren't to get involved. If I needed additional help, I wasn't to call on anybody in their section and they certainly weren't to ever call on me for anything. We were Doubleday and we were separate.

BURG: So he was afraid that Bob Schulz might put the tap on you, given your past experience in the White House--there was good old Rusty--come on, Rusty we can have you type out five letters and two reports.

BROWN: Well, at the time I didn't know why we were so separate, why we were going to be. I thought of us as, I was thinking as one big happy family. But, well, it wasn't to be that way. And later on I realized that it could never be that way. Not many offices are. And when you have strong personalities, you certainly don't have one big happy family.

BURG: John had known Bob Schulz for quite some period of time--

BROWN: Yes, knew him a lot better than I did. I hardly knew Bob when I went to Gettysburg.

BURG: How long did it take you to find out that Bob has a mind of his own; and a whim of iron?

BROWN: Well, I really didn't know him too well until I became President Eisenhower's secretary. And we got along very beautifully until I went from being John's secretary to being President Eisenhower's Secretary and then there was a complete change.

BURG: We will save that. We'll wait till we get to it. Yes, I understand, as many will who eventually read this in the fullness of time. Now let me ask you this then: Your first step was this very homely step of going to Gettysburg, using the account, buying the paper and pencils and the things that you would need so that you had your office equipped. Now, what then was the next step with John? Did the two of you confer about what the task was? Did he explain that to you?

BROWN: Yes, we discussed that--that we were to do the research and he was going to make an outline. I say "we" because John always made me feel like we were working as a team. My title was secretary and that was what was mainly my

work, but he always made me feel that it was a little more than just typing up dictation and typing up his handwritten notes, that I was participating in research. I don't really feel, now when I look back on it, that I did very much, but maybe I was a sounding board, I don't know. But he made me feel very important to his work and to his father's work. But it took us a little while to settle down. He was going from the position of the son of a President and--I'll say this and I'll hope it's going to be proven true--the most popular President we'd had in a long time. Well, Roosevelt was popular, but the most popular Republican President we'd had in generations, and I think one of the greatest Presidents of this century. And John, I'm sure felt that way too, that his father'd been a very great President and had done some--there'd been a strong president working with the Congress that was controlled by the opposite party. And it must have been a period of great turmoil for John in that we immediately start reading these press reviews coming up from Washington, the news stories about this young man who had become President of whom I knew very little and whose character and abilities I had no respect and I still don't. And as is

coming out now, the press had been placed in his pocket and he used it at will. And they didn't even seem to be aware that they were so, the press, the news people didn't seem to be aware that they were being used by him. Now it's coming out. Almost every week I pick up something in the Kansas City paper that talks about the way Kennedy used the newspaper people. But at the time, nobody seemed to be aware of it except John and me.

I'm digressing a little from your question--but we didn't settle right down to working up the, an outline of the first book. As I remember we realized right at the first there were going to be two books. The idea was that we'd have a book on the first four years and one on the second four years. But we spent some time getting to know each other better and to get our opinions on things that had gone on in the White House. And I think I acted as a sounding board for John.

BURG: You had to adjust then to the fact that both of you had been at the pinnacle and now that was over and the new man in the White House was getting a great deal of publicity as we would expect; so that for John there was the adjustment necessary--

BROWN: Yes, I don't think it was the publicity so much as the fact that we didn't think the publicity was true. There were so many things that we would read. I can't recall anything in particular right at the beginning. But you know Kennedy barely was elected in the first place, and some of us still feel that the election was stolen at the ballot box. And then to suddenly start hearing how he was so beloved by the country, well I didn't believe it. And John didn't either, I'm sure. But to have that pushed down your throat every time you pick up the newspaper--how popular this young man was. I don't think he was.

BURG: You were exasperated by this and your observation was that John was also exasperated by it.

BROWN: Yes, I think that was part of it. And then the other thing was we really didn't know each other very well; we had never worked together. And we also had to, you know, we were the only two people in the office. We had to sort of get used to each other's ideas and ways, and it was kind of hard for John to settle down to working on an outline.

BURG: What form did that take? I can think of myself at various stages where I'm trying to get down to something and the forms that my resentment would take if I didn't want to do it, if I couldn't simply get myself into it. What form would his unsettlement take, let's say?

BROWN: Well there were a couple of things. In the first place we got in the habit in the morning--we'd have our coffee. John Trostle, who, you know, very fine Pennsylvania farmer. He was the janitor and the mailman and jack-of-all-trades. So there were really the three of us in the office. Well John T. would have the coffee made by the time we got in in the morning, and it was winter and that was a bad winter in Gettysburg, a lot of snow, and we'd usually start out with our coffee--

BURG: At about what time, may I ask, would you be there, by nine?

BROWN: Eight o'clock.

BURG: Eight o'clock.

BROWN: --oh my . We'd usually get the office open about 8 o'clock. We'd start out with coffee and maybe some sticky buns and the morning paper. And we'd go over whatever was in the paper. Of course, we were still vitally interested in the political news and what was going on in the world. And I suppose, more than most people, John had a feeling of--you may not pick this up in his oral history statements or his book--but I'm sure he must have felt some, what word shall I use, feelings of uneasiness about the condition of our country and of the world's situation with a new man in the White House, and a man in whom he did not have too much confidence, I don't believe. You never can say how anybody else feels because--but I don't think he had too much confidence in him, in Kennedy. So we'd look at the newspapers and see what was going on and worry about it, and spend much more time doing that than we should have. But it was hard to get down to what has happened eight years ago when things were changing rapidly in Washington.

BURG: So the problem was sort of gearing down to the Gettysburg pace and the new routine--

BROWN: And that was part of it. That was one of the ways we would, I won't say waste time because I think it was a gearing down process. And then about the second day in the office in the middle of a bitter cold snow John became restless and he said, "Well, come on Rusty. We're going to go out and see the battlefield." We spend about three hours staring at the Gettysburg battlefield. Well at that time I knew about as much about the Civil War and in particular the Battle of Gettysburg as some Russian does. I knew very little about the Battle of Gettysburg. But by the time the day ended, I had been told just about every incident and about every General and every officer and every regiment on the battlefield.

BURG: John knew it that well.

BROWN: Oh, yes. He was an expert. He's an expert on the Gettysburg battle and on the Civil War. He has a fine mind and amazing memory, and I'm glad he's writing books because I think all I've read of his works, they're very good and very scholarly.

BURG: He's got a talent for it.

BROWN: Yes. And it was interesting, although it was bitter cold. And then a couple of days later Doubleday sent down a private plane and flew us up to tour their facilities in New York, and we spent the entire day in New York City meeting people.

BURG: Now did you meet Vaughn at that time?

BROWN: On, yes. What a wonderful person he is. Have you talked with him?

BURG: No, John Wickman [Director, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library] has. That was a nice thing for them to do, to fly the two of you up there--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --for that kind of thing.

BROWN: Well it was, and it was very interesting. Of course that was the first time I'd met Sam. I had met Doug Black before.

BURG: Who was Black in that organization?

BROWN: He was chairman of the board. I haven't heard of him in a long time. I imagine he's dead because he was of the age.

BURG: John had met all of these people though.

BROWN: Oh, yes.

BURG: He knew them.

BROWN: I met Doug Black at the White House. Sometime between November when John hired me and when we moved up. Doug had come down, and I believe we had lunch together down in the White House Mess.

BURG: Was there any discussion at that point of the books or how you would proceed, or was this just kind of a get acquainted--

BROWN: It was more a get acquainted, but we did talk about the books. And Mr. Black--I wouldn't never have called him Doug Black--but Mr. Black discussed Crusade in Europe and

working with the President on that, because he had worked with the President on that.

BURG: Do you happen to remember, what sticks out in your mind now about his discussion about Crusade in Europe? Did he talk about any particular problems in writing it? Or did he talk about the way it had sold?

BROWN: Well I think the one thing that he talked about was that President Eisenhower just sat down and wrote that book. He just went right through it in a very short span of time, and evidently he kept a whole secretarial pool busy.

BURG: My recollection is that he sat down and hammered it out in a matter of just a few months.

BROWN: It wasn't very long.

BURG: Sort of a day-and-night operation.

BROWN: That's about all I can remember that Mr. Black had said about it, but he was sure that these two books wouldn't go the same way.

BURG: Oh, he was sure they would not.

BROWN: Yes. And I believe John agreed with him.

BURG: Not too often do Presidential memoirs sell as I think the average American would expect them to sell.

BROWN: Well, of course, I was thinking more of the writing wouldn't go one-two-three as--

BURG: Oh, I'm sorry. I see.

BROWN: I don't think he discussed how they would sell with me.

BURG: His remark then was that he didn't think it was going to go as fast as Crusade in Europe had gone, the writing stage of it.

BROWN: That's right. I think he and John kind of laughed about how fast that went and how many girls were typing constantly, keeping up. There were at least two and maybe three girls who were typing up what the President dictated or what he had handwritten

BURG: Now these sessions up there in New York with Vaughn and Black and others, not only did you see how their organization was put together, but did you, on those occasions, or on that occasion get any kinds of tips, either you or John, on how to proceed with the work you were doing.

BROWN: No. They never, in my presence, gave any hints or asked many questions about how we progressed. Now this was in the first week after we'd moved to Gettysburg--our first trip to New York. And I think it was mainly a get acquainted and let us see how they operated. They even took us out to the printing and shipping plant they have in Garden City.

[Interruption]

BURG: So this then was the first but I take it not the last time that you had occasion--

BROWN: We went up several times.

BURG: Right at the first, Rusty?

BROWN: Well--

BURG: The first few weeks or months?

BROWN: No. Of course, I really only worked for Doubleday for about a year and a half. Maybe we went up there two or three times. I don't recall. But we went up several times. And they would always send their plane. Of course, come to think about it, maybe the last time I went was with President Eisenhower. I was thinking--my memory's not so good--if I had those logs to look at I could, they would probably tickle my memory a little better and I'd remember more incidents. But I'll probably give you all you need anyway--

BURG: A good bit of what we hoped for from you is just the atmosphere of times and place and people and what they were like at that stage and the things that you were all involved in. After that trip to New York--and later on I'll ask you more about Sam Vaughn and others--but when you came back down to Gettysburg, did that period of transition still continue. You're still in the next few days, still sort of trying to get a grip on the problem?

BROWN: Well I think, yes, I think it must have been a couple

of weeks before we got anything--if you can put something concrete on paper--I think it was a couple of weeks before John got his outline started. In fact, I believe the General came up from Augusta and, as I say, stayed a couple of, two, three days in Gettysburg, he and Mrs. Eisenhower, before they went on out to Palm Desert. And I don't believe there was anything ready for him. And I don't think he expected it.

BURG: He came there to the office from the farm?

BROWN: Oh, yes. I was very thrilled because he dictated--I have the carbon copies of the three or four letters he dictated. He wrote letters to friends. The only one I recall is he wrote Pete Jones. I don't remember what he said, but I was very thrilled. I'd never taken dictation from him. And I remember it was a very cold day and they had been in Georgia, and he came in and he had on a heavy tweed suit and a heavy overcoat and kind of a heavy cap. Maybe it was one of those sort of fur caps that they wear in Russia--

BURG: Yes, with the ear flaps.

BROWN: Yes. And he was very embarrassed because he was

dressed so heavy. And he said, "Oh, Mamie's so afraid I'm gonna get a cold." He was just grumbling about those heavy coats. He didn't go upstairs to his office. Now I don't think all of his furniture was up there yet as I remember. He used John's big office, and they discussed a little. John wanted him to take that big office which had been the living room because, as John says, "I feel like Hitler sitting at the rear end of this office."

BURG: So it was that big.

BROWN: It was a good sized living room. It was larger than this living room, and had a fireplace and some large windows. And John says, "I feel like I shouldn't be sitting here, this huge room on the first floor and you're going to be sitting in that smaller office upstairs." But the doctors had indicated to General Eisenhower it was a good idea to climb steps at a slow rate. And he did it. And he also felt, I believe, that he'd have a little more privacy up on the second floor. So he stuck to his guns and then, of course, you have that office out in--

BURG: Yes. The replica.

BROWN: --Abilene.

BURG: So when he came back then from Augusta before going out to the desert and you took dictation from him, was this your first real contact--I know, despite the fact that you were in the White House--was this your first close personal contact with him since Japan when you ran into him there?

BROWN: Well, of course, we had flown up to Gettysburg with him in one of the choppers, Barrie Ann and me. I think I told you that.

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: She fell out of the chopper into his arms.

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: But you don't get very close contact in a chopper, you know; there's so much noise. It was really my very first personal contact with him, and he dictated rather slowly. And I thought maybe he was--as I found out later he always was

very considerate about the dictation or any work that you were doing for him. But he did dictate slowly, and I was expecting him to be like General Ridgway or some of those other generals who would snap it off so fast that you really had to be on your toes. But he went slowly and I found out later he usually dictated faster than that. But maybe I was shaking and he could see it, I don't know.

BURG: That could be. That could be.

BROWN: But I was a little nervous.

BURG: And presumably, Rusty, he knew enough of your background to know that you had been in the White House on staff there. Did he give any indication that he also knew that you had seen him right after World War II in Japan under those odd circumstances?

BROWN: No, and I regret it to this day; I never told General about it--

BURG: And he never brought it up.

BROWN: No. Later on when we had coffee every morning and

every afternoon together at the doctor's request to make him spend at least fifteen or twenty minutes quietly in the office--

BURG: That's interesting. Was that Snyder--

BROWN: No.

BURG: --who advised that, or a Gettysburg physician?

BROWN: No, no. Oh, boy, at Walter Reed.

BURG: Oh, one of the staff there.

BROWN: Parmley.

BURG: Parmley.

BROWN: Parmley and General [Leonard] Heaton. We discussed every subject under the sun, but I never thought about that much in the last few years when I was working with him. Once in a while I'd think about it, but it usually would be when I was someplace where he wasn't around or Mrs. Eisenhower wasn't around or John wasn't around. I may have told John. But I'm sure he didn't remember. I had changed quite a bit.

BURG: Well, yes. That had been--

BROWN: It'd been nearly ten years.

BURG: Ten to fifteen years perhaps, this--

BROWN: Yes, because it was thirty years ago this month that I went into the Red Cross, and it'd been quite awhile.

BURG: It had been a time.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Well, in the first meeting that you had with him where you did the dictation, did he call you by name? Did he call you Miss Brown? Do you remember?

BROWN: I don't remember he ever called me Miss Brown.

BURG: Did he introduce himself to you?

BROWN: Well, no, because we had met before.

BURG: Oh, that's right.

BROWN: Yes. And I don't remember if he called me by name, but I'm sure if he did it was Rusty. We had been introduced several times so that we--I don't think he ever called me

Miss Brown.

BURG: Your impression was that when he came up for those two or three days, he probably didn't expect that John would have a great deal down on paper, either notes or rough outlines or anything of this sort.

BROWN: Now that's the impression I had. I could be very wrong on that but I don't think John had an outline for him yet. It seemed to me like, I think, John took the outline out to him in California that year. You know some of these things sort of, you get mixed up on--well history will prove me right or wrong, but I think that he took the beginnings of the outline; he either took it out there that winter to California or else it was given to the General when he got back in May.

BURG: Now it is not your recollection, however, that John, during the three days perhaps out at the farm or in a private discussion with his father, was given the germ of the outline. In other words, he did not come back to you, John did not come back to you the next day or two days later and say, "Well, I've been talking to my dad and here roughly is the way we'll organized it."

BROWN: Well at sometime along there, either in person or on the phone or if he went out to California, he did have some ideas from the General on how he wanted it. And it seemed to me like there was some discussion at that point whether it was going to be chronological or if it would go by subject matter, which is sort of the way it went.

BURG: Topical--

BROWN: Yes, topical.

BURG: --kind of treatment.

BROWN: But it does seem to me like they discussed it, and maybe it was those few days while he was in the office before he went out to California. I'm sorry I can't remember, but I'm sure John remembers it because, as I say, his memory was so good anyhow.

BURG: Did the two of you, at that stage of the work, ever kick around the idea of what would be best, a chronological approach to it or a topical approach, whether John used you in that instance as a sounding board.

BROWN: I think John talked to me about it as a sounding board.

And I think it was about that time. I don't remember how long President Eisenhower stayed in Augusta that year, but I think it was only a couple of weeks. Are you that familiar?

BURG: No, without checking into the records. All I remembered was that immediately after inauguration they'd come up to Gettysburg.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: And then I guess in fairly short time, headed on south.

BROWN: Yes, but they were only there for a short time I think. I think it was only a couple of weeks. I just don't think John had had time to, well--work. Between touring the battlefield and coming to New York and buying the supplies, and they'd been snowed in. I was snowed in in my duplex, and John, Barbara and the kids were snowed in out in the farm for a couple of days while the Eisenhowers were down in Augusta. So he really hadn't had too many days to get that outline down on paper. But once it started, it went pretty fast. As I remember, he made the outline, and then we'd start on a chapter. The thing that I remember most was Vietnam. You'd never think that our country would still be

in turmoil over Vietnam because John--well not just because John was so interested in it, but because of the interest in that country's problems and its importance to us during the Eisenhower administration when it really didn't receive all that publicity. I think if you mentioned Vietnam in the '50s, people might remember the Angel of Dienbienphu [Genevieve de Galard-Terraube, French Airborne Nurse] in the Geneva Conference, but it would probably only be something vague in their memories. But John was extremely interested in that subject and he dictated many tapes on it, the information we had in our files and some of his own impressions. And I believe that I'm not mistaken in saying that President Eisenhower thought John had devoted too much time to Vietnam. Of course, at that time Kennedy hadn't accelerated our involvement when we were working on Vietnam because that was one of the first chapters we worked on as I recall.

BURG: You took that--

BROWN: But our chapters didn't go just exactly like they are in the book.

BURG: That's interesting. It went in a pattern that John established. The outline might say that you'll do the first few months of 1953 after the inauguration, but that is not necessary the way John approached the work.

BROWN: Oh, well now I'll have to think a little--that his outline was different or did the book turn out different? I'll have to kind of mull that over and see if I can recall.

BURG: Well, there'll be ways of checking it, too--

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: --the first drafts of the book.

BROWN: Well, I'm sure that there's a copy of the outline out in Abilene. I said that off the top of my head, but now that you've asked me a direct question, I don't recall whether we stuck to the outline in our work and then it was changed when it got to the point where Doubleday moved in on the final--

BURG: Editing of the draft.

BROWN: --editing of it. I think the President switched

things around at various times and discarded some of the things that were first suggested in the outline. Now this is just impressions I'm giving you now--

BURG: That's fine.

BROWN: --because I can't remember. And I--

BURG: But it's interesting that now in your memory what stands out is that Vietnam was one of the first and a very important chapter, at least in John's mind.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: And that the President--

BROWN: We devoted a lot of time to it.

BURG: Now, harking back twelve, fifteen years, you think that his feeling was that John may have spent too much time on that. Do you remember on what you base that impression now? Was it something that the General said or did John come in and say, "Well, Dad said..."

BROWN: John. Yes. It was something John said. And, of course, by this time they were back in the office from California. We probably worked a month or so on the outline and on getting our papers, our research together, our materials together. And by the time the President was back in the office, we were involved in Vietnam. I believe it was right when he first got back but not--I may not be so right on that. But we were devoting a lot of time to that and a lot of effort, and there was much material and I--the President thought there was too much material on Vietnam.

BURG: He didn't, as far as space in the book was concerned, he did not place as much weight on Vietnam as he might on other things. That is, there's only going to be room enough in two books for a certain amount of material--wordage on the Vietnam situation, the French, Dienbiephu and all the rest of it. So in his own mind, as far as you could observe, he set a different weight on it, a different balance. He would have preferred less of that and more of other things.

BROWN: I think that's right. He felt it was very important

evidently because, if I'm not mistaken, there is a chapter devoted to it. You can see how bad my memory is. When I took that all down either in shorthand or I took it off of a tape and I--

BURG: That's probably one reason--

BROWN: --now I can't even--

BURG: --probably one reason why you don't remember too well. It's self-defense.

BROWN: It might be. But I think he felt that John was getting too much material when there wasn't that--that our dealings on Vietnam during the Eisenhower administration weren't that involved.

BURG: And that perhaps John was taking later material, a time when there was greater knowledge, let's say, great information about Vietnam and perhaps weaving it back into that earlier period.

BROWN: Well that may have been; it may have been that. At any rate, he thought there was too much material. He didn't

feel that it was that important in that first administration to devote that much wordage and that much time.

BURG: Were there any other areas in that first volume where the President also, not necessarily raised a point of disagreement, but were there other areas in those first months where you can recollect the President's suggesting, "Well, now let's treat this in this way; or let's give more treatment to that; let's play this area down a bit"? The Vietnam thing certainly stands out in your mind.

BROWN: It does. I don't remember too much because John really gave him raw material to work with. For instance, John didn't draft up a chapter and give it to the President.

BURG: Never? During this work?

BROWN: I'm saying things like "never," but when you really pin me down I--

BURG: The reason I ask, Rusty, is that one of the recent historians of this period of time, I think it was Peter Lyon, has, if I have his expression correct, I think he said it was

a manuscript by committee.

BROWN: Mandate for Change? And Waging Peace?

BURG: Well I think he was talking generally about the two volumes, which would imply that a manuscript had been given to the President, roughed out, let us say for a chapter. I'm only saying an implication in what Lyon says is that a draft was given to the President and that the President then sat down and went over that and removed passages, altered wording, did the work that, as we both know, he was fully capable of doing and did very well indeed to have it come up to the standard that he wanted to set for it.

BROWN: Well I like to be very precise in this and I'm not sure I can because of my memory.

BURG: But your recollection is that at least in these earlier months that we're talking about now, that was not the way John was handling it.

BROWN: As I--darn, I wished I had something to help my memory. In a way that's why I should have gone to Abilene, I think, to

do this. If I could see the outlines that we made and maybe some of the--

BURG: We can still do that, of course.

BROWN: I'd like for it to be correct because I think it's important. But off the top of my mind and my memory that is-- as you know I take strong drugs to control my epilepsy--

BURG: Yes.

BROWN: --and it seems to me that we sent up materials with comments and we got back a draft from Ann Whitman.

BURG: Interesting. That may be exactly the way it was handled--

BROWN: And it may not be--

BURG: --at that stage, too.

BROWN: --but I--

BURG: Well don't worry about it because we can check it against John's memory and others.

BROWN: And Ann Whitman, if you ever get her down.

BURG: Yes. And yours too, because the next time you're out at the library we can do some of this which I think will be an interesting addition to our work that we do here. We will sit down with logs and drafts and we'll look at it and discuss that and make that part of our record, too. That'll be fine.

BROWN: Well I would like for it to be correct. Now I know later on when I was taking dictation from the President we got onto some of the other books, Stories I Tell My Friends--

BURG: Oh, yes. At Ease.

BROWN: --At Ease. He would just sit there and many times send over four or five tapes in the morning, and he'd been sitting in bed and we'd hear him yawn and--well you have those tapes out there now.

BURG: Just reminiscing to himself.

BROWN: Yes, reminiscing to himself and I would type them up right from the Dictabelt. But I think we sent up rather raw material and he dictated to Ann. And I'm sure I'm right on many chapters because I thought when I went upstairs to take

over--how did Ann manage to take that all in dictation and do all the correspondence and handle all that mail. How did she ever do it?

BURG: So there was a massive amount of work--

BROWN: Oh!

BURG: --created by a man who was supposed to be in retirement.

BROWN: Oh, my goodness. You couldn't believe it. I remember when I was leaving and Schulz had hired an Air Force lieutenant, a girl, a young lady--

BURG: Nancy Jensen.

BROWN: Nancy--I'd forgotten her name.

BURG: Nancy Jensen.

BROWN: A very nice young lady. And when I was breaking her in and trying to explain to her that we were in kind of a lull then--the President, I believe he'd already gone to Augusta maybe the last time I was talking to her. She said, "Well, Schulz and Ethel [Wetzel] told me that all you have

to worry about--a few personal letters and to take his tea in at ten and at three."

And I said, "Well, you'll find out that we're in a lull right now for some reason--I don't know, maybe it's because I'm leaving and Schulz is trying to take care of more of the work, make it easier in the transition, but you'll find out as time goes on that the work load's almost unbearable at times and is particularly bad when you're in California." Well I think she found out because I understand she quit because of that. At least that's what the Secret Service told me. Well I don't know how I got off on that; didn't mean to jump up ahead like that. Well anyhow I believe that that's the way most of those chapters were written. They were dictated from raw material.

BURG: Well that's very intriguing and important enough, Rusty, that we will, in various ways, check it out.

BROWN: I hope I'm right.

BURG: It could be, you know, that Sam Vaughn says one thing and that John will say another, and it may be that over the

course of two books indeed it was done in a variety of ways.

BROWN: Well, I'm sure it was. But I believe the majority of it was dictated to Ann Whitman.

BURG: Now let me ask you this about the materials; I've kind of held that in my mind to go back to. You talked briefly at the beginning about just a rough approximation of the things that you had to work with. Now when you and John began your work at Gettysburg, in the first couple of weeks, while they were still down in Augusta, was there material at that point or was that coming in bits and pieces during the first weeks of your work in Gettysburg?

BROWN: Well, let's see now, most of our files were out in that back porch. I don't remember--I better be--I don't remember.

BURG: You did not have--

BROWN: I don't remember that we had any problem getting the material we needed. Sometimes it was just a problem that there was so much material on every subject we would to into

that--where do you stop-- as you know in Abilene, what you have out there in Abilene.

BURG: So you had files in file drawers, file cases out there on the porch.

BROWN: Oh, yes. Many of them.

BURG: Now those files were out of the White House office basically.

BROWN: Yes.

BURG: Not Central File stuff, but more--

BROWN: Oh, no.

BURG: --more the President's files, Ann Whitman's files and this kind of thing.

BROWN: Ann Whitman's files and National Security Council materials. Well, those--National Security Council, that would have been down at the army base.

BURG: Now did you have secondary books such at these, books

that had been written by various authors about the Eisenhower period or--nothing much of that sort?

BROWN: We had a lot of books but nothing that we used that had been written.

BURG: Had they come from the President's own library so to speak, his own collection of books?

BROWN: Let's see, we had that whole library full of books. I'm trying to remember what was in there. Some of that stuff had come up from the White House and some of it was John's own books and some were the President's. But as far as our little library was concerned, none of it, well it couldn't have, I guess it could have come from the White House--I'm getting kind of confused now because we were so darned careful about not having anything that came from GSA to my knowledge. But yet it seemed to me like some of that stuff we had on that library was from the White House. Now I'm trying to remember what it was.

BURG: Well, of course, if it were the General's own private

collection of books, and there's a possibility that it was, as well as John's own books, there wouldn't be any problem in--

BROWN: You know there was something out there that we used a lot but you know I can't even remember what it was? I just remember--I don't--seems like I'm getting kind of batty but there was, there was a group of books we had in that library that we used all the time.

BURG: Wouldn't be messages and papers, you know the Public Papers of the President, would it Rusty?

BROWN: No.

BURG: Which would be an eight-volume set of his speeches.

BROWN: Oh, I think we had that, but this was something else. Maybe I'll think about it while we're talking.

BURG: Actually published, there were published books?

BROWN: No, they, they, well, they weren't published books. They were--we better go on to something else. Maybe it'll

come to me.

BURG: They may have been special files or--

BROWN: It was something that we used all the time; isn't that terrible?

BURG: It's exactly the kind of thing one typically forgets. It's what you use all the time because it's never important to know. You never--now who would ever bother to remember it because there it is.

BROWN: JSDE was very well-acquainted with the Whitman files, the NSC files et cetera. He always knew where to look for meeting notes, state department messages, letters, et cetera to complete the pictures on a story. [This passage added during editing by Miss Brown 6/6/77.]