

OH-554

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With
BARBARA EISENHOWER-FOLTZ

Conducted at the
Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library
In
Abilene, Kansas
November 30, 2006

by
James Leyerzapf
and
Dennis Medina

Interview #1

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Oral History Interview of

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This is an oral history interview with Barbara Eisenhower-Foltz, conducted at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas on November 30, 2006. The interviewers are Jim Leyerzapf and Dennis Medina

JIM LEYERZAPF: You think you're up to six hours of tape?

FOLTZ: Oh sure (laughter)

LEYERZAPF: And it would help—

FOLTZ: You want me to say something?

LEYERZAPF: Yes, please.

FOLTZ: What would you like me to say?

LEYERZAPF: Tell the story about the ice skating metaphor. I love that.

FOLTZ: Well, I was coming from an event, I think. And I can't remember exactly where, but it was either in --somewhere in Lancaster County or near where we lived. And this man stuck a mike in my face and said, "What do you have to say about Eisenhower, the do-nothing president?" And I said, "Well I like to ice skate and the easier it looks, the better the professional is that's doing it." And that completely quieted him down and he left (laughter).

LEYERZAPF: That's a wonderful riposte. This is November 30, 2006. The interview subject is Barbara Eisenhower-Foltz. The interviewers are museum curator Dennis Medina and archivist Jim Leyerzapf. This was prefaced by a wonderful story of Barbara's about how she dealt with a newspaper reporter who was rather negative about her father-in-law. We'll proceed now with additional questions and I'll turn it over to Dennis. Dennis, would you like to ask some of yours?

MEDINA: Sure. As we were talking yesterday, Barbara, we talked about you doing an interview in the early eighties with Dr. Wickman and setting the groundwork for the Eisenhower family, but it didn't pursue enough and I want to delve into that personal relationship you had

with the Eisenhowers -- rather than treat them as historical individuals but as people that you loved. And find out more about them as people. So a lot of our questions are going to be based on your interactions with the Eisenhowers in those days, and our questions are divided into family and, then, later, into the presidential years. One of the first questions I have: after you met Mamie -- you were married in 1947 -- in that first interview you mentioned that Mamie took you on as a pupil, to teach you some things.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: I was wondering what kind of things she might have been teaching you. You also indicated you had no idea of when teaching was done, because it just stopped. You didn't know if you had done what she wanted or you were not a very good pupil (Barbara laughs). Could you elaborate on that?

FOLTZ: Well, maybe she'd given up (laughter). No, I don't know what she was teaching me. I was twenty years old and we'd moved all over the place and I wasn't a good housekeeper. I didn't really know much about it, or cooking, or anything. John and I always lived fairly close to Mamie, so she told me what you shouldn't do and what you should do in the way of keeping a good house, and all her philosophy about how you make a husband happy.

MEDINA: Along with making a husband happy, an article was written just as you went into the White House and one of them was, "*How to Be a Good Daughter-In-Law*." Do you remember that article?

FOLTZ: No, but who wrote it? I think I remember him. Who's the author?

MEDINA: I'm not sure. Jim, do you remember?

LEYERZAPF: You were the author.

MEDINA: You wrote it for a magazine

FOLTZ: I'll be darned. I think somebody wrote it for me. I'm sure they did. Well it sounds pretty good (laughter).

MEDINA: When you were—

FOLTZ: Can you turn that off?

MEDINA: I'll ask you some questions and we can come back to it later.

FOLTZ: Okay.

[Interruption]

MEDINA: When you were first married, you went on a honeymoon. Where did you go?

FOLTZ: Well, we went first to Williamsburg and then we took a trip out west and saw John's relatives that live out here. We went to Boone, [Iowa] I think, to see his aunt who has since died. They all wanted to meet me and that's what we did.

MEDINA: Did you come to Abilene?

FOLTZ: I think we did, yes. In fact, there's a picture.

MEDINA: I have a photograph.

FOLTZ: Yes, that's it.

MEDINA: Is that the time?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: In 1947

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Was taken at the Eisenhower home.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: We have a wonderful archives, but sometimes things are not captioned correctly, so --

FOLTZ: That's at the Eisenhower home in Abilene.

MEDINA: What was your impression of the home when you first saw it?

FOLTZ: Oh, I thought it was a nice little place.

MEDINA: Did John talk about his grandparents?

FOLTZ: Oh, yes, his grandmother was the main topic when they talked about them. She was very active, with having seven sons. Wow! And he was more taciturn, as I think you know. Nobody told me very much about him but -- and I'm not sure that I met him. I think she was a widow by the time I met her.

MEDINA: Yes, he died in 1941, I believe.

FOLTZ: Yes, so I didn't really know him at all.

MEDINA: And she died in forty-six.

FOLTZ: Then forty-six must have been when we were out there. No --

MEDINA: You mean forty-seven?

FOLTZ: -- I didn't meet her either

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: She was just, she was Ike's 'angel mother.' Isn't that what Lincoln said about his? I think so.

LEYERZAPF: She had -- it's obvious in reading in his own writings -- that she had a profound influence on him.

FOLTZ: Absolutely. In the Bible reading -- you talked about that. She offered each son something -- I don't know, maybe it was a sum of money, I can't remember all I was told -- and I thought it was a good idea, so I told my children that if they'd read the Bible through, why, they would get a reward. They could get anything they wanted I told them, and David managed to get through the Old Testament which I thought was the hard part --

LEYERZAPF: It is.

FOLTZ: -- (laughing) but he never went on. He didn't read the New Testament, so I didn't have to pay anybody. And the girls -- I think the contest was over by the time they (laughs) were old enough to read. But I guess she was just wonderful and I was always told all of the wonderful things she did and how she went out gardened clear up to almost the day she died. And then I loved it where someone said, during the war -- or no, right after the war -- when Ike came to Abilene and the reporter asked her what did she think of her son. And she said, "Which one?" I thought that was a nice, motherly thing to say (laughs). I knew several of them.

MEDINA: On the other hand, the other grandparents in Denver, the Douds, you knew both of them. What were your impressions of them?

FOLTZ: Well, Nana was really something. She played harmonica, you know. And we'd all sing in the evening. Mamie could play the piano by ear. John can play by ear. And there is a lot of talent there.

LEYERZAPF: Yes, there is.

FOLTZ: It was wasted (laughs) because nobody did that much with it but learn all the popular songs and things like that. But Nana liked to have a good time, she was really fun, and she was so nice to me when I first met her. She made me feel very much at home. We had just come from Europe, we landed, and we went to John's home -- Fort Meyer -- and she was there, and then we went down to Fort Monroe where we were going to be married with a stop-off in New York to buy a wedding gown. It was a really hectic period, so it was hard to be nicely organized clothes-wise and every-other-wise, and she just made us all feel like everything was wonderful.

MEDINA: And what about John Sheldon [Doud], Pupah.

FOLTZ: Pupah. Well, he was quite elderly, and he was sort-of deaf, and he didn't say much. But he was right there with everybody else. But I didn't get to know him. I wasn't there for terribly long.

MEDINA: In 1948 Ike retires from the military and goes to Columbia University. How often did you see the Eisenhowers at that point?

FOLTZ: Well, a lot, because John was going up to West Point to teach. He was in New York, and the Carlyle Hotel was where our home was. I was pregnant with David and they moved into New York and we moved immediately out of the Carlyle and into their house for a short period.

MEDINA: On Morningside Drive?

FOLTZ: Yes. And then we went up to West Point -- oh, I guess we had David before they moved into their house. But we'd come down and see them. I guess our hurried move was up to West Point because the New York was rather expensive.

MEDINA: How do you think that Ike and Mamie accepted their new civilian life?

FOLTZ: Oh, I think they just accepted it, they were very flexible. You know, the Army does that to you. Probably, Mamie liked it. She liked being settled.

MEDINA: How about life in big the big city of New York? -- Socially?

FOLTZ: I don't remember anybody trying to be social. And when we'd go there, why, we'd just have fun with them. I remember Mamie had a chauffeur -- Mamie and Ike had a chauffeur -- and he'd take David and Anne out to get them out from underfoot (laughs). This is at some point when they were in New York. We'd get a little rest from them because there were two or three of them by then. So we picked up the paper one morning and there they were at Sardi's! The chauffeur had taken them to Sardi's (laughter)!

LEYERZAPF: Very famous place.

FOLTZ: I'll say. And there they were. So we thought maybe he wasn't a good babysitter (laughter) after all.

MEDINA: This is a period of time when Ike starts meeting a lot of very influential people. Were they entertained at Morningside Drive?

FOLTZ: Some of them were.

MEDINA: And what kind of events would they have?

FOLTZ: Dinner parties.

MEDINA: And lots of conversation.

FOLTZ: Yes, but I especially remember when Ike was called to go over to NATO, to Paris. So he had us all come over one summer. We spent the whole summer in Paris, in the Versailles. And wasn't that a wonderful thing for him to do? We lived in the hotel where they did, and I have darling pictures of the kids. There was a man that had a little cart, he was the gardener and he'd give the kids rides in that -- David and Anne, they were the only ones. I saw all the sights and followed Marie Antoinette's path. I'd read a lot about her and just had a wonderful time sightseeing all over Paris.

MEDINA: We talked about Nana a little bit, but she also lived with Mamie in the White House. We'll eventually get to the White House.

FOLTZ: Oh, you see, her husband, Pupah, died while we were at NATO. So they flew home to Denver. Ike and I stayed there in Versailles, so I was sort of his hostess.

MEDINA: Oh.

FOLTZ: And a lot of very interesting people came through, I remember that.

MEDINA: Ike didn't go to the funeral in --

FOLTZ: No, he couldn't.

MEDINA: He couldn't.

FOLTZ: No, and -- can you turn that off a minute?

[Interruption]

FOLTZ: So a lot of interesting people came, and among them was Averell Harriman. He was unmarried at the time and, later, we went on a -- this was much later, this was in living memory, recently -- we went to Moscow with him and his wife. He'd just married his wife.

MEDINA: She was married to a Churchill, Pamela.

FOLTZ: Yes, that's right, Pamela.

MEDINA: Pamela Harriman.

FOLTZ: Pamela Harriman. We all stayed together in Lenin Hills. This was the guest area for visitors in Russia. I was so impressed with Mrs. Harriman. I was so impressed with her because when night would come and we were sort of off the hook for being entertained and shown things, we'd all go see some of their friends. Well, we just did a lot of things at night, but he didn't -- he was very elderly and tired, and he went up to bed and she went up with him. She didn't go around and be "Mrs. Harriman" in the evening. I was impressed with that. I thought she was a lovely person. You know, she became the Ambassador to France in the Clinton Administration. And do you know how she died?

MEDINA: She died in the swimming pool, didn't she?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Exercising.

FOLTZ: Isn't that terrible?

LEYERZAPF: Tragedy.

FOLTZ: I don't see how that happened; she must have had an attack of some kind.

MEDINA: Yes. Well, we were talking about Nana in the White House, how she spent her time there, your interactions with her and Mamie.

FOLTZ: She was very subdued. She was quite elderly and she finally died in Denver, didn't she?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: But she was there, there's so much going on, and she didn't participate particularly. She may have gone to some afternoon things, but her husband was dead by then. She was just living in the comfortable White House.

MEDINA: Did they play cards a lot? How did Mamie entertain her?

FOLTZ: I don't think that she played cards. I'm not sure. I know we used to go to those dog races over in Denver -- I've never been to one of those -- and they enjoyed those. But that was in Denver. I don't remember what she did. I think she was not very well and she went to bed early. She enjoyed the kids coming over.

MEDINA: Later on, we'll ask you some things about the campaign and the inaugural, but I'd like to concentrate on life in the White House right now. With family, how often did you go to the White House?

FOLTZ: Very often. We were stationed in Washington, so for all holiday dinners, of course. But I got very spoiled. I've never cooked a turkey (laughter). Anyway, we went there a lot, and we went to the movies. Did you know that they have a movie theater there?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: So we'd go over and have dinner with the folks and go to the movies, if they weren't busy with their entertaining. They included us -- John and I -- in some of the big parties. I told

you about the Queen Elizabeth luncheon; that was very nice. And we went to several state dinners.

MEDINA: Talk about the luncheon that you just mentioned, because that was a very private luncheon.

FOLTZ:

There were only six of us. They were charming people. There's a movie out, and I asked someone how they liked it -- called *The Queen*. And they said, "Well, she was so austere." I thought: you know, she wasn't austere when she was around us; she was really lovely and funny. She had a terrific sense of humor and so did he -- a dry wit that was really quite entertaining. That's all I remember about it. We had this luncheon and it was fun.

MEDINA: Do you think that it was more relaxed because of Ike's knowing the Royal Family from the war years?

FOLTZ: Maybe.

MEDINA: His stay at Balmoral: John met the Royal Family in, I believe, 1945 or forty-six.

FOLTZ: Yes, he has some pictures of that.

MEDINA: Did he ever talk about that?

FOLTZ: Not especially, no. When was it, 1945 or 1946?

MEDINA: It was forty-six, I believe. When they were at Balmoral.

FOLTZ: Yes. We went to England, John and I did. What did we do? It's been so long. Maybe I'll think of it, but we didn't see the Queen. You just go in and sign a book, and then if she's in residence, why, maybe she'll pick up on your name.

MEDINA: Up on the second floor in the [White House] solarium -- we were talking, when we were in the museum, about cooking, one of Ike's hobbies. What kind of things did he like to cook up there? I have photographs of him out on the balcony barbequing.

FOLTZ: I don't remember what he cooked, particularly, and I don't remember him serving us a meal. I remember there was also what we called the solarium, now at the kitchen part. He used to play cards up there all the time when he got a chance. I can remember watching this game with some very, very fine bridge players. In fact, one time he, in desperation, asked John and I to play bridge with him (laughter). And I can remember he said to me, "Why did you do that?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. It just seemed like a good thing to do (laughter)!" He said, "Barbie, you must always have a reason for what you do in bridge."

LEYERZAPF: Good answer. He had high expectations of his bridge partners, I believe.

FOLTZ: Yes, he did. Well he had good partners and --

LEYERZAPF: Al Gruenther was one of them and (speaking at the same time) --

FOLTZ: Yes, oh yes. Well, he wrote the (speaking at same time) --

LEYERZAPF: -- and he was a world-class bridge player, I believe.

FOLTZ: Yes, he wrote the Autobridge series.

LEYERZAPF: Oh.

FOLTZ: You know that series?

LEYERZAPF: I'm not familiar with it.

FOLTZ: Well, it was a piece of paper and you slipped it into a frame that had east, west, north, and south, and it was complicated, I can't remember how it worked, but you could play bridge with yourself. He was the author, the originator, of that.

LEYERZAPF: No, I hadn't heard that story.

FOLTZ: Yes, I didn't realize he was that good. And he was good.

LEYERZAPF: He apparently had a brilliant mind.

FOLTZ: He did.

LEYERZAPF: I believe Eisenhower once said that he was as bright as anybody he ever met in his lifetime.

FOLTZ: He was so nice, and fun, and interesting and just quick. He was very brilliant.

LEYERZAPF: They were friends of Mamie and Eisenhower, and I believe Grace Gruenther was a friend of Mamie. Did you see them relate to one another? Were you in their presence together?

FOLTZ: Not especially.

LEYERZAPF: No, okay.

FOLTZ: She must have died. There would be no reason why she wouldn't be around somewhere. I don't know.

LEYERZAPF: Yes, she was living during the fifties, but I forgot --

FOLTZ: Oh, was she?

LEYERZAPF: Yes. I've forgotten when Grace passed away. It might have been in the sixties.

FOLTZ: I guess if he was there mostly on business he'd come upstairs. Then later, we knew his two sons very well and they're brilliant like their father.

LEYERZAPF: Richard and Donald.

FOLTZ: Yes. Richard was head of planned giving at West Point.

LEYERZAPF: Okay.

FOLTZ: And I used to go down and talk to him because I was doing the same thing at Rosemount College. He was really successful; he raised a lot of money for West Point.

MEDINA: They're donors to the library, also.

FOLTZ: Are they?

MEDINA: Yes, and I've recently had Laura Gruenther, one of the granddaughters -- I'm not sure which was her father -- inquiring about our inventory of the Eisenhower paintings because my register indicates they have four, but they only have three, so we're trying to find out what happened to the fourth one.

FOLTZ: Maybe Don had it.

MEDINA: Possibly.

FOLTZ: Yes. Don died.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, he did? We hadn't heard that.

FOLTZ: I'm sure he did.

LEYERZAPF: Okay.

FOLTZ: But Brigitte, his wife -- he met her over in Germany and she was a German. He had to get permission to marry her. She was just a little fraulein and I remember Mrs. Gruenther was a little tough on her (laughter), she had to be a general's daughter-in-law. Anyway, she was a nice gal.

MEDINA: In your earlier interview with John Wickman he got a little confused because you referred to Ike as "Dad."

FOLTZ: Yes, I used to.

MEDINA: And he was referring—

FOLTZ: Oh, I never called him Ike. I always called him Dad.

MEDINA: But you never called Mamie, "Mom". Did she ask you to call her Mimi or --

FOLTZ: Mimi. That was what we called her. And that's what the kids all called her so --

MEDINA: She didn't like "grandmother" or --

FOLTZ: Evidently not (laughter).

MEDINA: Her family seemed to like nicknames.

FOLTZ: A lot of grandmothers are called "Mimi" and "Nana" and things like that. Nana was called Nana -- Nana was her mother -- and she was Mimi. It would have been hard to call her Mamie and it would have been hard to call Ike, "Ike." I feel like that's fresh. (I don't feel that way anymore; I call him Ike, so people know who I'm talking about.) I thought we decided on that because my father was a beloved father and he was "Daddy" and so that worked out.

MEDINA: With the birth of your children, how active were Ike and Mamie in sort of taking care of them

FOLTZ: Oh, very.

MEDINA: Yes

FOLTZ: Yes, and they had Delores and I remember one time -- Delores worked in the White House, but on her vacation she came down to Fort Benning, Georgia and looked after us. It was wonderful. We had all our parties that we were going to have for the year and she catered them. She was a wonderful cook and the kids just loved her. They still love her. She lives in Washington, they call her and --

MEDINA: This is Delores Moaney who was with the Eisenhower's for a long, long time?

FOLTZ: Yes. She married Moaney, and then he asked if she come and work for Mamie. They sent her to Cordon Bleu in New York to learn how to cook, so she was a wonderful cook.

MEDINA: And you mentioned the other day that she's just ninety?

FOLTZ: She just turned ninety. We called her up on her birthday and she was hale and hearty. She sounded just like herself. Her voice was strong, so maybe she and Ed will make a hundred (laughter).

MEDINA: Well, Mary is the only one of the grandchildren that was born during the Eisenhower years, the White House years. Correct?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: And Mary was --

FOLTZ: There, Suzy, too, I think.

MEDINA: Was Suzy?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Because I know that Mary was baptized in the Blue Room.

FOLTZ: Yes, Mimi wanted to have pictures taken and I didn't. I don't know why, and I wish I had had pictures taken of the ceremony.

MEDINA: Do you think that Mamie had a sense of history?

FOLTZ: I think so. More than I did, probably.

MEDINA: Did she enjoy being First Lady?

FOLTZ: Oh, I think so, yes.

MEDINA: Did she ever talk about the demands on her life or -- ?

FOLTZ: Well, I didn't hear her complain. We knew she had demands and what she'd do was, she'd conserve her strength. She'd stay in bed until she had to get up and get dressed and go to a luncheon or something. But she conducted all of her business from there, she had all her papers

on the other side of the bed -- that was her desk, sort of -- and she'd write. I'm not sure she did that so much in the White House but in Gettysburg.

MEDINA: I would think there'd be more demands on her at the White House.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: For morning teas and things.

FOLTZ: Yes, but I remember better in Gettysburg (speaking at same time), since she's a little older.

MEDINA: I did some research a couple of years ago when I was doing a traveling show on food -- White House dinners. And I found that Mamie was conversing with the chef and the chief usher and, of course, they had just installed the new freezer. So she was having vegetables brought in from the farm and Harry Darby was supplying them with steaks from Kansas City. I saw that there were lots of organ meats in there that they were eating. I mentioned that to you the other night, because today, someone with a heart condition shouldn't have that high-fat for cholesterol, but Ike was eating a lot of that during the time.

FOLTZ: Was he really?

MEDINA: Sweet breads and—

FOLTZ: I know they liked that.

MEDINA: —and kidneys. Did they have that kind of thing when you were there -- that kind of food?

FOLTZ: I don't remember that. I remember the steaks more, in Gettysburg. In the White House, I don't remember what we ate particularly, but it was good.

MEDINA: Because I also noticed that some food would be left over and --

FOLTZ: And she'd use the leftovers and later Moaney said, "Well we're not going to call them leftovers, we're going to call them plan-overs." (laughter) He was so cute (laughter).

MEDINA: Sounds like he had a sense of humor.

FOLTZ: Speaking of Moaney, you know there was a show, *Greenacres*, a program on television and we all watched and (laughs). They had a pig for a pet and Moaney decided that we needed a pig for a pet (laughter). You know, pigs are smart -- you can housebreak them and everything else. So he used to get that pig as far as the kitchen and no further, and I'm not sure Mamie knew that that was his pet (laughter). That was when I found out how smart pigs are. They really are.

MEDINA: We have an exhibit in the Presidential Gallery which you've not seen yet -- hopefully, while you're here we could do that -- but we talked about the Eisenhower's watching TV. Did they sit in front of the TV with TV trays and have dinner or -- like they were --

FOLTZ: They went out on the porch in Gettysburg. And that reminds me of another story. We were doing that in the West Wing of the White House -- is that the wing where the bedrooms were and everything like that?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: Yes, the West Wing. No, no, we weren't eating; we always went to a table in that case. But Churchill was there. And I remember Ike getting up -- we were sitting side-by-side -- and he got up and stood between us and he talked to me and he said, "Barbie I wish you'd known him in his great days." He was deaf and he was there with his aide who put a bib on him at dinner when we ate. Churchill couldn't hear Ike say that and I thought, Ike is really sure of himself, to stand up in front of him and say, "I wish you'd known him before when he was --

LEYERZAPF: His better days.

FOLTZ: Yes, in his better days. Because he hardly talked, wouldn't speak.

MEDINA: I believe that was the period of time when Churchill had a stroke, and was coming to talk to the United States, and they weren't sure he could do it. Eventually he did do it.

FOLTZ: Yes, that figures, because this was in the White House and this was on the second floor of the White House and he was probably in the Queen's Bedroom, down the way. It was down at the other end.

MEDINA: They had a wonderful working relationship and a wonderful personal relationship. I've noticed in correspondence -- probably over two-hundred letters -- that they always stopped at the end of their letters to talk about their painting -- whether they're having a problem.

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: Supposedly, Ike had a little studio up on the second floor. Do you remember that?

FOLTZ: Yes, I think I do. I don't think I ever went in it. This was off-limits. This is where he went -- and he also cooked up there.

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: The third floor was where we all stayed when we came. There are some very nice bedrooms downstairs, but this was wonderful. This was a whole floor, and the kids were there and we were there. We went quite often. And we traveled with them a lot, too. Ike just liked to have us all around. When he moved to Gettysburg, we moved to Gettysburg, too. There was his house, and here was ours down here, and the road went this way. And he let the kids ride up and down -- he made a road to his house within the fence, and the kids rode up and down on that road in a golf cart. They loved driving that golf cart (laughs)

LEYERZAPF: How old were the kids?

FOLTZ: It was before they were able to get a driver's license, so this was really hot stuff (laughs)

MEDINA: You mentioned yesterday, where we were talking about Secret Service while you were in the White House, that you and John did not have Secret Service, but Ike insisted on it for the children. Can you elaborate on that?

FOLTZ: Well, the Secret Service were wonderful, I'll tell you. I never had to be like a soccer-mom and run my kids around to all these things that they did. The Secret Service took them. I could go along, too, but they had to follow us anyway in a car. I remember, then, the kids started getting independent and they came home -- Anne came home from school. She rode her bike to school, and on her way home, she decided to take a shortcut through this woods. So the Secret Service were following very slowly in a car and they stopped the car and got out and started to follow her on foot. And the lady in a house across the street thought there was something really bad going on. She was worried about Anne so she called the police (laughter). The police came down and tried to arrest the Secret Service men (laughter).

MEDINA: You mentioned that they had a little nickname for them, for the Secret Service

FOLTZ: Oh, did I? I can't think of what it was.

MEDINA: The diaper detail?

FOLTZ: No, the kids didn't say that.

MEDINA: Oh, no?

FOLTZ: No. Yes, the diaper something, I guess it was. I think they call themselves that.

LEYERZAPF: No, okay.

FOLTZ: They were wonderful, though. They really became our good friends and every place we moved. In a way they were watching us, too, but we could go off and not have them. And it was just as well. David and Julie really didn't like it at all -- but they were in a dating mode. I often think of the Bush kids. I wonder how they're doing with their Secret Service. Doesn't sound too good; her purse was stolen the other day.

LEYERSAZPF: Oh, I hadn't heard that.

FOLTZ: Did you hear that?

LEYERZAPF: No.

FOLTZ: She was down in Florida and she evidently put it down somewhere and it was stolen. Secret Service probably took a beating on that one.

MEDINA: In 1953, Mamie did a press conference.

FOLTZ: That was her first wasn't it?

MEDINA: First and only one. Do you know why she never did another?

FOLTZ: Well, I think she didn't think she should -- or didn't want to. I don't know why, but you know, she wasn't much into publicity for herself.

MEDINA: She was very active in charities.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: And did a lot for that.

FOLTZ: And you never heard about it

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: She didn't have a -- what do you call those people who get you known? She didn't have one.

MEDINA: A press secretary?

FOLTZ: Yes, a press—well, she did.

MEDINA: Well she had to (speaking at same time)

FOLTZ: No, she had Ike's if she wanted it, but she didn't do that.

MEDINA: The role of the First Lady, that office, has increased in staff since that time.

FOLTZ: Oh, I know. The First Lady always has to have some project, like Mrs. Reagan was into telling kids not to take drugs -- and that kind of thing. And Mrs. Johnson, it was flowers and decorating and I'll tell you, she really made a difference in Washington. Washington's beautiful now. Big beds of flowers in the places between the cars. Mamie didn't -- that was after her time -- so her role was really, she felt, Ike's wife and hostess. And that's not a small job.

MEDINA: In the Presidential Gallery is -- and we watched a little bit of it yesterday, we didn't get through the entire thing -- your children talking about Ike and Mamie. And one of them is David's first recollection of his grandparents: Anne talks about Mamie always having something to say about every dress and every strand of hair.

FOLTZ: Yes (laughs), she did

MEDINA: Did she do that to you, too?

FOLTZ: Yes (laughter), I had to pass inspection. Finally, she quit doing that and then, as I said, I had either arrived or she'd just given up on me (laughter).

MEDINA: Anne also talks about -- I think you did see that one segment -- about grade cards, how Ike would have them, David and Anne, sit and hold the grade cards in front of them and go over them line-by-line.

FOLTZ: Oh, the grade cards. I don't remember that. That must have been up at Gettysburg.

MEDINA: Yes, probably at Gettysburg.

FOLTZ: I don't know why he'd see those cards, but he maybe wanted to, and may have paid them for some of their grades.

MEDINA: Oh, she doesn't mention that (laughter). But I was just wondering how active he was.

FOLTZ: Oh he was very active, yes. He just really enjoyed the kids.

MEDINA: What about their photo opportunities and things? We were just trying to discuss that, that the children weren't in the limelight, but there were times they had to be. Were you opposed to that or --

FOLTZ: Yes. I told you about Khrushchev wanting them to come over to Russia. I just was so opposed to that. The Russian Ambassador would pay Ike a call practically every other day and say, "You know, you've got to bring the kids. Mr. Khrushchev wants the children to come." And then Ike would say, "Now, Barbie, this would be wonderful for them." But I didn't think kids had any place in a state visit (laughs). I don't know why. They've all managed to get to Russia somehow and see it, and that's enough; they don't need to go to the Kremlin (laughs). This was war -- not war, but the Cold War was on.

MEDINA: You might mention a few things about that visit to Gettysburg with Khrushchev with the children.

FOLTZ: He told them all their names in Russian and Suzy didn't have one -- there's no Russian name for Suzy. Isn't that strange?

MEDINA: And he spoke in English?

FOLTZ: Oh, yes. And he gave them each a little, a little red--

MEDINA: Star?

FOLTZ: Star, I guess. And when we got in the car to go home I said, "Throw those away." I mean, I didn't want them running around wearing red stars (laughs) and now I wish we had them as souvenirs. We're friendly with Russia now, except, did you see the paper this morning?

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: Well they think that some B.A. -- British Airways -- planes had radiation on them and they're trying to find the people that were on those flights.

MEDINA: Oh (speaking at same time) because of the spy--

FOLTZ: It was the spy thing.

LEYERZAPF: Might have been a connection.

FOLTZ: So we're not so friendly anymore, I guess.

MEDINA: Earlier, we talked about your first visit to Abilene in 1947, right after your marriage. You eventually came back [to the area] for Command and General Staff School in the 'fifties.

FOLTZ: Well we didn't go out to be there on our honeymoon (speaking at same time)—

MEDINA: No, this was later

FOLTZ: —we just went, later, we went to the Command School.

LEYERZAPF: I think we looked it up and it was the '54-'55 school year.

FOLTZ: I'd like to write some of these dates down. Fifty-eight through --

LEYERZAPF: '54-'55.

MEDINA: We were talking about that coming from Kansas City -- about Leavenworth and your impressions--

FOLTZ: We lived in a Wherry house. The kids went to school and the Secret Service went with them (laughs). The Secret Service were quite a novelty, and they were wonderful. David was in the first grade there --and I remember they learned this song, "I'm a Sunflower from the Sunflower State."

LEYERZAPF: (Laughter) Good.

FOLTZ: Have you ever heard that song?

LEYERZAPF: No, I haven't.

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: Oh, Well, this is something you learned in school (speaking at same time).

MEDINA: We'll have to Google it and find out what --

LEYERZAPF: Find out what the words were.

MEDINA: I was wondering, John apparently was very busy studying for the Command School.

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: What were you doing to occupy your time and the children's time?

FOLTZ: Oh, there's always a lot of things to do on an Army Post. Anyway, we had this Wherry house on -- I'm trying to remember what it was like. We had three children at that point, and we had one bedroom for all three of them. John had to have a study. That was absolutely essential. So we had a double -- what do you call those things, you know, the double-bed?

MEDINA: Oh, bunk beds.

FOLTZ: Bunk beds. And then a cot. That took care of all the children. This was a small room. We also had a cat, and I remember John and I had gone out to a party and the Secret Service always would baby-sit in the living room. They didn't put the kids to bed or feed them dinner, but they would come and sit with them at night. We had a cat, and evidently the cat had kittens that night and Mr. Barton called up the dinner party and said, "What shall I do about this?" And I said, "Well, just put them on the floor in a box; there's some boxes out in the kitchen." He said, "Alright, I'll carry on." And so he did. But they really were part of our life.

MEDINA: We think of them more outside of the house, not inside the house participating with the family.

FOLTZ: Well, maybe they do that now, but I never -- I don't know whether to tell you this or not, but anyway, they used to say "We have not so many secrets, but we have a lot of service." Then, when David and Julie came along, they said, we have no service and lots of secrets (laughter). They didn't want to be bag carriers then, and I don't think they are anymore, when we went on a trip --

ED FOLTZ: And that's the Secret Service?

FOLTZ: Yes, when we went on a trip, they helped us with everything.

MEDINA: One of the things that we don't have very good records about, and very few photographs except for official ones, is the holidays. How were your holidays spent with the family?

FOLTZ: In which place?

MEDINA: At the White House.

FOLTZ: You saw the picture of the last Christmas in the White House?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: Oh, we usually went there and it was beautiful. It was beautifully decorated and we had a very nice Christmas.

MEDINA: It wasn't overdone like they do today with trees in every room and --

FOLTZ: No, not quite.

MEDINA: -- down the halls and --

FOLTZ: We had one in the West Hall, and I suppose there must have been one downstairs.

MEDINA: One of the things we do not have are decorations. Did Mamie have a collection of --

FOLTZ: Well, I told you that when Khrushchev came to visit he brought Christmas ornaments, which I thought was very strange. You know, "Godless Communism?" (laughs).

LEYERZAPF: Oh, yes.

FOLTZ: They were the most beautiful little ornaments -- I still have them for my tree -- and they were just beautiful. I asked what they would have been used for in that time and they said, well, people used them for New Year's Eve. They had Christmas trees, but they didn't call them that. They used them for New Year's Eve. Of course, there were a few people that were religious, but that was the most I got out of it. One of the ornaments was a rocket hitting the moon. And this was before we'd gotten there (laughs)

MEDINA: Do you still have those?

FOLTZ: Somebody must have taken that one because I don't have it anymore.

MEDINA: But, did Mrs. Eisenhower have a collection of ornaments--

FOLTZ: She did, too.

MEDINA: -- that were family?

FOLTZ: Oh, probably, but she was given those, too, by Khrushchev. I'm sure she probably did.

MEDINA: Our records in the White House appointment book indicate that in 1956, at Fort Belvoir, you had Thanksgiving --

Sound File 1a ends; Sound File 1b begins.

MEDINA: Talk about Thanksgiving at your house and then go into the birthday parties.

FOLTZ: We always went to the White House so we decided (when we lived at Fort Belvoir) to have them out for a holiday party. She had a friend that helped us, Dick Trefry who later had a job at the White House. He put on a lavish Thanksgiving feast for Ike and Mamie.

We'd have the birthday party, and we'd have Ike and Mimi over, and we had the porch set up like a theater. We did the *Sound of Music*, and we did several other musicals. The kids would lip-sync all the words and they'd have costumes on and --

MEDINA: How long would it take to do a rehearsal or practice to get --

FOLTZ: The children were pretty fast learners. Finally, David said he didn't want to do that anymore and so he became the manager of the lights and all that kind of thing (laughs). But I think the Eisenhowers got a big kick out of that. And then we had a pageant in the White House one Christmas. There were three children, so we had three wise men, and then we had them change clothes. I don't know how we did all of this, but there were lots of curtains that you could pull (laughs). Then we had the three kings, and then we had the Virgin Mary and the baby and the father, Christ's father. So that was perfect. Then John read this story out of the Bible of the first Christmas and they loved that. That was fun.

MEDINA: There is a photograph in the Presidential Gallery of a birthday for David and I don't know --

FOLTZ: Oh, that was a wonderful birthday! I read that, Dale Evans an --

MEDINA: Roy Rogers.

FOLTZ: Roy Rogers (laughs) were in town.

LEYERZAPF: There are some photographs.

FOLTZ: So we called them up and asked them if they'd come to this birthday party. Well, they were pleased to come and they came and they played on their guitars (laughter).

MEDINA: They were singing.

FOLTZ: Oh, they sang for the kids. So then we had to have another birthday party. I remember one time -- I think it might have been this party -- and this little kid from St. Stephen's School where David went to school, when he was leaving, he said, "I don't know whether I liked meeting Roy Rogers or the President better" (laughter).

LEYERZAPF: Kids are so honest.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Who were the children that were invited?

FOLTZ: They were all of David's classmates from St. Stephen's there in Alexandria, Virginia. Then Anne had a birthday and we invited all of her classmates and I can't remember what the starring thing was. We didn't have Roy Rogers. I don't think we had anybody. They always got a movie as part of the party.

MEDINA: We talked about Khrushchev coming to the farm and I know that there were some other dignitaries. How often did that happen? Were you involved in it?

FOLTZ: Oh, I was involved. Ike was bringing them up to show them his house and his farm and us, we were down here on the edge of the farm. And I'd hear that helicopter and if they hadn't told me ahead of time, I knew they were coming (laughs). And he brought de Gaulle down to our house, too. He didn't bring Khrushchev to our house; we went up to see him. That's when they threw away the red stars; we were driving back home. But de Gaulle came to our house. I had to give him tea, and he spoke English. Now, he never speaks English.

LEYERZAPF: That's interesting. Both of them could do it when they wanted to.

FOLTZ: Yes, they could when they wanted to. He had -- I can't remember what kind of glasses -- but he had very odd glasses, and Mary said to him, "Why are you wearing those glasses?" And the children, oh dear, were so embarrassed that their little sister was asking personal

questions -- and she said, "Why are you wearing those glasses?" He said, "I have very bad eyes. Poor moi." (laughter) He was so nice, and he came to Ike's funeral and Mamie's funeral, I believe

MEDINA: Not to Mamie's, unless there was something in Gettysburg or Washington But he wasn't in Abilene.

FOLTZ: No, I guess I guess he came --

MEDINA: But there is a famous photograph of him --

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: -- saluting.

FOLTZ: By then, I could speak a little French. I could understand his French; I'd been taking lessons because we were going to Brussels. I'm not a linguist, but I could understand him. He had such perfect pronunciation and he wasn't fast. It was wonderful to find somebody who could understand my French (laughs).

MEDINA: I had on exhibit for a while a tape that was done from Augusta for a -- I think they were little clips that were put on the news at night about Ike's stay in Augusta -- and there were probably thirty minutes of them, total. They usually ran from a minute to a minute and a half. I know that Mamie loved going down there.

FOLTZ: Oh, yes, she just really liked it. I don't know why she liked it so much. I guess living in the White House all the time gets a little tiresome for some.

LEYERZAPF: Change of pace.

FOLTZ: Yes. They had "Mamie's Cabin," and we'd go down there and stay, too, right around the time when they had Augusta National, you know, the golf tournament.

LEYERZAPF: Masters Tournament

FOLTZ: Then Ike would play with whoever won the Masters the next day. Then, later, I would play the golf course. I'll tell you, that's the hardest golf course and it's not made for women. There are no female tees -- you know, no forward tees. We all enjoyed that place.

MEDINA: During the Nixon administration -- I think we noted that you were invited to the Nixon's along with Mamie, for holidays.

FOLTZ: Yes. I think maybe that was when David and Julie were engaged.

MEDINA: Probably 'sixty-seven, 'sixty-eight, somewhere around that time.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Well it would have been a little later because he became president in 'sixty-eight, 'sixty-nine didn't he, 'sixty-nine?

LEYERZAPF: He was inaugurated in 'sixty-nine.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Do you have any memories of Pat and --

FOLTZ: Oh, yes. They were so nice to Mamie, too. They'd have her come down from Gettysburg and have dinner and go to a show. I remember holding her hand during one of the shows and I could feel -- she said, "Just feel my heart." And, boy oh boy, I never felt anything like that before. She was not well and it was just fibrillating. But Pat was really sweet to her,

and she was a lovely lady -- I thought -- Pat. She helped me get ready for the thirteen-nations trip. She gave me some pointers since she'd been doing a lot of traveling so I talked to her about it.

MEDINA: The 1959 thirteen-country Goodwill Tour?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Since we're on that subject, why don't we talk about that. You had mentioned the packing. How were you --

FOLTZ: The White House actually packed me.

MEDINA: How were you approached to go on the trip?

FOLTZ: Oh, Ike invited us. John was going and Mamie didn't want to go because she didn't like to fly -- and it was total flying. I mean, who's afraid in Air Force One? I knew the pilot and so it was a wonderful trip.

MEDINA: Back then it would have been the Columbine.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Which wasn't even a true jet.

FOLTZ: No, no we'd just gotten a jet.

MEDINA: Oh in 'fifty-nine?

FOLTZ: It was the first one off the --

LEYERZAPF: 'Fifty-eight or 'fifty-nine, the 707 came on-line.

MEDINA: Okay.

FOLTZ: I remember one very startling scene on the plane. We were sitting there, we were going over the, now lets see, I'm not going to remember (laughs) -- into Afghanistan, over the Khyber Pass. That was it! If you read any history that really gives you a thrill to think you're going over the Khyber Pass. Oh, that was some trip.

MEDINA: What kind of security did you have? Or was it visible?

FOLTZ: I don't remember any security. I'm sure we had it, well, Ike had it, anyway. Whether we had it or not, I don't know. They probably had an eye on us.

MEDINA: You talked about twenty-one suitcases. How was that all determined -- what the [state] functions were going to be?

FOLTZ: Well, we were going to two state dinners in every country, so what's thirteen and thirteen? Three and three is six: twenty-six events. We decided, finally, that I could wear the same dress twice (laughter). Evening gowns you know and --

MEDINA: Did Mamie get involved in selecting what you were going to take?

FOLTZ: No, I went down and to Woodward & Lothrop and bought a couple of evening gowns. They were not name dresses or anything like that, but they were very pretty. You don't have to have a Dior on all the time. We started out -- well, I guess you know the trip -- we started out in Italy, in the evening we walked through this long hall and you had to remember to stand up straight and smile at everybody. The whole room was full of people -- and all looking at us (laughs). That was the start of the trip, in Italy, and then we went to Turkey.

MEDINA: On that trip I believe you saw the Pope?

FOLTZ: Yes. We had our picture taken with him, and I had my picture taken with Nehru in front of the Taj Maha. Do you know those pictures didn't -- I don't know where they are, I can't find them.

MEDINA: I have one here.

FOLTZ: Oh, do you have that? John was disappointed that I didn't call him. I think he said, "Why didn't you call me?" And I said, "The press were telling me what to do." I usually cooperate with them and that's how that ended up. But, oh, we always had all of these leis. They were something! I'm not allergic to anything, usually.

MEDINA: They were cardamom seeds probably. We have several of them in the collection.

FOLTZ: Up to here and right into your nose and -- (laughs).

MEDINA: Right, it's the cardamom seed.

FOLTZ: Is that it?

MEDINA: And it's still --

FOLTZ: Oh I'm so glad you have that because --

MEDINA: -- even fifty years later, it still has a scent to it.

FOLTZ: Really? (laughs)

MEDINA: We have them sealed in plastic containers.

FOLTZ: Isn't that some place . . . (looking at photograph) . . . Isn't that unbelievable? He built that for his love? Yes.

MEDINA: What other impressions do you have of that trip?

FOLTZ: Oh, I have so many that you don't want to hear them all (laughs).

MEDINA: No, just some highlights, key points.

FOLTZ: Well, I was asking last night if anybody had read *The Kite Runner*. Do you know it's about Afghanistan? It's a wonderful book, and I remember when we went to Afghanistan and the king was in power. So the princess had all these parties for me and we didn't mix with the men. As we went into the Middle East, I was a passenger on the plane as far as the press was concerned -- not that way in, say, Italy and in Europe, they were very interested in what I had on, and what I was doing. But as we went into the Middle East, why, it was like I wasn't along. I was still treated very nicely by the royal families, but it was all private. So the princess had a girl come in and model a gown at this tea or luncheon she had for me. She modeled this beautiful gold silk outfit, and she said this is the official costume of Afghanistan and the embroidery on it is a hundred years old. (Well, now it's a hundred and fifty.) It had the big baggy pants, and they were silk, a beautiful blue. It was a beautiful thing. And she said, "I hope you like it." And I said, "Oh, I just love it." I wore the top on a lot of occasions. Now, I can't fit in it as well as I could then. I liked that better than almost anything else that I was given, and I was given a lot of gifts along the way -- which I was allowed to keep.

MEDINA: That was at a time that you could keep them.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: And that was in Afghanistan?

FOLTZ: Yes. And then when we went --

MEDINA: Is that the time you also received the lamb skins? On that trip?

FOLTZ: Yes. Didn't they come from Afghanistan?

MEDINA: They came from Afghanistan from a prince.

FOLTZ: Yes, I think so. This present was from her to me -- the costume. And it was really beautiful. I loved it. I love costumes.

These skins were absolutely the most beautiful. In 1009 they would be about 50 years old. I had them made into a beautiful jacket. I have recently had the jacket remodeled and it's in beautiful shape and I'm still wearing it.

LEYERZAPF: You might as well enjoy it.

FOLTZ: But I had this scarf in black and all the jewelry to go with it. The jewelry has a large thing like this, and it was all jeweled and it hung on -- you had to put it on a strap to hold it. And then you had the black scarf over your head, and then there was a large jeweled piece that went down the front and it hung on the button at the top. Then there were bracelets like this and they were all jeweled. Now, when I say jeweled, I don't think they were precious stones. I've never had them appraised, but they came in a beautiful box and they were really spectacular.

MEDINA: You might want to have them looked at.

FOLTZ: I think I might. There's an orange stone in them that's probably a coral, but I don't know --

MEDINA: Since they were giving you gifts, were you taking gifts also?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: And how were those determined?

FOLTZ: Well (laughs) of course Mamie and Ike helped me, because I had to have a lot of them, and Elizabeth Arden gave me suitcases. They were small and they were navy blue leather. They were full of cosmetics and the women really liked them. That's what my present was. It sounds like nothing but they were quite spectacular.

MEDINA: That's the only state visit you were on?

FOLTZ: No. We had a visit to the Far East, Philippines, Midway, Guadalcanal, etc. That was with Ike and lasted several weeks.

MEDINA: Then the rest were all in the United States because the visiting head would come to President and Mrs. Eisenhower? You'd be invited to the White House?

FOLTZ: Sometimes, yes. I mean depending on, it just --

MEDINA: Was it a preference that you didn't want to attend most of them?

FOLTZ: Oh, no; we wanted to. We liked to do that. I'm not sure --

MEDINA: Probably protocol.

FOLTZ: No, I'm just thinking, I don't know whether --

[Interruption]

MEDINA: I know in 1980 and '81, Mrs. Eisenhower wanted you to write her biography, and when you were here you had donated a series of correspondence. How did that project get started? How did Mamie ask you?

FOLTZ: She wanted me to do it. She would be in bed and I would come in and sit on the little pink chair. That was the way I was going to write the book, because she always had a pink chair beside her bed. We talked about her life in many settings. In the White House and --

MEDINA: So as far back as the White House she was asking you to do this?

FOLTZ: No.

MEDINA: No?

FOLTZ: No, but I had come in in the morning. She would be in bed and she was always in a beautiful bed jacket and all groomed for the day, but she stayed off her feet a lot. And I thought, why does she do that? And how can she stand to be in bed so long? Well, she really had heart trouble and she was not well. She had a rheumatic heart, I told you about the fibrillations. From then on I realized that she wasn't that well, so I'd come and sit on the pink chair and we'd talk about things. Then, when she asked me to write the book I had a tape recorder and we'd talk about everything. I'll have to get those tapes out.

MEDINA: Yes, because the childhood would be wonderful to know about -- her growing-up years.

FOLTZ: She wanted to talk about that a lot, too, and she wanted to talk about the fact that in the fall they cooked potatoes at the curb in the leaves. Have you ever heard of that?

MEDINA: Were they real potatoes?

FOLTZ: They were real potatoes. They'd have a little fire there in the leaves and cook them. I don't know, I'll have to get the tape out and listen to it. She had a lot of memories like that which she liked.

MEDINA: And, of course, her tragic life of her sisters dying.

FOLTZ: Oh yes. You know, she said she couldn't stand to ever hear a dove cooing. That cemetery was full of these doves and they'd coo -- and this reminded her of her sisters.

LEYERZAPF: Hear that association.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: And along with that she talked about Icky?

FOLTZ: She didn't talk about him much. She told me about him. She didn't talk about him much. I think that really hurt, and she was always afraid of things happening to people.

MEDINA: I know that while he was buried in Denver, originally, that on his birthday she would always send flowers.

FOLTZ: Oh did she?

MEDINA: That was arranged through Nana.

FOLTZ: And they were yellow weren't they?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: Because that was his favorite color -- somebody's favorite color. I think Ike sent her flowers too.

MEDINA: Well, supposedly Mamie's favorite color was this—

FOLTZ: Pink.

MEDINA: -- pink and a green.

FOLTZ: You asked me if I knew where the paint samples were. No, I don't.

MEDINA: Because a lot of biographers talk about that, that she traveled with these paint samples, but we have no proof.

FOLTZ: Yes

MEDINA: But you don't know if it was a true story or not?

FOLTZ: Oh, it's true.

MEDINA: Is it true?

FOLTZ: She had everything painted and she did have samples of the colors that she wanted. And when I say she traveled with them, you know they moved a lot. But she always had her bedroom painted that color. Now, whether she did in her early army life or not is questionable (laughter) because they moved a great deal or lived in army housing. But when she -- let's see, Ft. Myer, I think, she had a bedroom in those colors, and then in the White House. I don't know, she was in those places long enough that it was established that that's what she did.

MEDINA: Jim, do you have anything? My questions are going to start getting into the White House years from here on and I wonder if we should take a break. Or if you don't have any more --

LEYERZAPF: Well I had a few questions. During the twelve nation tour you stopped in Pakistan, and, of course, it's in the news a lot today.

FOLTZ: Yes

LEYERZAPF: Do you have any memories of the Pakistan visit to Karachi and Ayub Khan.

FOLTZ: Yes, I remember when we drove in, there was a city on each side and it had been tent cities, so the people were living very badly and he had them all cleared out.

LEYERZAPF: Okay.

FOLTZ: He had all the camels cleared out, and I wanted to ride on a camel --

LEYERZAPF: So you were disappointed.

FOLTZ: Well, no, they finally arranged it (laughter).

LEYERZAPF: They found one for you.

FOLTZ: Yes. But they couldn't figure out why I wanted to do this. Then we arrived, the road to where we were staying was covered with oriental rugs. The cars drove over them! Imagine! And I said, "I'll take that one, I'll take that one." Then they had the state dinner and I sat on Ayub Kahn's right -- I said, "I never thought I'd be sitting in Pakistan talking to the President about birth control" (laughs). He said that the amount of people in Pakistan was ruining everybody's life, so they had a program going to teach these girls how to use birth control. And this was a very interesting subject to him. He was really pushing this. I don't know whatever happened about it, but --

LEYERZAPF: Now this was Eisenhower or Ayub Khan who was --

FOLTZ: Ayub Khan.

LEYERZAPF: -- was pushing the birth control.

FOLTZ: Yes. I was sitting as his dinner partner and this is what we were talking about (laughter) and I said I never thought I'd be sitting in Pakistan, talking to the President about birth control. But it was a really important thing to him, to lower the population so that people would be better off. Then, I think we saw some tent-pegging, a horse comes in and the rider has a sword of some kind and they spear something. It was really quite impressive. We sat out in a --

like a football field, only it wasn't a football field -- and these horses would come in and ride. They called it tent-pegg~~ing~~. And they'd spear whatever it was they speared -- I don't remember.

MEDINA: So it's a demonstration?

FOLTZ: Yes. There was always something -- in each country, it seems to me -- that was a demonstration of something that they did.

LEYERZAPF: Any recollection of Turkey and the visit to Istanbul?

FOLTZ: Yes, we were in Turkey the first night. We did not go to Istanbul. We were in --

LEYERZAPF: Oh, Ankara.

FOLTZ: Yes, Ankara. They warned us that the smog was so thick that -- you know, this was really bad -- and Ankara was down in, kind of in a cup-like depression, and we went there first. We came into Turkey and we went there first. I don't remember too well -- we didn't stay too long, just overnight. And as I say, as we went into the Middle East, I was not entertained particularly, except India. I was not invited to any of the state dinners, but then, finally, when we got to Spain I was at Franco's dinner party on his right -- I was his dinner partner (laughter).

LEYERZAPF: Now, that was on the way back; was that the last leg?

FOLTZ: Yes, it was the last part of the journey.

MEDINA: You mentioned the other night, Mrs. Gandhi --

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: -- Nehru's daughter. That was one of your recollections.

FOLTZ: Oh, she was wonderful. Yes, I liked her so much and I was so shocked when she was killed by her bodyguards -- those Sikhs -- and I never saw that in the paper. I guess I could Google it, couldn't I? I'll have to do that. I'm really curious.

MEDINA: Possibly, Jim knows why. It was something political.

LEYERZAPF: Well, it was political, ethnic division within India as I remember. Much as you have throughout South Asia and the Middle East today.

FOLTZ: Yes. I told you about her maid unpacking twenty-one suitcases and hanging up all the clothes and putting them in the drawers and then magically they all got back the way they were? (laughs).

MEDINA: Because these were packed for a purpose and this was in order.

FOLTZ: Oh, yes. India. We stayed there the longest, five days, and we went down to Agra and the city Fatehpur Sikri. I remember that place. I tried to remember all the names, Rashtrapati Bhavan -- aren't you impressed? That's the President's palace, and Fatehpur Sikri was a place near Agra. You just flew over it, but I thought it would have been interesting to go to it. Evidently, it was just a dead city. Nobody lived in it because they ran out of water and it was in the desert a bit. In New Delhi there were snake charmers on the curb in places. I think a lot of that was done to show us what they --

MEDINA: For entertainment value (laughs).

FOLTZ: Yes (laughs). But you've seen pictures of snakes coming at us --

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: Whatever they were in (laughs) and --

LEYERZAPF: Return just a moment to Pakistan. As I remember from looking at the itinerary, the plane first touched down in Peshawar. Do you remember that?

FOLTZ: No, I don't.

LEYERZAPF: You don't. Okay.

FOLTZ: Where was that?

LEYERZAPF: Oh, it's on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan and I believe --

FOLTZ: Were we going to Afghanistan or were we going to --

LEYERZAPF: It's in Pakistan, but it's just off, just across, the border. And it rather surprised me that you stopped at perhaps an airbase there --

FOLTZ: Maybe so.

LEYERZAPF: -- just before you went on to the capital of Pakistan.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: I always thought there was an irony in that -- in that in December of 'Fifty-Nine, the presidential party touched down in Peshawar, which was the same air force base that Francis Gary Powers was flying U-2's out of.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: It's the same base.

FOLTZ: That's why we never went to Russia (laughter). That trip that Khrushchev was trying to get the kids to come. Oh, we were all set and then the U-2 incident happened. That was something. He was supposed to commit suicide, but how can one be sure somebody will do that?

LEYERZAPF: Well there were all kinds of fail-safe -- he was also supposed to detonate an explosive that would destroy the plane. He didn't do that, either.

FOLTZ: I wonder why.

LEYERZAPF: I don't know.

FOLTZ: Have you ever read anymore about that?

MEDINA: No.

LEYERZAPF: No. They certainly were counting on it though that --

FOLTZ: Yes, they were.

LEYERZAPF: -- those methods would be employed, given what was at stake. And he never did them.

FOLTZ: I can remember Ike wanted to cancel those flights while we were there and while we were going to be there, and Ike -- and I don't know how I -- Who was the Secretary?

LEYERZAPF: Herter?

FOLTZ: No, the CIA director.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, Allen Dulles.

FOLTZ: Allen Dulles. And he talked him out of it. He said nothing will happen. He was in the White House in the West Hall, where we all sat in the living room, saying that. I heard him say that, and then when poor John Kennedy had all that trouble -- the Bay of Pigs and all that -- same thing. He had told them that it was all right to go and do that they evidently didn't have air cover. And I thought, you know, what's the matter with this guy (laughter)? He's supposed to keep them from having all this trouble. I don't know whether that's recording or not, but --

LEYERZAPF: Well, it's okay.

FOLTZ: Yes, is it okay?

LEYERZAPF: Oh yes, it's okay.

MEDINA: Moving to --

FOLTZ: He's gone.

MEDINA: -- Gettysburg, which they bought in the 'fiftie. She called it a renovation, but actually she just saved one part of the house, and they added those two wings.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: How active was she in --

FOLTZ: Very.

MEDINA: Very active?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Furniture and --

FOLTZ: This was her first house. She had Elizabeth Draper help her with it. Now, Elizabeth Draper was not the one that did all the hotel --

MEDINA: That was Dorothy Draper.

FOLTZ: That was Dorothy that did that -- or was Dorothy the one that did Mamie?

MEDINA: No Elizabeth Draper was --

FOLTZ: Elizabeth was --

MEDINA: -- his second wife and she's the one that designed it.

FOLTZ: Uh-huh. Imagine, they were both interior designers and they were both married to Mr. Draper -- Dr. Draper.

LEYERZAPF: I wasn't aware of the sister of Dorothy (speaking at same time).

MEDINA: They weren't sisters.

LEYERZAPF: Well, that's right, okay.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: The first wife and second wife. Elizabeth Draper designed the Eisenhower Toilet--

FOLTZ: Yes, she did.

MEDINA: -- that you have.

FOLTZ: And she also was an interior designer for the Janet Auchincloss.

MEDINA: How did the Eisenhower Toile come about? Did Mamie ever talk about that?

FOLTZ: Well, Elizabeth Draper wanted to make an inexpensive material for young people, and that's what she designed. I have some bedspreads made out of it, and it really is nice.

MEDINA: Mamie had a dress made out of it.

FOLTZ: She did. She never wore it though.

MEDINA: Yes, she did.

FOLTZ: She did?

MEDINA: I have a photograph of it in the museum (laughter).

FOLTZ: Oh, it was the picnic, wasn't it?

MEDINA: I don't know. It's under a tree and it's just Ike and Mamie together. I don't know the location, but --

FOLTZ: Yes (laughing). You know they --

MEDINA: Well, I have the dress (speaking at same time -- unintelligible).

FOLTZ: -- they had some chairs covered in it in their house. I didn't see them when I went in there recently, and they also -- what's that one across the street from the White House?

MEDINA: Blair House.

FOLTZ: Blair House. Elizabeth decorated that, too.

MEDINA: It was Elizabeth.

FOLTZ: Yes, and I think she used that Toile there.

MEDINA: Yes, she did in the Eisenhower bedroom.

FOLTZ: Oh, did she?

MEDINA: The drapes, the bedspread and all the furniture that's covered is -- I was going to go on -- something to do about the farm. Oh, the office. Ike is in the White House and has many offices there. When he moves in 'sixty-one to the farm, he goes to Eisenhower College for his office. Was there a reason why he didn't have it at the farm?

FOLTZ: Well, there's no place to have it. I guess you could go up to the cattle barns or over to the pig farm (laughs) and use some of those buildings, but no, he had a very nice office and he was very [unintelligible].

MEDINA: Mamie always had mentioned that she was tired of having all the people around, and I got the impression that may have been why she didn't want, that she influenced that.

FOLTZ: I don't think there was anyplace to have that office in the house. I don't think of that house as being so big, you know. I guess it really was -- I mean, if you'd buy one like that now you'd think it was pretty big -- but they had that study at the back behind the kitchen, and then they had sort of a little desk as you came in and Mamie used that sometimes.

MEDINA: She had a desk upstairs in her bedroom.

FOLTZ: Yes, which Anne has. That was sort of a fascinating desk because it curved; it was a kidney shaped desk. It was beautiful.

MEDINA: Those are still made. That was made --

FOLTZ: Are they?

MEDINA: -- that was made in Michigan. In Grand Rapids. I think the company's name was Star or Start. Because I know when that desk was removed and the Park Service took it over, they were looking for someone to make one and I said, "you don't have to get a replica, they still make it."

FOLTZ: Ah-ha. Well, they did that because Anne took hers and I took over the thing that they had repeated, a little chest about this high, and it had lots of drawers in it for costume jewelry. Well, I don't think you'd put your jewelry in there, real jewelry, because there's nowhere to lock it. It's a wonderful little chest.

ED FOLTZ: It's in the corner of the closet in the bedroom.

MEDINA: Since you mentioned jewelry, that seems to be one of my favorite subjects (laughs). I know Mamie had a nice collection.

FOLTZ: Yes. She gave me quite a bit of it. Most of it's in a safe.

MEDINA: She was very generous to the museum and gave us some pieces. I know that she loved jewelry.

FOLTZ: Um-hm.

MEDINA: And in 'ninety-six I took these photographs that she had documented all of her jewelry when she moved into the White House. Was that one of her favorite things? I know she also liked china.

FOLTZ: Let's see, jewelry (laughs).

MEDINA: Jewelry was the better?

FOLTZ: Yes. But I didn't see her wear that much. She always had on pearls, and they were not real. She gave me a set of real ones and I don't think she'd ever worn them, really. They needed to be worn, you know, they like to be on somebody's skin and I'm so glad you have that picture. I wish you could duplicate it for me.

MEDINA: Okay.

FOLTZ: Bigger?

MEDINA: I think it's in color.

FOLTZ: Yes it is.

MEDINA: It's in National Geographic so we have to see if we can.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Copyright issues.

MEDINA: It's a copyrighted photograph.

FOLTZ: Maybe I could write to them.

MEDINA: But we'll see.

FOLTZ: They won't even remember 1952 or 'fifty-nine in the National Geographic, would they (laughs)?

MEDINA: It probably was published --

FOLTZ: Oh, yes --

MEDINA: -- in the National Geographic Magazine.

FOLTZ: I've got the National Geographic that they -- you can hardly see us. See, it's Nelmu and Ike and me.

MEDINA: I think there's some closer ones.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: I think there's some closer ones, but—

FOLTZ: Really?

MEDINA: I think they, when they get closer, the Taj Mahal is not as evident.

FOLTZ: No, I think that's the one I had.

MEDINA: And that's probably done for the dramatic view of the Taj Mahal.

FOLTZ: Oh, it really is isn't it?

MEDINA: Especially with the reflection on the water.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Well, thank you, and we'll take a break and then come back later today.

FOLTZ: Okay.

LEYERZAPF: This is the end of side two of tape one. The interview will resume on a separate cassette.

OH-554

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With
BARBARA EISENHOWER-FOLTZ

Conducted at the
Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library
In
Abilene, Kansas
November 30, 2006

by
James Leyerzapf
and
Dennis Medina

Interview #2

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x Barbara T. Foltz
Donor

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Steven Fawcett
Archivist of the United States

Assistant Archivist
for Presidential Libraries

8-4-08
Date

Sound File 1b ends; Sound File 2a begins.

LEYERZAPF: This is the interview of Barbara Eisenhower-Foltz by Dennis Medina and Jim Leyerzapf, dated November 30, 2006.

MEDINA: And just mention that we're discussing the article, *How to Be a Good Daughter-in-Law* that's supposed to be authored by (laughing) Barbara, but—

FOLTZ: Yes. Well, I think maybe I talked to somebody and they took my words and made an article out of it. Who was it? Oh, I can't even think of his name, but they were friends of the folks and he was a newspaper man. He came down to Georgia, and he wrote up stories about us, and we didn't like the stories very much. They were a little on the sappy side, you know, and John just wanted him to go away, but he called himself our Boswell. He was John Eisenhower's Boswell. Wasn't that his name?

LEYERZAPF: Yes.

FOLTZ: So he finally disappeared because we didn't have anything much to say to him, and we didn't like him, but I think something like that could have been written by him.

LEYERZAPF: Perhaps. It wasn't Bob Donovan?

FOLTZ: No.

LEYERZAPF: Yeah, okay, someone else.

FOLTZ: They lived out on Long Island, and he had a wife and they were friends of the folks -- they claimed to be -- and I think that we had done some something with them. I just can't remember. Maybe it'll come to me.

LEYERZAPF: The only ones that come to my mind that were associated, at least in the record, are Bob Donovan and Merrill Mueller, Red Mueller.

FOLTZ: Well, how about in Mamie's files?

LEYERZAPF: I don't know those files that well, and there very well might have been somebody different.

FOLTZ: I don't think he ever had anything to do with Ike.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, okay.

FOLTZ: I don't think so.

LEYERZAPF: I don't know who that would be.

MEDINA: Mary Jane McCaffrey probably handled that part.

FOLTZ: Oh, I'm sure she probably remembers it.

LEYERZAPF: I guess she would be the person to handle that.

FOLTZ: They helped us. I can't remember what they did. I think she helped me shop before my wedding. We disembarked in New York from Austria --

MEDINA: Mamie helped you shop?

FOLTZ: No. It was the reporter's wife.

MEDINA: Oh.

FOLTZ: No. Mamie didn't help me shop, but some of her friends did. She'd put me in the hands of the writer and his wife when we returned to the U.S. from Austria in 1947 and we also bought the wedding gown up in New York before we went down to the Eisenhower's house. They had a dinner for us -- it was just the family. And Mimi always had finger bowls. And I can remember (laughs) my sister saying, "Oh, I was afraid Richard was going to drink the water out of the finger bowl." (laughter). Then we went on down to Fort Monroe where we were stationed and that was where the wedding took place.

MEDINA: When you say family that were there for the dinner, was it Ike's family or Mamie's family?

FOLTZ: No, I think it was just my family. I mean my mother and father and my brother and sister and me. My other brother was in West Point. So then we went down to Fort Monroe and had the wedding. Mom and Dad didn't even have quarters on the post so everybody was helping. This was a big deal to have Ike coming down to this wedding.

MEDINA: What kind of public reaction did Eisenhower have at that time as far as going out in the public? Did people try to go up to him all the time?

FOLTZ: Oh yes, I think they did, pretty much. They showed their adoration. I don't remember exactly how, but it was sort of a phenomenon. I mean, we'd never been so looked at (laughs) before, and then, I guess, -- Could you turn that off and I'll tell you this story?

[Interruption]

MEDINA: You had another story that you were going to tell when we were down at the chapel that you mentioned. I just thought of another Mamie story. Do you remember what that was?

FOLTZ: Oh, I think it was the finger bowl.

MEDINA: Oh, was it the finger bowl. Okay.

FOLTZ: She told me that she always set up John so that he had a finger bowl, even if they went out and left a babysitter with him.

MEDINA: Really?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: She was that proper.

FOLTZ: Well, that was, I guess, very formal, but that's what they did and so John knew all the manual of the finger bowl. You know there is a manual to it. It comes in on a dessert plate with a knife and a fork and they set it down. Then you pick up the finger bowl and set it over here, and then you have your dessert served. You eat that and then when they take the dessert plate away you could bring this back over here and rinse off your hands. He sort of ignored it, but I'd never heard of such a thing.

MEDINA: I forgot to show you in the library -- we were talking about Mamie's hairdo and Elizabeth Arden did some drawings --

FOLTZ: Oh, really?

MEDINA: -- on the hairdo so that no matter where she would travel, someone could --

FOLTZ: She could have it done.

MEDINA: -- have it done. So I need to show you that.

FOLTZ: Yes, I'd like to see that.

MEDINA: But how often would she get, go to the beauty shop? Of course she didn't go out, somebody came in to do that.

FOLTZ: No, she got Delores trained to help her with her hair. She'd go out to Maine Chance. That was one thing she did in the way of beauty things.

MEDINA: You were talking about shopping. How does a First Lady shop? She can't go out to the stores, I don't think.

FOLTZ: No she'd go up to the designers in New York and they'd show her their seasonal things. Models would come out and model them and she'd pick out what she wanted. She'd pay for them though. She would not take anything – the jewelers loan jewelry to celebrities and for people who are in the news. I'm sure out in Hollywood that happens a lot. And she would not let us borrow jewelry for big occasions.

MEDINA: You were telling me a story the other night about "running things on the eagle."

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: Would you say some things about that?

FOLTZ: "Running it on the eagle" (laughs). I can't remember where -- Ed, do you remember hearing that from Mamie?

ED FOLTZ: I learned that from you.

FOLTZ: Yes.

ED FOLTZ: You told me that Mamie used to say --

FOLTZ: She used to say that, yes. No, "we're not going to run it on the eagle."

ED FOLTZ: You sort of took that, and I thought it was good and I use it all the time (laughter)

FOLTZ: She would make sure that the wrong people didn't use the White House cars. I mean, she was really very strict about that and about everything like that.

MEDINA: Propriety.

FOLTZ: Well, just not "running it on the eagle," not taking advantage of government stuff -- or even stealing it (laughter). People do that, I guess.

MEDINA: Yes. It became a big problem, I think, for state dinners. Losing flatware and things like that. You know, now, that they're watching it much closer?

FOLTZ: Well, over in Belgium we had a lot of things taken when we had a big party and they were nice people that were invited (laughter). We finally went down to Italy, and on a trip when we bought all these little boxes, and we'd set them around, they'd all disappear. Then, finally, we went to matches and put our names on them -- and then they'd take those.

LEYERZAPF: Placate them by giving them something less expensive.

FOLTZ: Yes (laughs).

MEDINA: I think we can move onto the White House years, the second segment that I mentioned to you, and intertwine so many of the stories. But we're now in 1952, Ike comes to Abilene to announce with his brothers that he's going to run for the presidency. Were you on that trip?

FOLTZ: No. But I was living in Highland Falls, New York. Nineteen-fifty-two. John had gone to Korea after a four-year tour teaching at the Military Academy. I spent my time in Highland Falls, also at the White House and at Fort Sheridan where my parents were stationed.

MEDINA: Yes, fifty-two.

FOLTZ: Ike and Mimi asked me if I'd like to go on a campaign trip, and I thought, Oh, that would be fun. So I went down to Peck and Peck and bought myself one of those Peck and Peck outfits -- the store no longer exists, I don't think. It was on Fifth Avenue. And away we went. It was by train and it was really eye-opening. It was so exhausting. We'd stop at all these little places and Ike didn't get exhausted. He went out and gave a speech in each place, and all these people gathered around the back of the train. I don't know how long it lasted, but it was quite an experience. Mamie was out there with him -- remember that cute picture where they're in their night clothes?

LEYERZAPF: Yes.

FOLTZ: On the back of the train? Well, that wasn't part of my trip, but it was it was kind of the way it was. You know, it was something. And I thought they were so nice to ask me to go.

MEDINA: Well, prior to the announcement, Ike's in NATO. Did he consult with any of the family that he was going to make this decision to run?

FOLTZ: Not with, no, not with—

MEDINA: With John?

FOLTZ: Well, maybe with John, I don't know, but then he got over there in Paris and he invited us to come for the summer. So we went over and stayed in Versailles in the -- I can't think of the name of the hotel.

MEDINA: Trianon.

FOLTZ: Trianon Palace. It was a wonderful place. The kids were there and they got a -- I think it was a Secret Serviceman's wife -- came and looked after the children. I got to go and look at all the things I wanted to see in Paris while the men were playing golf (laughs). It was just a wonderful summer. Imagine, a whole summer in Paris!

LEYERZAPF: That would have been in 1950 or fifty-one.

FOLTZ: All these people, interesting movie stars, from movie stars to politicians to everybody, came over there to try to talk Ike into running for President. And then when -- I told you about Harriman?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: They were all trying to get Ike to run for President, and so he finally did.

MEDINA: How do you think that Ike and Mamie handled the pressures of the campaign?

FOLTZ: Very well.

MEDINA: Daily life? Mamie mentions that she's wearing her engagement ring and her hands got swollen from all the hand-shaking.

FOLTZ: Hand-shaking, yes. That was just a minor complaint. In fact, I think they enjoyed that to some extent. You know, it gets old after awhile, but they certainly weren't faking it when they were smiling and --

LEYERZAPF: They enjoyed people, didn't they?

FOLTZ: Yes, they did.

LEYERZAPF: Ike often said he hated politics, but I think this part of it he might have liked. Might have enjoyed that -- meeting people.

FOLTZ: Yes (laughing). I think he did.

MEDINA: I think he said that in a press conference. A reporter asked -- it had been three years of Ike being President -- and he wanted to know how he enjoyed politics, and he hesitated. He later said that he didn't like politics in general terms, but he did like it in the terms of meeting people and deciding things, but not the general sense of *having* to do that.

LEYERZAPF: I think a lot of the politics that he disliked was the politics of working with Capitol Hill, as opposed to meeting common folk and talking to them.

FOLTZ: He always wanted to close down the Congress at night for when it was over. Who was the head person in Congress? Do you remember, Ed?

ED FOLTZ: Oh, that Tennessee guy I think (speaking at same time).

LEYERZAPF: You mean [unintelligible]—

MEDINA: Sam Rayburn, is that who you are thinking, Speaker of the House?

ED FOLTZ: No, a Senator from Tennessee. He's well known and he's still living. I read something about him about a week ago.

FOLTZ: Gosh, he must be ancient (laughs). Anyway, what I was going to say is, I remember being in the White House around cocktail time. Anyway, he called up and they had a roaring conversation. It was sort of a moment because Congress was closing, and he'd called up to tell Ike that they were all going now and they'd see him next time they convened. Who was that?

LEYERZAPF: You said an elected official or—

FOLTZ: Yes, I think so.

LEYERZAPF: Because of his --

FOLTZ: It couldn't have been Johnson.

ED FOLTZ: Baker from Tennessee (speaking at same time) was a great --

FOLTZ: No, it wasn't Baker.

MEDINA: It would have to be someone that's the Majority Leader, or someone like that.

LEYERZAPF: Well, for six of the years it would have been Rayburn in the House and Johnson in the Senate.

FOLTZ: Johnson.

LEYERZAPF: The first two years (speaking at same time), though it, would have been Bill --

FOLTZ: You mean, President Johnson?

LEYERZAPF: -- Yes, Senator Johnson. He was Senate Majority Leader although the first, his first two years, the Republicans controlled Congress and Joe Martin of Pennsylvania was Speaker of the House and Bill Knowland of California was Senate Majority Leader. So those were the four leaders.

FOLTZ: No, it may come to me, but I can't -- It was really nice. I got a kick out of it.

MEDINA: How about the Convention of fifty-two in Chicago?

FOLTZ: Did we go? Yes. My parents lived out there.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, okay.

FOLTZ: At Fort Sheridan, Illinois. We'd go in every day and watch the goings-on. And, of course, he won.

LEYERZAPF: Did you take the children with you for that convention week?

FOLTZ: They were at my parent's house.

LEYERZAPF: They were there in any event.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: I see from the record, you were trying to think of where you were in the spring of fifty-two. According to our records, you were at Highland Falls, New York.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Does that sound right?

FOLTZ: Yes. And the reason why was that John went to Korea and instead of going home, we had been stationed at West Point for all those years. I felt like it was home, and even though the personnel changed very often, a lot of my friends, too, came there to Highland Falls to live while their husbands were in Korea. We kept each other company and, well, it was interesting. John got over to Korea and they decided that he was dangerous because if he got captured why, and his father was President, this would cause all kinds of trouble so they gave him a dog (laughter), and they gave him a roommate, a tent mate, and the tent mate was named Hal Barber, a really nifty guy.

LEYERZAPF: You had friends in the Highland Falls area.

FOLTZ: Oh yes, well this was (speaking at same time) --

LEYERZAPF: So you were comfortable there?

FOLTZ: -- they were not civilians; they were all army wives that I knew. So I was living there, and then I'd go and visit my parents for a month in Fort Sheridan, and then I'd go down to the White House for a month and take the kids. I remember I came upstairs one day and they were eating dinner in the solarium and I looked at what they were eating and they were having cake and ice cream. This was not desert, this was the main meal (laughter). I asked what in the world are they feeding them? I asked the man that was serving it; I said, "What kind of a dinner is this?" And they said, "Mrs. Eisenhower said to give those children what they wanted and not to give them stuff that they don't eat."

MEDINA: Oh, we don't want to be wasteful.

FOLTZ: She didn't want to be wasteful. It wasn't that she wanted the kids to just eat all the things that they love that mother wouldn't let them have (laughs).

LEYERZAPF: She wasn't trying to spoil them.

FOLTZ: No, she wasn't. But I always thought that was so funny. It was just such a shock to come up and see what they were eating for dinner (laughs).

MEDINA: With the election, we have a lot of photographs of that election night with Ike and Mamie holding up their hands and the numbers behind them. Were you there that night when the election returns were done?

FOLTZ: In fifty-two?

MEDINA: In fifty-two.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: What kinds of things were going on?

FOLTZ: It's just an unbelievable feeling, to know this man's been elected President of the United States. John wasn't there.

MEDINA: He was in Korea.

FOLTZ: Yes -- I don't think I was, either. I think I was watching it on television because we went over to -- Ed, we went over to Ann [Seola's?] house. What was her name? It wasn't [Seola?]; it is now? Anyway, we went over to her mother's house and they were stationed there, her mother and father -- she was an Army brat -- and watched the whole thing.

MEDINA: Did you come to New York after that to see Ike and Mamie after he was elected?

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Because then the inaugural is being planned.

FOLTZ: Oh, now, wait a minute. Was it fifty-six when we all went down to a hotel and watched the election [unintelligible]?

MEDINA: That would have been in San Francisco.

FOLTZ: Oh, was it? Then this was fifty-two that I'm thinking of. We did -- we watched it in this hotel.

MEDINA: It would have been probably the Staler Hilton or --

FOLTZ: Right in New York City.

MEDINA: Yes, there was another hotel there that was his headquarters, and I can't remember the name of it.

LEYERZAPF: Was it relatively easy to get from Highland Falls into the city?

FOLTZ: Oh yes, it isn't very far.

LEYERZAPF: Not that far away.

FOLTZ: And we got in his car -- I remember this very clearly -- the next morning -- we'd spent the night in the hotel -- the next morning we were going to Augusta so he could rest. And we got in the car and there were these little flags flying; they were blue. And I said to somebody, "What are those flags?" And they said, "That's the presidential flag." That really blew my mind. And then we went down to Augusta and had a vacation.

MEDINA: Did the Secret Service move in at that point?

FOLTZ: Yes, and it was something. The San Francisco Convention, I did not go to that. John had bought himself an airplane, just like the Kennedy boys one-engine. I wouldn't go anywhere with him in that.

MEDINA: I didn't know that John flew.

FOLTZ: Oh, yes. He wanted to fly out to that convention, so he got a friend of ours to go with him and I thought to myself, well, there are about eight children that are going to be orphaned if anything happens to that plane. But it didn't. He got out there and then Freeman Gosden, who was a great friend of Ike's, said, "Now Barbara, if you go down to California, to L.A., we'll show you a good time." He said, "You can go to a party and all these movie stars will be there." And who was I going to get to sit next to? Oh, he's a wonderful movie star (laughs). I hadn't thought about him for a while. Anyway, I'll tell you in a minute. So I went down and stayed in

their house and then I went home on the airlines. I didn't fly back with John at all. I really didn't think it was a good idea for the two of us to be in a one-engine airplane (laughter).

MEDINA: No (laughs).

LEYERZAPF: No it wasn't a good idea (laughs).

FOLTZ: No it wasn't, and look what happened to that Kennedy boy. I don't think John had more hours than he did at that point. Later, I took some lessons so that I wouldn't be quite as frightened — and I wasn't. You know, when you get used to things, why it helps (laughs). Anyway, I went down to Freeman's party and, oh my, it was really something. Who is that wonderful movie star that I got to sit next to (laughs)? Cary Grant. Grant was chasing a young girl that was at the party. He didn't really have eyes for me (laughter), and I had read in the paper that he'd been seeing a psychiatrist and had taken LSD.

MEDINA: Oh.

FOLTZ: Well remember, psychiatrists used to treat people with that. Then they found out it was really fun, I guess (laughter) and it turned into a street drug. So I asked him about it. I said, "What was it like to take LSD?" I think I could ask him — he had authored or been interviewed on the subject in *Good Housekeeping* — what it was like, the experience? And he said, "Oh, it was wonderful."

MEDINA: Oh.

FOLTZ: So when I got home, John asked me how I liked sitting next to Cary Grant and I said, "Oh we had an interesting conversation about LSD." And he says, "You asked him about that (laughter)?"

LEYERZAPF: And you did.

FOLTZ: Yes, I did. John thought that was terrible that I'd ask him about it. And he [Grant] fell in love with this girl, and he was chasing her [unintelligible] in the course of the evening. He later married her and she was his only heir. I think they had a child; I'm not sure.

MEDINA: I'm not sure about that.

LEYERZAPF: Who was his wife at that time?

MEDINA: I have no idea. We were talking about Mamie's clothes and now we're in the inaugural, and she starts to shop for her inaugural ball gown. Neiman Marcus offers her a gown.

FOLTZ: Is this the second inauguration?

MEDINA: It was the pink one. Bonwit-Tellers did the second one.

FOLTZ: I didn't know that.

MEDINA: They're all designed by Nettie Rosenstein. I don't know how that works out, but a designer goes through a department store.

FOLTZ: They do?

MEDINA: Yes. And we know that Mamie paid for that dress -- it might have been undercut a great deal, but --

FOLTZ: Yes, it probably was.

MEDINA: Did she advise you of what she was wearing in --

FOLTZ: No. I'll tell you what I wore to the first inauguration. I hope I have a picture of me in it and I'm sick I gave it away. I didn't give it away; time passed, and I hope I didn't take it to a

thrift shop. But anyway, when we were in Paris that summer, Mamie said, "Barbie every girl has to have a dress made in Paris so we're going to go shop for one." We went to Jacques Griffe and got this gorgeous dress. So I had to go back for a fitting and Mamie had to go somewhere. So she got Perle Mesta to take me back to the fitting because she didn't think I had enough spunk to (laughter) get it fitted right. And that's the dress I wore to the inauguration.

MEDINA: What color was it?

FOLTZ: It was sort of a melon color. It had tiers all the way down, and I've seen some recent designs like that by some that have stolen the idea. It was gorgeous.

MEDINA: You were talking about buying a French design. Mamie was asked early on, when she was First Lady, about buying American and she said she always bought American; in fact, she bought "Jacques Pene." In the collection that we have there is not a JC Penny piece in there.

FOLTZ: There's not?

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: Well she thought that was great -- this was out in California -- and JC Penny's in California. I think, is a little cut above some of the ones over here. She strictly bought costume jewelry, I thought, no dresses.

LEYERZAPF: That might make a difference.

FOLTZ: Yes (laughs). She'd buy these rings and things like that and her friends would complement her on them and they were just "Pene's" (laughs). She just kind of did that because -- the same way she was stubborn about her bangs -- a lot of people criticized her bangs and she wouldn't change them. She --

MEDINA: But I do think that we have a Jacques Griffe piece in the collection.

FOLTZ: You do?

MEDINA: I'm thinking dress, I believe I remember seeing that name.

FOLTZ: Oh, Jacque what? Jacque Griffé?

MEDINA: Griffé.

FOLTZ: Oh, do you?

MEDINA: Which is the collection that you sent out here after Mamie's death.

FOLTZ: Yeah, well that was in that back room on the --

MEDINA: Was that a bedroom that she used as a closet?

FOLTZ: No. That was on the way into the house, but the bedrooms were all intact because we didn't use them after she died.

MEDINA: During the period of time between the election and the inaugural, there's a little problem going on with Nixon in the Checkers Speech.

FOLTZ: I remember watching that.

MEDINA: You watched it. Did you watch it with the Eisenhowers?

FOLTZ: No, I was watching it up in Highland Falls. Now, where were they?

MEDINA: They would have been (speaking at same time) in New York.

FOLTZ: John was in Korea.

LEYERZAPF: I think they were in Cleveland on the campaign stop.

FOLTZ: Oh, is that what it was?

LEYERZAPF: I think that's where Ike was. Ike and Mamie were in Cleveland on a campaign stop on the night of the Checkers Speech.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Did you ever talk about that?

FOLTZ: No. We also got a -- who was the general over in Korea?

LEYERZAPF: Ridgeway?

FOLTZ: No, name a few others who --

LEYERZAPF: MacArthur?

FOLTZ: No, this was in Korea. He was a big general.

LEYERZAPF: Ridgeway relieved MacArthur. I don't know who else was over there.

FOLTZ: Anyway, one of the generals, General Van Fleet. I knew his daughter, and I think she was staying in Highland Falls, and she had somehow seen her father or talked to him. He made some rude remarks about Ike, and he said he couldn't stop the war or something. They were talking about the Korean War and I was told to give the message that he was all wrong about what he was doing over there. Everybody laughed later and they said, "Gosh Barbara, it's a

good thing Ike won because this man would have been court-martialed and kicked out of the Army."

LEYERZAPF: No.

FOLTZ: Well, I'll have to look that one up. Anyway, she came to me when I was out mowing the lawn and she told me about this and she said that her father had gotten in touch with her and told her to tell Ike that Truman was wrong about what he said. I just can't remember. I have a newspaper clipping, actually, from that period where somebody that we didn't like, some columnist, was saying that "over the bridge tables up in Highland Falls [they're] talking about -- I've got to go look that up.

LEYERZAPF: That's an interesting story.

FOLTZ: And I felt like a spy or something (laughter). And who was it, who was it? Well, I have scrapbooks and that will tell me the whole story, especially when I see the article

MEDINA: But the Checkers Speech was never a topic of conversation?

FOLTZ: No, just among our friends. We didn't say anything about it. I mean, we talked about it. I thought it was a very good speech, myself. And then the papers started hammering on it and -- David and Julie were -- they weren't married. They were married.

MEDINA: They were little kids.

FOLTZ: No. Not --

MEDINA: During the Checkers Speech.

FOLTZ: I guess so, yes.

MEDINA: Yes, that would have been fifty-two.

FOLTZ: Fifty-two. Well, when all the Nixon trouble started --

MEDINA: That started during the Watergate, in the 'seventies.

LEYERZAPF: Early seventies.

FOLTZ: When that started I just -- I never read anything about it. I don't know anything about it because I said, "my daughter-in-law is Julie and I don't want to have an opinion on that subject." That was a sad thing.

MEDINA: Did Ike and Mamie feel that you had a role in White House activities?

FOLTZ: No.

MEDINA: Did you have a function?

FOLTZ: No, in fact they disabused that idea. If I got any ideas like that in my head I was disabused (laughter). No, they thought -- it was sort of like the Bushes, although Ike did take me on that trip.

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: I think as time passed, and Mamie didn't feel as good as she did in the beginning, they had me do some things, but mostly I was raising my children and I didn't have much help. I mean help that you paid for. I remember when we moved to New York City I'd be -- Watson. What was his name?

LEYERZAPF: Tom Watson.

FOLTZ: Tom Watson had a dinner party for us and it was really formal. I mean he had a footman behind every chair.

MEDINA: Oh, dear.

FOLTZ: And it was really something. Then his daughter -- later, her husband went into the government -- Jane Watson. I went to a luncheon at her house and all these women, all they talked about were the nurses that they had for their children and I had no nurses (laughter) for any children.

MEDINA: And they weren't nannies?

FOLTZ: They were nannies.

MEDINA: Oh, they were nannies.

FOLTZ: Yes. They talked about all the problems with nannies. (laughs).

MEDINA: The inaugural, when it happens, and John comes home and there's that tea with --

FOLTZ: You mean the coffee?

MEDINA: The coffee.

FOLTZ: In the White House.

MEDINA: And Truman and Ike go in the car, and they don't talk, and historians have said it was because Ike was upset that Truman asked John to come home for the inaugural.

FOLTZ: I think that might be. And I think Truman was very hurt. He thought he was doing something nice and John didn't want to come home because he actually lost a promotion during

that, more or less. You'd think his father would have done something about that (laughs) because he was up for promotion. I shouldn't say this because this is very technical and I don't want to make a mistake, but he was serving in a position that when you finally had served a certain amount of time you got an automatic promotion. He was a major and he would have been colonel. And probably in line to be a general eventually. I think he kind of missed out on that. Ike was very much against interfering in any way in his career. This was done from a loving way. It wasn't that he was mean or ignoring his son; it was just the way he was about things.

MEDINA: Also, the historians have talked about -- I think it was in 1947 -- is that right Jim, that Truman offered to run as VP?

LEYERZAPF: Forty-eight.

MEDINA: Forty-eight.

FOLTZ: He offered to do what?

MEDINA: Ike apparently was at the White House and Truman offered that he would, that Truman, himself, would run as VP if Ike would run for the presidency.

FOLTZ: Oh, I didn't know the VP part.

MEDINA: And he turned it down.

FOLTZ: Yes, well, I think he would.

MEDINA: And then later Truman denied the story.

LEYERZAPF: But we have a letter.

MEDINA: Recently the Truman Library found a letter, a diary that has an entry

FOLTZ: Don't you remember how he went around saying he never was invited back to the White House? Well, John sent him I don't know how many invitations -- he was working in the White House then -- and he just didn't accept so he was being very petty wasn't he?

LEYERZAPF: That's interesting.

MEDINA: But you do agree with the historians on that -- point about Truman and Ike not getting along very well because of that [incident] with John?

FOLTZ: Well, yes -- I don't think that they were having words or anything, it's just --

MEDINA: But they had none (laughter).

FOLTZ: They had none, yes (laughter). Ike was a very big-hearted, big person, you know, so he didn't get really very upset over something like that. But Truman had asked him to run as a Democrat. And he said no, he decided he was a Republican. So Truman was angry about that.

MEDINA: The inaugural, we had talked a little bit about some of the activities the other day and you were talking about staying in the White House and some of the activity that was going on, getting ready for the dinner that night and the balls. We've talked about your dress, and I could not find a photograph of the first inaugural, but I did find one of the second inaugural.

FOLTZ: Oh, boy, that was so long ago.

MEDINA: And I don't have it in color.

FOLTZ: Which dress is that? I don't even recognize the dress.

MEDINA: Well Mamie's was yellow, pale yellow.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Of course the balls are just a mass of people; there's not really much dancing going on, is there?

FOLTZ: No, but I've noticed lately that the President always dances with the First Lady.

MEDINA: Just a couple of little turns.

FOLTZ: Yes (laughs) I don't think Ike did.

MEDINA: I don't remember.

FOLTZ: No.

MEDINA: Did they ever dance? I know they would sing together at some of the parties.

FOLTZ: Oh yes. Mamie could play the piano by ear and they always had a piano around somewhere.

MEDINA: That part of their life -- we know from some of the early biographies that when they were at some of the early forts they had a lot of activities at their apartments or their housing and they called it --

FOLTZ: Club Eisenhower.

MEDINA: Club Eisenhower.

FOLTZ: And it was like that even on the farm. Every time there were guests or people were around, even between themselves, they'd have cocktail hour, and usually there's someone there.

a guest of some kind. They ate dinner at seven, and it was over well before that, but sometimes the person didn't stay for dinner. A lot of people would drop by

MEDINA: Just for a little cocktail and social hour.

FOLTZ: Not so much out in the country, but we would.

MEDINA: But you were close by.

FOLTZ: Yes. They didn't really get into the Gettysburg scene very much -- Ike was a friend of the man that ran the hotel -- but I did. I got involved with the Red Cross and other things and -- the head of the Red Cross ran off with all the funds (laughter). A big embezzlement in our little town.

ED FOLTZ: Barbara has become a celebrity in Waverly because she [unintelligible] has trips.

FOLTZ: Trips and Tours, that's the committee I'm on.

ED FOLTZ: Trips and Tours. And they asked Barbara to take them up there. Barbara took them and --

FOLTZ: I just had a wonderful guide, that's why they enjoyed it so much.

ED FOLTZ: Now I'll walk around with her -- and she's going to be really famous [unintelligible] -- somebody will say, "Oh, Barbara, that trip was so good, you told the story so good" etcetera.

FOLTZ: Oh, I put a few little things on at the end. There's a microphone in the bus. They asked me what it was like and I was telling them how we used to go up there for dinner and we'd put on shows for the folks. They enjoyed that. But we had a lot of fun there. Even though it was not the White House anymore, we all got over that and it was a lot of fun.

MEDINA: That is a big shock, isn't it, when the presidency is over and --

FOLTZ: Well, the biggest shock to me was when I'd go by the White House and I knew I can't drive in. I mean, that was grandma's house (laughter). You just automatically stopped when you came in from Alexandria. You were going to do something, you'd go through the gate, and they'd pass you through, and you'd go on upstairs to the second floor where she was and --

ED FOLTZ: What happened when we went and saw -- Mrs. Bush came down and took us upstairs and --

FOLTZ: Oh, yes, that was current. Well, Dick Trefry was a friend of John and mine and he worked in the White House. He was head of security, I think -- he was a general -- so I called him after I married Ed and asked him if he could give us a tour, a good tour. So he said yes, he would he would arrange it all. He then he told Mrs. Bush we were coming and, by golly, she came and met us and took us through the whole White House and up to the second floor and everywhere else. That was really nice of her. That was Mrs. Bush number one.

ED FOLTZ: Barbara.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Barbara Bush.

FOLTZ: I've never met the other girl, the President's First Lady.

LEYERZAPF: I had a couple of questions about White House staff you might have come to know that you might want to comment on. I mentioned earlier Andy Goodpaster. Any observations about Andy? Were you around him much?

FOLTZ: Yes, well, he went on that thirteen-nation trip with us. He was working in the White House at the time.

LEYERZAPF: Oh that's true. He was on the trip.

FOLTZ: I was the only girl on the trip and we sat in the Air Force One and we'd talk about what we'd seen and done, and I just thought Andy was a really fine person, and nice, and he was interesting.

MEDINA: Ann Whitman didn't go on any of the trips?

FOLTZ: Not that I know of.

LEYERZAPF: She would have stayed at the White House. Did you have any contact with Ann Whitman?

FOLTZ: No, is she still alive?

MEDINA: She died.

FOLTZ: I think she did, yes.

LEYERZAPF: Not too long ago, but --

FOLTZ: No, I didn't really --

LEYERZAPF: Didn't have much contact with Ann?

FOLTZ: I suddenly got into such a volume of mail and invitations: sixty-four invitations to birthday parties for my kids. We lived in Alexandria and I just couldn't even answer them all and exist and do anything else. So I went to Mimi and I said, you know, I really can't -- I have to

have help. You have said that we should answer every letter that comes in, so how about helping me out? And so she did. I started being able to use the help on the on the East Wing. So they'd help me with my correspondence, but that was pretty awful if you're the least bit conscientious.

MEDINA: So you worked a lot with Mary Jane McCaffree?

FOLTZ: No, not Mary Jane

MEDINA: No?

FOLTZ: It was some other girl in the office. It was a whole office doing the First Lady's stuff.

MEDINA: I was always under the impression that Mary Jane sort of organized all the --

FOLTZ: Well, she was around -- very much so. In fact, I heard from her at Christmas time.

MEDINA: Any other White House staffer?

FOLTZ: That were friends of mine?

LEYERZAPF: Tom Stevens?

FOLTZ: I didn't know him.

LEYERZAPF: Didn't know the appointment secretary, didn't know Tom?

FOLTZ: No, knew who he was, of course.

Sound File 2a ends; Sound File 2b begins

LEYERZAPF: We are resuming an interview with Barbara Eisenhower-Foltz. The interviewers are Dennis Medina and Jim Leyerzapf, and Barbara's husband, Ed Foltz, is also sitting by.

MEDINA: Barbara, yesterday we were talking a little about the White House life and the staff. We had a few people that we named, and Goodpaster was one, and Ann Whitman. There were some permanent staff in the White House, and one of them was the chief usher, who sort of runs the White House. Do you remember Andy West?

FOLTZ: Yes, Chief West.

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: (laughs) He wrote a book, didn't he?

MEDINA: He did write a book.

FOLTZ: Did you read it?

MEDINA: A long time ago. I don't remember very much about it.

FOLTZ: Yes, he told about all the first ladies and their little oddities. He was very kind, though, thought the world of all of them, and they really depended on him terrifically. I think that is such an odd title, chief usher. You know, this is a home. I would think they would either say the -- what would be the equivalent of him in a private home?

MEDINA: Oh, he would probably be like a head butler.

FOLTZ: Head butler? Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, okay, I always wondered about that. I thought it an odd title.

FOLTZ: I think they just did not want to call him a butler, but that is what he was. He kept track of everything.

LERYERZAPF: Manager, as it were?

FOLTZ: Yes, he was the manager.

MEDINA: He is a manager, because they also would record every person that entered the White House.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: When you came through -- you were mentioning the other day that it is difficult to go back to Washington, to go by the White House, and know you can not go in.

FOLTZ: Yes, we can't go in unless the President and First Lady invite us.

MEDINA: But back then, Pennsylvania Avenue wasn't closed. Did you have a marking on your car or did they just know you when they opened up the gate?

FOLTZ: I don't remember any markings on the car. There may have been but they always recognized us.

MEDINA: Were you driving or did you have a chauffeur?

FOLTZ: No, we drove.

MEDINA: You drove. The White House didn't provide you with a car?

FOLTZ: No!

MEDINA: No (laughter).

FOLTZ: Mimi wouldn't have stood for that.

LEYERZAPF: That would have been "running it on the eagle," wouldn't it?

FOLTZ: That's right.

LEYERZAPF: I love that expression.

FOLTZ: Yes, isn't that wonderful? We use to say that --

LEYERZAPF: I shared that with our administrative officer since she controls the budget and ethics. So I told Janet yesterday and she found it very interesting and amusing and a wonderful term.

FOLTZ: And, Mimi meant it! She really didn't run it on the eagle (laughter)! I guess [some] people did, you know.

MEDINA: Some biographers have, when they have written about Mamie, talk about her protocol -- about vacuuming the carpets so there were no footprints on them. Is that really true?

FOLTZ: Well, it may be, but I just don't remember it as being a big thing.

MEDINA: Well, a lot of biographers make it a big thing.

FOLTZ: I know they do.

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: I wonder why?

MEDINA: I don't know.

FOLTZ: What's wrong with doing that (laughter)?

MEDINA: Well, I always got the impression it was because she wanted the next visitor to feel like they were the first one to see her or something like that.

FOLTZ: Oh, I don't know. I don't think she thought through that.

MEDINA: But I don't know if anyone looks at the floor to see if there are footprints.

FOLTZ: I don't think so. Now, most people didn't do that and so this was always noted, but I can see if enough people came through there and there are enough footprints, it wouldn't look very nice.

MEDINA: There also was a story about one of the Queens coming -- and I am not sure which Queen it was, from what country -- but Mrs. Eisenhower had the chefs serve apple brown betty for dessert and the press got a hold of that and really lambasted her for doing that.

FOLTZ: Why?

MEDINA: I don't know, I guess they thought it was too common.

FOLTZ: Too common?

MEDINA: Do you remember --

FOLTZ: We did not have a French cuisine (laughter), we had what you'd call "real food" (laughter). But the chef was very good.

LEYERZAPF: Do you remember his name?

FOLTZ: No, I don't. But, he has written a cookbook.

LEYERZAPF: There was one named Rysavy, R-Y-S-A-V-Y, but I've never understood whether he was the only one or just what his position was.

FOLTZ: Oh, I'm sure there was more than one.

MEDINA: He wrote a cookbook, but I'm not sure he was the chef. We will have to check that.

LEYERZAPF: Yes, he was on staff as a chef, but I am not sure he was chief chef.

FOLTZ: No --

LEYERZAPF: But he has some recipes in it, some of which I have tried.

FOLTZ: Did they work?

LEYERZAPF: Yes.

FOLTZ: Were they good?

LEYERZAPF: Yes, they were fine.

MEDINA: Do you have any other impressions of some of the permanent staff? Back then the curator would have been Clement Conger?

FOLTZ: I just heard his name. Can you name some others?

LEYERZAPF: Bill Hopkins?

FOLTZ: You know, I think he was over in Ike's office.

LEYERZAPF: Probably, since one of his jobs was records manager for the White House. He was one of those who had been there for, maybe, since Wilson. Bill had been there for a long time, through a lot of different administrations.

FOLTZ: I use to go over to Mimi's wing, which was the -- what?

MEDINA: East Wing.

FOLTZ: East Wing, and I knew all of the secretaries over there, but I never went over to Ike's office uninvited (laughter).

MEDINA: Did he use the Oval Office a lot?

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: Did he go to the Executive Office Building more?

FOLTZ: No, he used the Oval Office. That was his office. And there was a Mess there for the people that worked in that wing and I remember we went in there and had lunch once, but only about once. They didn't want wives and children running around through that building, in that part of the building, I don't think.

MEDINA: What do you think Mrs. Eisenhower thought about her role as First Lady?

FOLTZ: I think she enjoyed it. One thing that I got a kick out of, she thought that she should plan the menus. So Ike would decide that he was having guests, and I think one of his secretaries or somebody would call the chef and tell them what to serve and what time the guests were coming. Mimi didn't like that and they had to change that (laughs). She was the hostess and she was going to decide what they were going to eat and where and when. She was right. She really knew everybody's role and what they should do and how they should do it.

LEYERZAPF: She was a talented manager.

FOLTZ: She really was, and as I say, she really watched the money. They had to pay for a good bit of their own stuff.

LEYERZAPF: Uh-huh.

FOLTZ: She didn't let it be wasted at all.

MEDINA: When I mentioned that I was doing some research at the White House, I did find some of those billings from the accounting office. Anything consumed on the second floor was always billed to the First Family --

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA -- and so anytime they had guests, even though the White House chefs were cooking it, it was paid for.

FOLTZ: They paid for it, yes. I think that is still the way, unless somebody changed it, I mean, changed the rule.

MEDINA: It's still that way. But I never understood how Mrs. Eisenhower transported -- how she ordered things from the farm to be brought out. Was there an operation, a farming operation to go along with that?

FOLTZ: I don't know. I don't. Things just sort of magically happened from my point of view (laughter).

LEYERZAPF: Which was just fine.

FOLTZ: Yes, it was fine.

MEDINA: Life on the farm -- you were out at the farm most of the time?

FOLTZ: Yes. Well, we moved up there before they did. Because we had bought that little house down on the lower end. We were sort of waiting for them to come and they came after JFK's inauguration. They had a last party at the -- I think it was the Sulgrave Club. I mean, they had a luncheon after the inauguration there. Then they came up to the farm.

MEDINA: During the Presidency, how often would they come and stay at the farm? Not very often?

FOLTZ: Well, it depended. Also, Mamie liked to go down to Camp David and that was very close to Gettysburg. We were there a lot and that was a wonderful place. Unseen hands would do (laughs) magic. We would wake up in the morning and there would be a fire in the fireplace and your breakfast that you had ordered. But they didn't bring it too quickly, it didn't get cold. It was just magic, that place.

LEYERZAPF: Mamie really enjoyed Camp David.

FOLTZ: Yes, she did, we all did.

MEDINA: And she enjoyed living in the White House with the servants.

FOLTZ: Oh, I think so. I mean, why not? She had always had servants, in one order or another.

MEDINA: That Pupah [her father, John Doud] provided (laughs).

FOLTZ: Yes. Maybe not always, but, I think, pretty much always. Especially when they lived in Washington, places like that, they would have a least one person.

LEYERZAPF: I recall an entry in Ike's diary when they were at Fort Lewis, when they first arrived. Mamie was unhappy because she couldn't find the quality help she had had in Manila in

Fort Lewis. He made a note of that in (laughs) the diary, that she was a little unsettled about the quality of the available help.

FOLTZ: She really couldn't find anybody, particularly to cook in the house. I don't know what she did. She didn't complain about it -- that was her business -- but you could see what a good manager she was, and she was helping me to become a half-way good one (laughter).

MEDINA: What was life like living in the White House? You're in a fish bowl and the press is very interested in the First Family. Was there a total separation of the press from the family?

FOLTZ: Yes, they were over in the other wing. They didn't come in the White House unless they were invited in. When you went down the stairs -- it's sort of like this where we are living now -- there was a whole bevy of people to say good morning to, whether you wanted to or not. You'd say "Hello, how are you," "Hello," "Hello," "Hello," all the way down the stairs -- not *all* the way down the stairs. You just felt like you were in a museum or something instead of a house, but it was a wonderful place. I was telling Ed the other day, I felt this way, you felt like you were at the center of the universe in the White House because it was such an important place --

LEYERZAPF: You *were*.

FOLTZ: You *were*. You had that feeling, just of the magnitude of it and the things that were going on, and it was quite an interesting experience. You didn't feel like you were out on a farm in Gettysburg, (laughs) that's for sure.

MEDINA: What kind of pressures did this put on you, about your children being --

FOLTZ: We just --

MEDINA: photographs, photographs all the time --

FOLTZ: They weren't photographed very much. We tried to keep them from being photographed and fussed over. I don't know, I think it worked to some extent. We just didn't think that that was a good idea. In fact, when Mary got christened in the White House, I wouldn't even allow pictures of the christening, which people wanted. It would have been cute and I am sorry I didn't, now.

LEYERZAPF: But you wanted to keep life as normal for the children as --

FOLTZ: Yes. I didn't want them to think that everything they did was photographable. Unless there was something bad (laughs).

MEDINA: We were watching in the Museum that segment about Ann and David. I think it was Easter time on the South Side of the White House. You mentioned that David puts his arm around Ann and you said somebody must have told him to do that.

FOLTZ: Yes. Right (laughs).

MEDINA: What were they like as kids in the White House?

FOLTZ: That was really the first, that picture that was taken -- it was on the front of *Newsweek* -- of me with the two children. John was in Korea. That was in the very beginning and we didn't do that much after that. Now, what did you ask there at the end?

MEDINA: What was their life like in the White House, David and Ann's?

FOLTZ: Oh, I think they had a wonderful time. Everybody made a big fuss over them. As I told you, Mimi told them to only give them the food that they would eat (laughter). She didn't want it wasted, so, they were having ice cream and all these wonderful things for dinner. You know, it was just a fun place. There was a swimming pool there and Ike hired a trainer for the kids to teach them, to make sure they could swim well. David got mixed up with some kind of a

tournament, it was a city-wide thing. So, he went to that, but he didn't do too well. I hadn't realized that was going to happen.

LEYERZAPF: Eisenhower took an interest not only in David's golf game, but also in swimming?

FOLTZ: Oh, everything.

LEYERZAPF: -- any other memories you have of Dwight and his grandson, and sports, and teaching him?

FOLTZ: Oh, he was very interested in kids. He only had two children and then, of course, the fatality of the oldest, but I think he wished he had a whole bunch of them because he really adored my children. He always was very interested in them -- short of reading them stories, I don't think he ever had time to do that.

LEYERZAPF: Were there games? Board games or card games he would play with David and the girls?

FOLTZ: I don't think so. I don't think so.

LEYERZAPF: Okay.

FOLTZ: No, the only game I remember him playing was bridge, with all the good bridge players in the world. You know, the well-known ones.

LEYERZAPF: So he didn't get down on his knees and play marbles with the girls.

FOLTZ: No (laughs). He was usually working, but in his spare time he really enjoyed them. We lived everywhere they lived. We were out at Fort Leavenworth and John said, "Where do you want to go next?" We had some kind of choice of where to go after Leavenworth. He said,

"Do you want to go back to Washington?" I said, "Yes, let's go get in on the fun." (laughter)
So we did. I don't know whether that was a good idea or not, but we did it anyway and enjoyed it.

MEDINA: Several historians have said that Ike kept his public life, his family life separated. Do you think that was true?

FOLTZ: I think so. To a certain extent.

MEDINA: As much as he could?

FOLTZ: News people knew. They always said, "don't give any exclusives." Otherwise, you can ban them from everything. As long as you're not giving this guy an exclusive. So, that is the way we handled it and they pretty much left us alone.

MEDINA: Did he talk to John or you about any of the crises or world situations that were bothering him or were difficult?

FOLTZ: No, I don't think he did that as much as Nixon did. Nixon would carry on, ask us what we thought about this and that at the dining room table.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, really?

FOLTZ: Where Mamie would say, "Now, I don't want anybody to talk about work or anything else. I want Ike to be able to come home and relax and not think about it."

LEYERZAPF: There was a pretty clear separation of work and family, of public and private. Do you recall Eisenhower ever coming -- maybe at the farm, in a situation that was more relaxed -- maybe he had a very frustrating day and venting a little bit about some senator or world leader? Or showing frustration?

FOLTZ: The only thing I ever remember was when the U-2 crisis came up and John Foster Dulles was telling him that there was no problem. He thought they should stop the flights and Foster Dulles was assuring him that everything was going to be alright, that if anything happened the guy would go down and he'd take a pill and die. You know, that isn't very logical is it? No matter what your contract says.

LEYERZAPF: Pretty hard to follow through on that one.

FOLTZ: Yes, I would say so. Anyway, you know what happened. Then Khrushchev withdrew his invitation for coming to Russia. It was really a disaster, that U-2 thing.

LEYERZAPF: Eisenhower was visibly frustrated at that time?

FOLTZ: He was very upset about that because he admitted it was his responsibility. I don't know.

MEDINA: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Yes.

FOLTZ: But then, I remember, he owned up to it in the paper --

LEYERZAPF: Oh, yes.

MEDINA: Yes, he did.

FOLTZ: -- a couple days after.

LEYERZAPF: Yes.

FOLTZ: He was deciding whether to do that or not. Everybody was telling him not to, but he did.

LEYERZAPF: Do you think it was a matter of, that he knew his effectiveness was so tied up with his integrity, that he ought not to go there, that he just ought to own up to it because that's what he always stood for?

FOLTZ: I don't think he thought it through like that. I think he just was plain honest and it made him uncomfortable not to own up to it.

LEYERZAPF: Oh, okay. Just his own personal standards.

FOLTZ: I really think so.

LEYERZAPF: It was the right thing to do.

FOLTZ: It was the right thing to do and he always did the right thing, I think. He didn't analyze it, particularly; he did what he felt was the right thing. Without any fanfare. He just did the right thing. He was quite a family man, really. He always had certain friends that he played bridge with. They would come up in the evening sometime and help him relax and play some cards and sit around and just talk. I don't know what he told them.

LEYERZAPF: We have a long oral history with Cliff Roberts. Do you remember Cliff Roberts --

FOLTZ: Oh, yes, yes (speaking at same time) --

LEYERZAPF: -- and Roberts said that even with his closest friends he pretty much stuck to that demarcation: this is public, you're my friends, we're gonna have fun.

FOLTZ: He didn't discuss it.

LEYERZAPF: And a lot of people in the press accused -- thought that Eisenhower was overly influenced by those people.

FOLTZ: No.

LEYERZAPF: And in fact, it seems as though they rarely discussed public policy.

FOLTZ: Oh, I don't think so.

LEYERZAPF: He didn't want them to because he wanted that, that relaxation --

FOLTZ: I think they were impressed with him --

LEYERZAPF: -- that came from the camaraderie.

FOLTZ: -- and he had the ability to put it out of his mind temporarily.

LEYERZAPF: To block it.

FOLTZ: His troubles. Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Compartmentalize.

FOLTZ: Which is a good way to be when you got that much responsibility.

LEYERZAPF: Carter couldn't.

FOLTZ: Who?

LEYERZAPF: Jimmy Carter, I understand, had difficulty compartmentalizing.

FOLTZ: Oh, really?

LEYERZAPF: That's one of the things -- if you've seen photos of Carter in '76 and then again in 1980 -- the incredible amount of aging that took place. I've heard that, at least.

FOLTZ: They all age a little bit. Even Bush is beginning to age, isn't he?

LEYERZAPF: If you can't compartmentalize, you are going to wear down in a hurry.

FOLTZ: You really are because it's very tense.

MEDINA: What about the president's health? You know, with his heart attack in Colorado, and --

FOLTZ: -- (speaking at same time) Yes, that was pretty bad and he recovered from that. Then his question was, whether he was going to run in '76. I don't mean '76 --

MEDINA: It's '56, '56 (speaking at same time).

FOLTZ: -- '56. I think he finally, wanted to [unintelligible]

MEDINA: Did he talk to the family about it? I know that he talked to Milton.

FOLTZ: Well, I think he probably talked to me, but I don't think he talked it over with us particularly. We learned what he was thinking of, but he didn't sit us down and ask us about it. No, we were part of the fun.

MEDINA: But John was on staff.

FOLTZ: Yes, he was on staff and I'm sure he talked to him about things. He'd talk about things in the family, like -- a lot of stuff was top secret anyway. You know, people used to talk about he mixed his syntax, and how he struggled to speak at some of these press conferences. But the truth was, he was (laughs) trying not to spill any beans, so to speak. He'd come back and he said, "Well I guess that held 'em." He confused them. But he didn't know he was being graded on how well he spoke and what he had to say.

MEDINA: I think someone recently has come up with that conclusion, in a biography.

FOLTZ: Really?

LEYERZAPF: Yes. The measure of your command of grammar is probably your writing. In the early thirties, he was the best writer in the United States Army. He wrote some of the speeches for the secretary of war.

FOLTZ: Really?

LEYERZAPF: (laughs) Yes

FOLTZ: My gosh!

LEYERZAPF: He wrote very well. He had total command of the English language. So, that old saw that he was semi-literate, and --

FOLTZ: Oh, I know.

LEYERZAPF: -- didn't know how to --

FOLTZ: He was doing nothing --

LEYERZAPF: Yes, how to construct a sentence and so forth. Yes as you said, he was evading it --

FOLTZ: He was evading it, kind of.

LEYERZAPF: -- and trying give them a decent answer without, finally, spelling the beans. I think Jim Hagerty might even mention something in an oral history about that.

FOLTZ: Oh, did he?

LEYERZAPF: About how he would often come back after the press conference and mention, "Well, how did you think I did, Jim, did I confuse 'em well enough?" Or something like that.

FOLTZ: Yes. Because they were asking him really terrible questions. I mean, wasn't the Cold War going on? And, you know, "How do you like the head of the Soviet Union?" Those kind of questions.

LEYERZAPF: Dennis mentioned the medical problems, the heart attack in September of '55 and the surgery in June of '56. From your perspective, how would you describe the degree of loss of health? Compare him, in, say, the summer of '55 before the heart attack to perhaps a year and a half later, say, Christmas of '56. Was there substantial impairment --

FOLTZ: I don't think so.

LEYERZAPF: -- or did he seem still fairly vigorous?

FOLTZ: Well, not so much vigorous as just "with it." He got very thin, and I think he was all right up to the moment he died, almost. The thing that absolutely astonished me was, I came into his room in the hospital at one point and he was having about the sixteenth heart attack. He was alright at that moment, and having visitors, and guess who he's on the phone with? Kennedy. They would call up and ask his advice. I guess they all do that, among themselves, you know.

"How did you handle this one?" And, I was amazed, because at the same time Kennedy's minions were out saying that Ike was terrible and all this. "He was an old man." I thought it was so dishonest of them, then, to call him up and ask his advice.

LEYERZAPF: I think that some place here there's a letter from Jackie Kennedy to either Dwight or Mamie saying, "Don't listen don't to the press about what you hear. Jack and I don't feel that way."

FOLTZ: Oh, Well, isn't that nice?

MEDINA: I think it's from Mrs. Kennedy -- there's a three page note, a letter, to him. Because Jack Kennedy, when he was a senator, was in the hospital for back surgery. And the President wrote them a letter and Jackie Kennedy reciprocated with a note thanking him for doing that with his schedule and everything that he had to do to take the time to write.

LEYERZAPF: What I'm thinking about is an anecdote. Do you remember Rusty Brown, at Gettysburg -- the secretary, Lillian Brown?

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

LEYERZAPF: There's an oral history interview with Ms. Brown done a few years ago when I visited with her. She told it as an anecdote. She thought somewhere -- and we cannot find it -- somewhere there is a letter written while Kennedy was President, from Jackie to the President expressing those sentiments.

FOLTZ: That's nice.

LEYERZAPF: That's right, we can't find it. That was Lillian's memory.

FOLTZ: Yes, and the press was just so anxious to -- oh, remember when Ike went out of office: "Here comes youth, and it's going to save us," and all this stuff. Well, I don't think it bothered Ike. I think he was happy with himself, and what he'd done and everything. But it bothered us.

MEDINA: What was life like after the White House for the President, and Mrs. Eisenhower, and for all of you?

FOLTZ: It was nice, they would go out to California and he'd play golf, and Freeman Gosden set him up with all of these golf games. One thing that made me sad -- I don't know whether we should leave this in or not -- but I don't like to talk about other people, but --

LEYERZAPF: You can take a look at it.

FOLTZ: Frank Sinatra wanted to play golf with Ike, and Freeman was the holder of all the golf dates -- all these different people who wanted to play golf with Ike out in the desert -- and he wouldn't play with him. He would have nothing to do with Frank Sinatra because although he was not a member of the Mafia, his cronies were not of Ike's ilk. And I was broken-hearted. I was a real Frank Sinatra fan, and wanted him to entertain at the inauguration -- (laughs). But no, they wouldn't have it.

LEYERZAPF: Did your family ever go with Ike and Mamie to the desert?

FOLTZ: Oh, yes.

LEYERZAPF: In the winter?

FOLTZ: They would bring the whole family out, the kids and me and everybody, and just have a wonderful time. That was a great place. And I didn't play golf.

MEDINA: There has to be a level of, not depression, but withdrawal, from all of that high pressure of being President -- and then, all of a sudden, there's nothing.

FOLTZ: I know there must be, but he didn't show it.

MEDINA: He didn't show it?

FOLTZ: No, not at all. He played a lot of golf and he had a lot of friends and they played bridge. I think he wrote some books, didn't he, right about then?

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: That's very occupying.

LEYERZAPF: He was writing books and a lot of articles for the *Readers' Digest*, a few for *The Saturday Evening Post*. He was a prolific writer.

MEDINA: John was working in that office, after his presidency.

FOLTZ: I never saw him the least bit depressed or down about anything. John may have, but I never did. He wasn't faking it; he just had this way of compartmentalizing things, and coming in in the evening, and, "Well, how's everybody?" (laughs) He was a dear man.

LEYERZAPF: He was fairly busy, too, even though he was retired from the presidency, because the correspondence we have upstairs from those years is voluminous.

FOLTZ: Really?

LEYERZAPF: Did you know that Ike, in effect, was a political tutor for George Romney?

FOLTZ: No.

LEYERZAPF: That is, the governor of Michigan?

FOLTZ: Yes, I know who he was.

LEYERZAPF: He would fly occasionally to Gettysburg -- very quick flights -- and come in and they would discuss politics and Eisenhower would advise Romney on how to give a speech, what to talk about, what not to talk about --

FOLTZ: Really? How fascinating.

LEYERZAPF: There's correspondence in the file. This was in '63, '64, '65 -- as though he were grooming Romney.

FOLTZ: Uh-huh.

LEYERZAPF: There's quite a bit about that. He was involved quite a bit.

FOLTZ: Well, we went out to a campaign for Romney, John and I did. And he flew out to Detroit. It was in Detroit, wasn't it, that's where we were? They asked us to bring a couple with us -- friends, you know -- so that we would have a nice time. It was really quite something. Then I heard that he couldn't run because he hadn't been born in the United States. I think he was born in an embassy, but somebody tried to say that he was not born in the United States.

ED FOLTZ: That was Romney. I remember that.

FOLTZ: Was he born in an embassy? Was his father an ambassador?

ED FOLTZ: It was that discussion --

FOLTZ: Maybe he wasn't an ambassador but he was somehow connected with the embassy.

LEYERZAPF: I think they got past that, though, in the sense it didn't block him.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: He made some statements in '67 that both hurt him as a candidate and also sort of estranged him from Ike. He made some comments about Vietnam, about being "brainwashed" by the generals. And it's interesting to look at the Eisenhower-Romney correspondence because what had been very personal and elaborate suddenly becomes very brief and cool. Almost from the date of that [statement] you can see that Ike was rather disillusioned -- that he'd made some of those statements.

FOLTZ: Who was the general in Korea?

MEDINA: We were going to look that up.

LEYERZAPF: I forgot to look that up, you brought that up. It wasn't McArthur, it was General Van Fleet.

FOLTZ: I still remember his daughter coming up to me when I was mowing the lawn and telling me that he didn't like what Truman has said and that it was all wrong and to tell Ike, but Ike was on the campaign train so I got a hold of him on the campaign train and told him. He was very pleased to hear that. Because everybody was quoting Truman -- I just can't remember, what was going on at the time. I know Ike was running for president at the time. And this was being used against him, this was quite a breakthrough.

Truman was involved. He said something about Korea that contradicted what Ike said. Van Fleet's daughter said Gen. Van Fleet was right, Ike was right, Truman was being political.

LEYERZAPF: I'll see what I can find about that, at least try to write it down for you.

FOLTZ: Oh, the general was General Van Fleet.

MEDINA: Ike works out an agreement with the National Park Service to have the house become a property of theirs upon his death. Did the President consult with Mrs. Eisenhower about this? Was she in total agreement?

FOLTZ: Yes. I don't think she liked the idea too much but he wanted to give it to John and John didn't want it, because he didn't want to live in Gettysburg in a great big house that he probably couldn't afford to keep up. Which was logical, you know? We were living in other places, so they gave it to the Park.

MEDINA: When the president is in the hospital, that last year of his life, I think Anne gets married at the time. She comes to the hospital in her wedding dress, because he couldn't go to the wedding.

FOLTZ: That's right.

MEDINA: In the video that we have, your children talk about being in the hospital with her grandfather. How did Mamie handle that?

FOLTZ: Well, she liked that, yes. She didn't want them to overdo it, you know, because he wasn't very well, but --

MEDINA: And she stayed in the hospital.

FOLTZ: She did. She was right there, she had a room right next to his. She stayed in there for months and months. She sort of guarded the door because everybody wanted to come and see him.

MEDINA: We have wonderful letter that he dictated a couple of days before he died to Irving Berlin --

FOLTZ: Oh, really?

MEDINA: -- thanking him for the music that he created and Ike loved.

FOLTZ: Oh, isn't that interesting?

MEDINA: And there's one point: he says there is no need to respond to this letter.

FOLTZ: He may not have been there.

MEDINA: Yes.

FOLTZ: He didn't say that, did he?

MEDINA: No, he didn't say that but there is no need to respond. That's what I was wondering: if he knew that he was near death.

FOLTZ: He must have. It seems strange that somebody would be writing a letter a few days before he died. He must have been feeling half-way decent.

MEDINA: Well, it was dictated.

FOLTZ: Even so.

LEYERZAPF: Even so, yes.

FOLTZ: Is Irving Berlin still alive?

MEDINA: No.

LEYERZAPF: No.

MEDINA: His children gave the letter to the museum.

LEYERZAPF: We have a small collection of Irving Berlin papers --

FOLTZ: Really?

LEYERZAPF: -- that they donated. I think it's essentially the correspondence between him and Eisenhower. There might be some other material -- it might be a hundred pages -- and it's hardly the whole *corpus* of Berlin's papers, but it's interesting.

FOLTZ: Well, there was a lot of music in the house because, as I've said, Mamie could play music by ear. And we always had a piano. In fact, they finally got a little organ, one of these -- they're very new nowadays -- and they're about this big.

LEYERZAPF: Keyboard-type organs.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: There is a grand piano in the living room of the farm. Did she play that often?

FOLTZ: I didn't hear -- but, you know, they were older when they moved in there. I'm not sure whether she did or not, but she played the piano a lot. And John has that talent, too. He can play by ear. So we had a lot of singing going on. All you had to do was hum the tune, and they could chord it.

LEYERZAPF: Did they play recorded music quite a bit? Did they like to listen to records, stereo?

FOLTZ: Not especially.

LEYERZAPF: Not particularly.

FOLTZ: I don't remember that. We did, but Mamie played the piano. Everybody sang around the piano and they were sort of -- I don't know what you would call it (laughs) -- army songs.

LEYERZAPF: Some of the music at the White House -- Dennis showed you the White House Social Office records. I looked at some of the programs for some of the special events, and I was surprised at some of the performances they had. What comes to mind is, [Leonard] Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic playing the entire score of West Side Story at one dinner. You weren't there, were you?

FOLTZ: No, we were probably stationed somewhere out in the boonies (laughs).

ED FOLTZ: I remember seeing him playing

FOLTZ: You know, when the Kennedys came in, you get the feeling that she was the only one who had any taste at all, that Mamie had no taste. And it was just so wrong, and it was so mean of the press

LEYERZAPF: I don't know what the press were paying attention to because, again, if you go back to those social events, the famous concert violinist, Yehudi Menuhin, was there. If you look at the list, the idea that there was no culture is ludicrous,

FOLTZ: I know, it is ludicrous.

LEYERZAPF: Just look at the performances and the performers who came to the White House. It's amazing.

FOLTZ: I don't think they criticized them quite so much as they said when Jackie was doing -- she had very well-known performers come. She used a lot of imagination. She'd have dinners down at George Washington's home, they'd go down on the boat, and have a state dinner down there. That was very imaginative, I think.

LEYERZAPF: I also found it interesting, of course, that a lot was made of the fact that it was Robert Frost who read something at Kennedy's inauguration. He was also at the Eisenhower White House twice for dinner. We have thank-you notes from Frost to Eisenhower.

FOLTZ: Isn't that something?

MEDINA: Since we're talking about the Kennedys --

FOLTZ: (laughs) I didn't mean to bring that up.

MEDINA: -- the Kennedy Center was initially started by the Eisenhowers.

FOLTZ: I know. But we have the Eisenhower movie theater, up in the --

MEDINA: (laughs) Yes, back inside. I guess Mrs. Kennedy offered Mrs. Eisenhower co-chairmanship of that project.

FOLTZ: Oh, she did?

MEDINA: I guess maybe that was an appeasement or something.

FOLTZ: I don't think so.

MEDINA: Mamie never mentioned it?

FOLTZ: No. And I don't think they thought anything about it. I think they blame the press for a lot of this foolishness that was said. Because I think Jackie was a nice person. I think there were people around them that may have said things to the press that -- I'm thinking of that man that's still there --

MEDINA: In Washington?

FOLTZ: No, I can't think of his name. It's not important. He writes a lot of books, and he [is] always connected with the Kennedys. I don't think for any other reason except that he did it. I think he was a pusher, though I'm not sure. I don't want to say that unless I'm sure. I don't know much about him but I will say I thought that they are probably nice people and probably nicely motivated but a lot of people around them were power hungry and really into this Presidency thing. And they were young, and this was supposed to be giving America a new life.

MEDINA: Since we are on that train of thought --

FOLTZ: I was horrified to find out that Bush is my son's age (laughs). He's too young.

MEDINA: -- talking about handlers and people around them, another one that comes to mind is James Hagerty, the press secretary who, of course, would be putting the President's image out. What were your impressions of James Hagerty?

FOLTZ: We all liked him very much. I had no opinion about how well he was doing, but we liked him very much.

MEDINA: So most of your involvement with staff was more social?

FOLTZ: Yes, I really wasn't involved in things at the White House.

LEYERZAPF: Yesterday we talked a little bit about Mary Jane McCaffree.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: Given her role, is there anything else you want to contribute in terms of your impressions of Mary Jane or anecdotes about Mary Jane?

FOLTZ: No, I don't remember very well. I was going to name Mary Jean, Mary Jane -- not after her, but I just liked the name. John, he wouldn't let me. He didn't like it. I don't know, there are people that didn't like her very well because she was actually protecting Mimi from certain things.

LEYERZAPF: That's a tough job.

FOLTZ: She did a good job. And when I got overwhelmed why they helped me with my mail -- I guess I said that --

LEYERZAPF: Mary Jane had a difficult job.

FOLTZ: Oh, she did.

LEYERZAPF: There's a lot of pressure in that job, a lot that she had to do.

FOLTZ: We would sit in the evening and sign all these letters, thanking people for things. She had dictated them earlier or else she told them what to write, and then when we were all gone she kept right on writing to people and thanking them and doing all that. That was the main thing she was doing up in Gettysburg.

MEDINA: Another item that the Eisenhowers don't get credit for very much -- Mrs. Kennedy got a lot of credit for redecorating or restoring the White House.

FOLTZ: The reason they didn't get credit was because Ike wouldn't give Mamie any money. He said I can't go to Congress after they've totally re-made the White House under the Trumans, and furnished it (from B. Altman's, which was the big thing). Terrible to furnish it with B. Altman's stuff -- you know, Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was because he wouldn't go to Congress, and so, you know what she did? She wanted some glass curtains up on the third floor, so she went out to Fort Myers and bought all this condemned parachute silk and had one of the White House girls make curtains with that, upstairs. That was the only thing she did (laughs).

LEYERZAPF: Always frugal.

FOLTZ: Isn't that something?

MEDINA: There were two items that she worked on, which are still there. One was the China collection.

FOLTZ: Oh, really?

MEDINA: A book has been published on that and she wrote the forward to it. The other is Mrs. [Margaret Thompson] Biddle, a friend of hers that had all the vermeil.

FOLTZ: Oh, the gold vermeil. I know the second Mrs. Biddle; she's a very good friend of mine. The first Mrs. Biddle was living in Paris, and that's -- I don't know how it all works with my friend, but she married Tony Biddle. He had divorced the first one, or they had been divorced, I don't know what the situation --

MEDINA: How close was Mrs. Eisenhower? She must have been very close to her to get that collection?

FOLTZ: Yes, I think so.

MEDINA: Because it's over two thousand pieces.

FOLTZ: Really?

MEDINA: And it's still in the room called the Gold Room or the Vermeil Room. And look in the White House --

ED FOLTZ: How close was [Walter] Annenberg?

FOLTZ: I think he was a very good --

Sound File 2b ends; sound file 3a begins

FOLTZ: -- he was a very good man.

MEDINA: So you'd mentioned Annenberg. What about Jackie Cochran and your [unintelligible] at the desert? How was your stay there?

FOLTZ: Well, when we went out there she had some Christmas parties at her house. They all seemed to like her. It seemed like she had a cosmetics business. We had a lot of her cosmetics, I remember that.

MEDINA: It was Maybelline that she had founded.

FOLTZ: Oh, was it?

LEYERZAPF: I didn't know that.

FOLTZ: She was quite something. I mean, she was a pilot and everything else.

LEYERZAPF: Yes, famous pilot.

FOLTZ: Sort of like my roommate in college. I had a roommate in college who had her own airplane and she was taking aeronautical engineering. She just won an award at Purdue for being the outstanding woman engineer in the aeronautics division and she was something. She could do anything.

LEYERZAPF: Jackie was very able. She succeeded at everything she tried.

FOLTZ: Yes, and she came from a very poor background. What I mean by poor is, poor in money. She made her way to be a very wealthy woman, and she married Floyd Odlum, didn't she?

LEYERZAPF: Yes, Floyd Odlum.

FOLTZ: Who was he?

LEYERZAPF: He was chairman of the Atlas Corporation. I'm not sure what all their interests were but uranium mining was one.

FOLTZ: Really?

LEYERZAPF: The story I heard was that, in the 1930s -- '20s and '30s -- that Floyd Odlum made some very shrewd investment decisions, that, rather than being devastated by the Depression, he actually did very well.

FOLTZ: That's nice.

LEYERZAPF: I don't know the details and I'm not even sure how reliable that is, but that's what I've heard.

FOLTZ: Well, anyway she was fun, and she had a Christmas party, I remember, and she had presents for everybody. She had Shirley Temple dolls or something wonderful for the kids, for my girls. We just had a wonderful time at her house. She had a guest house, and I think she put people up in there that were guests or staff of the Eisenhowers.

MEDINA: What about the Hopes, Bob and Dolores Hope? You would have seen them at the desert.

FOLTZ: Yes, they were good friends, too.

MEDINA: And Eisenhower Hospital, named after the President. How active was the family in that?

FOLTZ: Well, we went to one of the fund-raisers. It was a dinner, a typical fundraising dinner. Frank Sinatra was the Master of Ceremonies and sang. It was a wonderful dinner. I think Dolores Hope had a position in that hospital. The Hollywood bunch were really friends of theirs. I mean, they all lived at Palm Desert in Palm Springs. Bob Hope -- this isn't about Bob Hope, but they had a very modest house in Palm Springs and they'd been going there for years. Then, they finally decided they were going to go into this very important house. You want to turn this off? This has nothing to --

LEYERZAPF: No, I'm just making sure it was running (laughs). I don't want to miss it.

FOLTZ: So, I don't know what the house looked like. I've been in the house, I've even spent the night in the house, but I never got a real view of it. But evidently Bob thought it looked like the control tower for the airplanes. And he used to make funny remarks like that about it. But it was a nice house. It was a mansion, you know, whereas they had been living in this very modest little house in Palm Springs for years, or coming there for the weekend. But they were really a nifty couple.

LEYERZAPF: You enjoyed them.

FOLTZ: Yes, and I went out to play golf with her later. He used to come to Philadelphia all the time and play golf. One time I got in one of his golf games along with her, but I'd gone out to play golf with her. I went out to play golf with her in California and it rained the whole time. She was having a party for me. So instead of playing golf -- I didn't know she was going to have a party, and it's black tie. So we went looking for a dress for me, and I was just trying to keep it down so the price wasn't too much. I thought, I'll go a thousand dollars. We went to places that were much more expensive than that. And I finally found a dress.

LEYERZAPF: That was Dolores Hope, Bob has passed on.

FOLTZ: Yes.

LEYERZAPF: You mentioned [Bob Hope] coming to Philadelphia. I think in May of '64, a charity golf tournament was arranged, a match between Ike and Arnold Palmer, against Bob Hope and Ray Bolger. We have some information in the files about that.

FOLTZ: Oh, that was really funny, that was in the photo at the country club, I think. Yes, and we belonged to the club. Later, I mean. I didn't belong to the club at that time. Ray Bolger, every time they'd sink a putt he'd do a cartwheel or something on the green. It was a wonderful game. But Bob had friends in Philadelphia and he was an honorary member of Golf Mills Country Club, which was a very nice club.

MEDINA: When the president dies, all action goes into the state funeral and lying in state for three days in Washington.

FOLTZ: He had it all planned ahead of time; he used to talk to John about it.

MEDINA: So John was involved in all that planning.

FOLTZ: I think so, yes. I don't remember Ike so much as Mamie. We were always talking to him about her, you know. We flew out to Abilene for that. Mamie hated to fly so much that when it was Ike's, we came by train.

MEDINA: The sadness of the occasion, and the trip out here: there were many dinners on the train, and people have talked about those.

FOLTZ: I don't remember being in any dinners or anything like that. That was probably further down on the train. No, it was such a sad occasion.

MEDINA: Mrs. Eisenhower at Union Station decides to mark the cart that the President's body is in with two flags. Julie recently donated one of those flags that Mamie gave her.

FOLTZ: Oh, really?

MEDINA: Do you know what made her decide to do that?

FOLTZ: No. She adored David and Julie. They had a grandmother and she, grandchildren, [and there were] things that they did that I was unaware of. But Julie will tell you about it.

MEDINA: Okay. Coming to Abilene -- we talked about the original site of the burial. Was Mrs. Eisenhower in agreement with being buried here in Abilene?

FOLTZ: I think so. Ike at first wanted to be buried in the yard or the house in Gettysburg, and there's some kind of restrictions on that. You can't just bury yourself in your backyard. I don't know what it all consisted of, and finally he just gave up and decided he -- I don't mean that you were second choice.

MEDINA: Yes (laughs).

LEYERZAPF: He seriously considered Gettysburg first?

FOLTZ: Yes, his house. He had a lot of land and he was just so pleased with that farm. Well, you know, when you've been in Army and been moving around all the time and you never owned a house? He wanted to leave it to the kids, but it didn't work out that way. So he's buried here.

MEDINA: We mentioned the agreement with the Park Service about the house. According to that contract, Mrs. Eisenhower was to move out six months after the President dies. We know she was looking for a smaller place. Were you involved --

FOLTZ: She was supposed to move out of that house? I think she stayed on.

MEDINA: She stayed on until her death.

FOLTZ: Yes. She was thinking about going to the Distaff Foundation which was like the kind of place we are, a residential community, and Andy Goodpaster was living there -- not at the time, but just to give you an idea about what the place was like. It was a beautiful house, and they built apartments and so forth. At that time, in the main house the person only got one room and that was your bedroom. Then you are supposed to come downstairs for all the dinners and lunches and breakfasts. You eat and socialize with your friends, just like your home. Mamie just said, "I can't live in one room." And she was right. So he made an offer, sort of a tentative offer, to build her own apartment on there so she could be there. She wanted to be there. But they wouldn't do that. They didn't want to have a discrimination like that. I don't know what was the reason she was not buried there. But I think she would have been perfectly happy with this. I think she was alive when Ike had gotten Icky's body.

LEYERZAPF: Yes, that was in '62.

MEDINA: [1962 was] When the building was finished, but I think it was '66 that they brought his remains here.

FOLTZ: Was he in a little tiny casket?

MEDINA: It's a small casket, yes. It's visible and the stones were removed where the floor was cut. Those stones were in storage until the crypt was put in there.

FOLTZ: So it's really sealed up. Well, of course, every grave is.

MEDINA: Yes. The vaults are sealed, and they are under the floor there. Mrs. Eisenhower came out here at least twice a year.

FOLTZ: Yes.

MEDINA: Did she say anything to the family about coming out?

FOLTZ: Oh yes, we knew she was coming. We were actually living in Gettysburg at the time, in our house, so we knew pretty much what she was doing. She came down a lot, and we went up there a lot -- during Ike's lifetime too. We lived there a long time, relatively speaking. But John and I wanted her to come and live with us, because this was the time she was looking for a smaller place. So we bought a house that had the room. I think she just stayed in her house until she died and I think that was the best thing.

MEDINA: She wanted her own privacy.

FOLTZ: Well, it was just her house, you know?

MEDINA: And her things. What other things would she do during that period of time between Ike's death and her death?

FOLTZ: I think she mostly wrote letters. She had a voluminous correspondence. She'd just follow the routine of the day, more or less. She didn't know anybody in Gettysburg, particularly, and all her girlfriends that were widows who would come and stay with her, visit with her.

MEDINA: We watched in the museum the other day, the video of Barbara Walters. Barbara Walters interviewed her three times.

FOLTZ: I know.

MEDINA: And it's the one in Mamie's Cabin. I think that's the one we were referring to.

FOLTZ: Yes. Where she asked her, "How do you feel now that your husband's dead?" -- or something like that. And there was a lot of criticism of her for that interview.

MEDINA: Was there a special friendship with Barbara Walters?

FOLTZ: No, I think Barbara just worked her way in.

MEDINA: Because that last one of the farm that we have a clip of, on exhibit, she asked her some real difficult questions and --

FOLTZ: It was commented on in the press, that this was cruel; poor little Mamie, to ask her things like that right on television. She came up and did an interview with Julie, too, later. She brought her own hair dresser and all this stuff. Do you think the hair dresser did anything for Julie? No. Not that she needed to, but we didn't care for her too much. And they said, "Would you rather be interviewed by Barbara Walters or . . ." -- who was the other big interviewer? I guess it was the one we watch all the time at night -- what's his name, you know?

ED FOLTZ: Larry King?

FOLTZ: Yes. Would he be interviewing? I don't think he was at that time.

MEDINA: Not at that time.

FOLTZ: No.

LEYERZAPF: He had a show, but I don't think he was into interviews at that time. Hugh Downs?

FOLTZ: I don't know. They had to make a choice, and I suggested that they not be interviewed by Barbara Walters. And you know she does it so sweetly.

MEDINA: And it just comes in sort of a back way. You are taken off-guard.

FOLTZ: "Just curious; this is a nice curiosity about your life."

MEDINA: Well, that's what I was wondering about, the fishbowl life of a President and how difficult that must be.

FOLTZ: Yes, I think it is.

LEYERZAPF: And for the family.

FOLTZ: Have you noticed the Bushes? We never hear about those twins -- ever.

LEYERZAPF: No, there're not out there; you don't hear much.

FOLTZ: It's amazing, isn't it? You see, it's the idea, if you don't give an interview to one person exclusively and want to be left alone, they'll leave you alone. But I imagine they wouldn't mind a nice story every now and then -- the kids.

MEDINA: I don't have any more questions.

LEYERZAPF: No, I'm looking at my list too, and --

MEDINA: I know that when Mamie died, the funeral here was much smaller, wasn't a state funeral, as such. You were here, and Mrs. Hope came, and President Nixon and Mrs. Nixon were also in attendance.

FOLTZ: I don't remember, who [unintelligible] there were. I know it was smaller.

MEDINA: The Causins were here from Washington.

FOLTZ: There were a lot of people at the funeral in Washington. But not so many here as with Ike, I suppose.

MEDINA: There were fifty-thousand people here --

FOLTZ: Oh, my word.

MEDINA: -- lining the streets at Ike's funeral.

FOLTZ: Really! Golly, isn't that something? Fifty thousand.

LEYERZAPF: This little town.

MEDINA: There were cars parked on the interstate and they had buses bringing people into town.

FOLTZ: Really?

MEDINA: Shuttling them into this --

ED FOLTZ: Barbara, you remember we went to the White House to visit Bush, the first Mrs. Bush. She showed us around [unintelligible] argument all about a bed and who slept [unintelligible].

FOLTZ: I don't know, she was telling us where we slept, I think, after the inauguration. We came into the building and Mamie had us in the Queen's Room -- John and I -- and I think she had us somewhere else, in the Lincoln bedroom or --

MEDINA: Right across the hall.

FOLTZ: You thought we were arguing?

ED FOLTZ: I thought you and Mrs. Bush were getting pretty --

FOLTZ: Oh, no wonder I never heard anymore from her!

ED FOLTZ: I was just tailing along, like I'm doing here.

FOLTZ: She was really nice. I thought it would be nice if Ed could see the White House on one of those private tours and so I called Dick Trefry, who was head of the whole thing and a friend of ours from the army. So he fixed up a little private tour and he told Mrs. Bush about it. She came down and took us up to the second floor and all through the White House, which was terribly nice of her.

MEDINA: Did you notice many changes in the White House?

FOLTZ: Well, you know, each one redecorates. Mamie didn't do that because the Trumans had just done it. And, as I say, Ike would not go and ask Congress for any money to do it again.

LEYERZAPP: It would have been difficult.

MEDINA: Well, Mrs. Eisenhower is very generous to the museum over the years.

FOLTZ: Oh, I know.

MEDINA: Giving some of her family materials, some of the things that she cherished. She was certainly generous with your family, giving her granddaughters materials.

FOLTZ: Yes, she did. She used to say, "What am I going to do with my things?" And I said, "Mimi, you got three granddaughters." We had too much of our own stuff that she'd given us, that we required. You know, if ever [you] wish for stuff, be careful what you wish for, because we were just inundated with things.

MEDINA: There were many things that were sent for the grandchildren when you were in the White House that they never did get.

FOLTZ: I'm sure they didn't.

MEDINA: But they were just sent out here.

FOLTZ: They were toys, or --

MEDINA: Toys and wooden shoes, and --

FOLTZ: Oh, don't you know? Have they ever seen them?

MEDINA: Yes, now they have (laughs).

FOLTZ: What do they say?

MEDINA: They just laughed.

FOLTZ: You didn't tell them that Mother wouldn't let them have all that stuff?

MEDINA: No.

FOLTZ: Well, I wouldn't. We didn't have house room for it. So I'd just tell them to get rid of it.

MEDINA: Well, even in the White House, of course, for the record, they were allowed to give things away, keep things that were gifts. But I know a lot of staff members took materials.

FOLTZ: I'm sure Mimi wanted them to. She used to have a big table up on the third floor and a lot of these gifts were on that table, and if you saw something you liked you could take it (laughs). Now this was not done with people that they knew. But these were gifts that just came

in [unintelligible]. Somebody sent in a beautiful needlepoint picture of their house in Gettysburg and the work was really good on it, and Mamie was going to just get rid of it. And she said, "Would you like this?" I said, "Yes." And I have it hanging up; anybody that went to all that work -- deserves it to be hung.

MEDINA: We get a lot of descendants that have a letter of thank-you for a gift and are wondering if we have them. A lot of times we don't. But the gift unit is really pretty good about marking what happened to it. Sometimes it would say it went to Gettysburg, or they gave it to you, or they gave it to Mike Moore, or --

FOLTZ: The time I got gifts is when I went with Ike on that trip and we were allowed to keep what we got. If it was given to me, I got to keep it. If it was given to John, it had to go into the State Department warehouse. And then we got some of it back after John was no longer in the Army. I wonder if they still do that, I think they do. I don't think they allow gifts at all.

MEDINA: No, now it becomes federal property. And the State Department still does have auctions.

FOLTZ: Auctions?

MEDINA: They have auctions. They sell a lot of material.

FOLTZ: Oh, I don't think that's right. I think they ought to do like they did, you know, keep it until the person is out of office.

MEDINA: And the President can buy materials. They have to have a fair market value, and then [the President] buys it.

FOLTZ: Can't buy what?

MEDINA: If he gets a gift, and he does want to have it, he can have it appraised and then he buys it.

FOLTZ: Oh.

MEDINA: So there are some ways around it, but you would still have to buy it.

FOLTZ: I bet it's expensive.

MEDINA: I think we are sort of ending. Do you have any other impressions that you want to put on for the record?

FOLTZ: I can't think of any. Just a wonderful time, and as I say, Ike took us on a lot of trips. I remember he took us on a vacation when he was going on to Puerto Rico. And then up to Newport -- they'd go to Newport in the summer -- and they'd bring us up there, the whole family. Out to Palm Springs. So we had a really good time. And their friends were friends that - they were our friends, too. We had sort of a gang, and they were intimate friends, and we knew them all. But policy -- what was going on in the world -- was never discussed. Just that one time I heard anything about that Gary Powers thing. And I thought, "He's Secretary of State" -- and he goofed with Kennedy, too, remember? Why did they keep having him?

LEYERZAPF: Oh, you are speaking of Allen Dulles?

FOLTZ: Yes. I didn't think he was too good. But that was just my opinion and nobody else seemed to have that opinion.

MEDINA: Well, thank you very much.

LEYEZAPF: Thank you.

FOLTZ: You're welcome. You're welcome. It's been fun. It's fun to talk about yourself for a couple of hours (laughs).

[TAPE ENDS]