

## INTERVIEW I

DATE: June 4, 1985

INTERVIEWEE: INEZ HUGHES

INTERVIEWER: Lewis Gould

PLACE: Harrison County Historical Museum, Marshall, Texas

Tape 1 of 1

H: --Harrison County Historical Museum.

G: That's the voice of Mrs. Inez Hughes, who is the director of the museum, and we're talking to her about her memories of Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson. You taught Mrs. Johnson in high school, I believe.

H: No, actually she was a senior my first year in Marshall High School, and I taught juniors.

G: You taught juniors.

H: Yes.

G: Perhaps you'd tell us something about how you came to be a teacher at Marshall High School, just to give the people who read this tape some background about you.

H: My roots are very deep in Harrison County. I had four sets of great-great grandparents and a great grandfather in the county before Texas became a state. So I was reared in the area of the plantation of my great grandfather, who came in 1839. It was just logical to want to come home to teach after I had taught at Terlingua and Karnes City. Then I came to Marshall.

G: How did one become a teacher in those days? Where did you gain your education?

H: I attended the College of Marshall here for two years, then went to Terlingua and taught two years. Then I went back to school and got my degree, went to Baylor, got my degree, then I taught three years in Karnes City, then came here. However, I had students whom I

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taught, they took an examination, went to school in the summer, and started teaching that fall. That was in the 1920s.

G: How many students were there at Marshall High in the mid-1920s when Mrs. Johnson and you were there at the same time?

H: I should know, but I don't remember.

G: I noted that in her graduating class she had about twenty-eight people--

H: Oh, no, no.

G: Were those only twenty--?

H: Have you seen the picture of her that we have upstairs of her graduating class?

G: No, I haven't. How many do you think were in the graduating class?

H: Oh, I'd say at least seventy-five.

G: Seventy-five. So there would be about three or four hundred in Marshall High?

H: Marshall High students? Oh yes, at least. Yes.

G: How many teachers were there, do you remember, or have a sense of--?

H: We must have had about twenty-five on the faculty.

G: And you taught--?

H: English.

G: English. Do you remember the kinds of materials that you used or the books that a student in Marshall High in the 1920s would be reading?

H: Very well. Very well. Kittredge and Farley's [Advanced English?] Grammar. (Laughter) And the American literature, [Leonidas] Payne's *History of American Literature* is what I started in with.

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G: Would most students going through Marshall have had something comparable to that in English?

H: Yes. Yes, that was the standard. Payne's *History of American Literature* and Payne's *Anthology of American Literature* was in the junior year. I did teach seniors later, but I don't know just what the text was then.

G: Were they reading any novels or works of literature?

H: Oh, yes.

G: What would they be reading at that--?

H: [Nathaniel] Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables* and *Moby Dick* and Shakespeare; we had at least two Shakespeare dramas each year.

G: I take it you expected them to do a good deal of reading.

H: Definitely. They had to write term papers and they had to read--masters at least--had to read a biography and three books by the author to do their term paper on the author.

G: So every student had to do a term paper?

H: Oh, yes. None were exempt.

G: And you had no multiple choice examinations or anything like that in those days.

H: Very few. Some teachers had them, but not in English.

G: Do you have any memories of Mrs. Johnson in her student years?

H: I had been in college with her two brothers out at the College of Marshall when I was there. So of course I had known her and known the family. I knew her brother; Tommy and I were very close friends.

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G: Both of her brothers are somewhat shadowy figures, at least at the Library. There's not that much known about them. Maybe you could say a word about their personality and character, as you knew them.

H: Oh, Tommy was one of the sweetest, finest fellows. I was sort of his escape valve when he had his affairs with his loved ones, and they didn't go right, and he would come for sympathy. When I went on to Baylor, the girl he had been very much in love with here at the college was going with one of the professors at Baylor. So one evening we were in the library and she said, "Inez, do you think there's really anything wrong about my going with Ben Condray [Benjamin Franklin Condray, Jr.]?"--she was wearing this diamond about four carats that Tommy had given her--I said, "Well, Alyse, what about Tommy?" She said, "Well, I don't think he would mind." Two weeks later they eloped, she and the Baylor professor.

G: I wonder if he minded that.

H: She sent the diamond back to Tommy the next day.

G: What kind of a young man was he in looks and demeanor?

H: Oh, he was a very tall and handsome brunette, very handsome fellow. I remember one little girl, he was, oh, very much infatuated by. One day he said to me, "You know, the thing is, she's all wool and a yard long, but she's not very thick."

G: Did you know her other brother?

H: Tony?

G: Tony.

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- H: I'd rather--yes. Yes, I knew Tony very well. He was, of course, younger. Tommy and I were nearer the same age.
- G: What about Mrs. Johnson's father [Thomas Jefferson Taylor]? Do you have any memories--
- H: Yes, I knew Mr. Taylor.
- G: --of the kind of man he was?
- H: Yes. He was a very astute businessman. I'll tell you a good little joke I heard once. A friend of mine, Mr. Walker [?], said he was down at the store and he said, "Mr. Taylor, how about drinking a Coke with me?" And he said, "Thank you, I don't care for the Coke, but I'll take the nickel." (Laughter) Put it in the cash register.
- G: That seemed to capture something of the essence of his business career, I gather, from looking at the material in the courthouse.
- H: He was astute. I tell you, I think one of the kindest things, one of the greatest compliments to Mrs. Johnson, I shouldn't say this, but it was the fact that the news media never went into personal things about her father, and I think that's a great consideration. He was a very likeable man and a very handsome man and a very good businessman.
- G: I gather he was quite a tall man.
- H: No . . .
- G: Well, Mrs. Johnson said that Lyndon was one of the few men she had met that was as big as her--
- H: As her father?
- G: --as her father was, and that was part of the big attraction.

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H: Once when I had had a car wreck and was in the hospital, Mr. Taylor was on the second floor and his then-wife, she's now the widow, was on the third floor. Of course, I just saw him in the wheel chair at that time, going daily up to her room. But he didn't impress me as being a large man, but maybe he was.

G: A tall one. A tall one.

H: Tall.

G: Did you have any contact with Mrs. Johnson when she was at the University or when she was coming back here before she got married?

H: No, actually not, but this very interesting thing happened. I happened to have been the first president of the Alpha Zeta chapter here in Marshall of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society. For some reason, Dr. [Annie Webb] Blanton, who was the founder of it, had me doing some official job at the banquet that year, and at the end of it, I don't know why she was there, but she and Lyndon Johnson came up after the banquet and she said--at that time I was not married--"Miss Hatley, do you remember me, Claudia Taylor?" And I said, "Well, of course I remember you, Claudia." She said, "I want you to meet my husband, Lyndon Johnson." They had just married and that was just before they went to Washington for his job with [Richard] Kleberg, assistant to Kleberg.

G: And did you have any contact with her or can you maybe talk about the other times that you met her or had contact with her, either regarding the museum or any other thing over the years?

H: Well, she's always been very gracious. Once when I was in the LBJ Library-Museum in Austin, she happened to be there and she was very gracious. In fact, she sent her director

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here, but I happened to be out. There had been a death in my family and I didn't get to meet him when he came. She said, "I want my director to come to Marshall." She came through the museum on one occasion. I'll show you the Johnson collection when we finish. She has a first cousin living here, Winston Taylor, an attorney. So I called him one day and I said, "Mr. Taylor, do you have anything on her as a child here in the county? We don't want everything from Washington." I had gotten her dress and some pictures and so forth and so on. But I said, "We'd like to have something of her childhood." He said, "I don't have a thing." About a year later he brought to us a very handsomely executed and framed picture of her when she was a child of about six. He had found this little snapshot and had taken it to a local artist and had her do this portrait from it. So when she came she was quite interested, of course, in seeing that.

And one of the things I think that pleased her most in the museum when I was taking her through, I said, "By the way, this is the candy case from your father's store," and she was just like a little girl, she raised her hands and I think she would have clapped them but here were all the photographers out in front. And she said, "Oh, I'm so glad. How many times I have reached in there for candy. I'm so glad to see this has been preserved. So often these things are just thrown away."

G: We haven't said anything about her mother and I don't suppose you knew her mother. She died in 1918. Or maybe you did. Have you heard people mention her mother or the kind of woman that she was?

H: Yes. A very good friend of mine from Hallsville taught down at the Baldwin School when Lady Bird was just a child. This girl lived--too bad she's dead now, she could tell you a

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lot--in the Taylor home and I remember descriptions that she gave when she would come home about the family and the conditions. It seems that Mrs. [Minnie Pattillo] Taylor was rather secretive, and this girl said she wore a veil.

G: Turbans and a veil.

H: Always. That she would come to breakfast wearing that veil.

G: That I didn't know. She apparently went to Chicago for the opera season--

H: Probably.

G: --and had quite a library, too. That was something Mrs. Johnson reported.

H: Yes. She was a very elegant woman, very highly refined and cultured. Now the story always has been told that when Mr. Taylor proposed to her back in Alabama that she said, "Well, you go to Texas and make a million and then I'll consider marrying you." So he came to Texas and did right well financially and went back and they were married.

G: But I gather she wasn't entirely suited to living in this area or didn't feel entirely comfortable.

H: Not to rural life anyway.

G: Which was very rural--

H: Very rural.

G: --at that time. I guess we're running down, but I wondered if you could say a word about how people in the area regard Mrs. Johnson or the general impression they have of her, if you can speak to that.

H: Oh, yes. I think the whole community has the utmost regard for her, for her intellect, her ladylike manner in which she has always conducted herself, her vision, her personality.



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You know Walter Cronkite said she was the smartest woman that had ever been in the White House.

G: I would agree with that.

Anything else that you remember about her or that you'd like to add before we conclude? About the museum or about Mrs. Johnson or anything about Marshall and her that we ought to know?

H: You might want to know that a Dr. Baldwin here, I told you she attended the Baldwin School, and this Dr. Baldwin, who was from an old line of doctors here, I think he must have been the third generation, brought her into the world in 1912, and his grandson is [Francis] Scotty Baldwin; there was something in the paper just yesterday about how he is now president of the--what do they call it?--the National Trial Lawyers Association.

G: One other person I just remembered that was associated with the Johnsons who's from Marshall, too, is Bill Moyers.

H: Oh, yes.

G: Did you have him as a student?

H: Oh, yes. In fact, Bill brought me his Emmy award week before last for his Marshall, Texas--Marshall, Texas documentary.

G: That "Paths Through the Twentieth Century?"

H: Yes. That was the first probably--

G: What kind of a student was Bill Moyers?

H: Was Bill?

G: I'm sure a good one.

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H: A very stable student.

G: Marshall has produced quite a number of prominent people.

H: Ooh, we have so many celebrities. I suppose you have heard of Wendy Russell Reves who's given the thirty million-dollar art collection to Dallas Museum? She was one of my students.

G: You've had an illustrious array of students.

H: Y. A. [Yelberton Abraham] Tittle.

G: Oh, that's right. I didn't realize that Y. A. Tittle--

H: Y. A. is from here. J. [Joseph] C. Goulden. Now he and Bill Moyers graduated together. J. C. has written about fifteen books. Oh, we have so many outstanding--really we do. It's amazing how many outstanding people we have. The authority on cornea transplant, of Lebanese descent, George Ellis, New Orleans, goes all over the world lecturing on cornea transplants.

G: How do you account for that?

H: Hobart Key, when the people were here doing the documentary, these New York people, Hobart Key was in it, who is an Annapolis graduate and a very fine engineer who is sent all over the world when they have trouble spots. So they asked him that, and I'll just give you his answer. He said, "It's the teachers we had."

G: (Laughter) That's a great place to stop.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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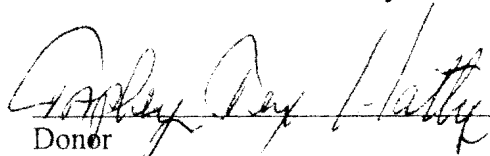
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