INTERVIEW III

DATE: June 9, 1977

INTERVIEWEE: WELLY K. HOPKINS

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: Mr. Hopkins' home in Culpeper, Virginia

Tape 1 of 1

[Interview begins abruptly and first comments are inaudible]

H: You know Lyndon was susceptible, as I recall, in some respects to pneumonia, or types of pneumonia. He had it several times. Looking at this, and seeing the date in 1939, I would say that it might have been an occasion when he was back here on business in Texas and had an attack of pneumonia. Otherwise, he's just drawing symbolisms here and describing something other than illness, which I don't believe it was. Of course, he could have meant that he was acting very "big" and got into trouble when he says, "I went down twice and caught a log just as I was sinking the third time." I think he meant that he really had been ill. And, "They're still pumping water out of my lungs, and now it looks as if I won't be back in Washington on the job until the end of next week or Monday," which would have been about eight or nine days after the day of this letter. That would be my general recollection now.

G: Okay.

H: It might have been something else, but that's my [view].

G: He had, I've heard, serious bouts with pneumonia about four times.

H: He had. I think that was one of the brushes that he had with it. It may not have been actual attack of pneumonia, but he went at such a high speed-- (interruption)

G: Were you in the middle of a statement when the phone rang?

H: I might have been. I don't know whether it was in reference to his susceptibility to pneumonia or illness at various times. I don't recall. I may have been making some other statement about him. I don't remember now.

G: Let me ask you some questions about Senator Wirtz.

H: I'll do my best to answer them.

G: Did his election to the state senate have any significance for the fate of the Ku Klux Klan in Texas? Did it throw the balance against the Klan in any way?

H: I'm not sure. Can you recall the first year he was elected?

G: Was it 1926?

H: I think it was before that. I don't know that I knew Wirtz in his first race for the senate. I know I knew him well by the time he ran for his second term, which must have been about 1928 or something like that. Because I ran for the senate in 1930, and he had resigned that year. I campaigned for Wirtz all over my county on his second go round. I'd known him professionally in the sense that as a young lawyer we had some litigation together. He was always kindly disposed toward me as a younger man.

You asked me the question about the impact of the Klan. By the time he ran the second time, the Klan had more or less run its

course. As I remember, it was strongest in my county along about 1922-1924. I got out of the University in 1923, and it was at its height then.

G: He may have run as early as 1923 or 1924. It was a special election, I think.

H: I'm not sure how it came about [that] Wirtz ran for the senate the first time.

G: You never heard any stories in connection with his election foreshadowing a defeat for the Klan?

H: Not precisely, but now that you ask the question I always understood, without specifically talking to him about it, that he ran not on an anti-Klan ticket but he made his opposition to the Klan well known. I dare say it was an issue in his campaign. My recollection was that Fleetwood Richards, a lawyer from Lockhart, had been in the senate before Wirtz. Because I know I made a speech for Fleetwood there on the square in Gonzales within a matter of a few months after I got out of law school. But I may be in error as to dates, but I know Fleetwood was in the senate at one time, and I am sure it was before Wirtz because I followed Wirtz and then Rudolf Weinert, Wirtz's former law partner, succeeded me.

Going back to your major question [about] Wirtz: I'm pretty sure the Klan was an issue in his campaign, and I'd be quite positive that he was in opposition to it. He was that type of fellow--a magnificent man, incidentally, both as to capabilities and personalities, a marvelous man in many, many respects. You well know the relationship

between him and Lyndon. I don't know that Wirtz knew Lyndon before I did. Wirtz knew Lyndon's father, Sam Johnson, before I did. But Lyndon, you see, was still in school in San Marcos when I ran for the Senate in 1930. As a young fellow, I'm not sure Wirtz knew him while he was in the senate. He knew Sam Johnson, all right. I first met Lyndon, as you will recall, in the spring of 1930. But I could talk at length about Wirtz as a man and as to his character. He was a man of many, many qualities.

G: He was a great raconteur, I understand, too.

H: Well, he was. He was a great storyteller. He could tell them with a zest and a little detail here and yonder. He made most pleasant company. He was a man very, very loyal to his friends. God knows, Lyndon would be the first to say that. Had it not been for Wirtz, Lyndon would never have been elected to Congress.

G: Is that right?

H: I don't think there is any question about that. Because Wirtz by that time had moved to Austin from Seguin. He just got behind Lyndon and really put him in office.

G: Wirtz was named receiver for those projects.

H: Hydroelectric projects.

G: The one on the Guadalupe River, I guess was the first.

H: The sequence of that, as I recall, was that Wirtz became interested first in the development of the Guadalupe River, forming some connection, I've forgotten just how, with a firm out of Chicago.

G: Emery, Peck and [Rockwood].

H: Emery, Peck, and Rockwood. I knew Peck casually in later years. If you've never learned the details of Peck's death, that in itself is interesting.

But Wirtz was first interested in the Guadalupe River. I don't know how he first got interested in the development of the Colorado, but he had to deal with the Insull interests, who had already started there previous to his interests here. He finally worked his way out with them financially. He organized the Colorado River Authority under an act of the legislature that he wrote but I passed for him. From then on, you know the story of the development of the dams up and down the Colorado River. I think his interests were first in the Guadalupe River, because I know he had built one dam at McQueeny above Seguin, one at Seguin, and two between Seguin and Gonzales.

G: Do you remember any details of his struggle with--was it Ralph Morrison--in San Antonio, with regard to the receivership of that [company]?

H: Mostly that came after I left, although it was in the making before I left. Because at that time I think the question arose about the expansion of Central Power and Light Company. Ralph Morrison had come down from Chicago, as I remember, and had acquired some of those properties for the Insull interests, who had originally bought Gonzales Power. They later went down as far as Corpus Christi. Morrison, as I remember, came in behind them or represented them from the beginning, and I think was in control of the San Antonio utilities at the time of the fight with Wirtz on that. But I had gone by then. I left Texas in 1936. He had already joined the issue maybe

with Morrison, but I think the big battle between them and the litigation came in a few years later. I knew about them only through Wirtz's visits.

G: Did you get a sense of Senator Wirtz as a public power advocate back then?

H: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. That was the aim of the Colorado River Authority to begin with.

G: Do you have any specific recollections of him battling with the utility people here?

H: Well, yes, because my recollection runs that Texas Power and Light took the lead in litigation in Washington undertaking to enjoin the use of federal funds in the development of the Colorado River Authority. The litigation was long and involved here. Bob Hanger, a good friend of mine, was a lawyer on the other side representing Texas Power and Light. I think the latter part of Wirtz's professional career undoubtedly was taken up in big part by a running feud with the public utilities. They tried a couple of times through the Texas legislature to set up investigations of the Colorado River Authority, making various claims about the damages caused by floods in the river, but they were all inspired basically by utility interests and he fought them to a standstill.

Then you know his record as assistant secretary of the interior. He espoused and helped to work out the legal phases of a lot of the public projects out in the far Pacific Northwest. I think Bonneville and some of them were still in the making then.

G: Grand Coulee?

H: Yes, he was a public utility-minded man, and quite a magnificent bit of his handiwork the Colorado River Authority is today--and all the things that have flowed from it. Had it not been for Wirtz's original interest, there'd have been no Colorado River development.

G: I really have two different impressions of him. One is a fellow in the courtroom or with the Interior Department fighting against these big utilities, and, on the other hand, an expert in oil and gas working for either Sid Richardson or the Brown brothers.

H: That's right. He was.

G: How do you set these two together?

H: I don't think there'd be any difficulty. I think that Sid Richardson, for example, was fully aware of Wirtz's beliefs and political theories and economics and whatnot on power projects, but he recognized the man's abilities and Sid had problems that were not conflicting with Wirtz's views. Wirtz and his partner Ben Powell, and young Rauhut and Sam Gideon later on, represented Humble Oil and a number of other oil companies in Austin in the early days of the railroad commission having charge of oil and gas development in Texas.

G: Do you think they tended to favor the independent producers over the major producers?

H: You mean Wirtz and his group?

G: Right.

H: I wouldn't know how to evaluate. I'm sure he had a lot of independent clients, but I know he had major company clients. But the key to it

all was that everybody that dealt with Wirtz knew of his absolute integrity, both personal and professional. If he undertook to represent you, why, his other connections or representations or clients made no difference.

He also was an expert on Texas water law. I don't know whether it's well recalled or not, but he was. I heard him argue one time before Judge Holt--I've forgotten who was on the other side, J. B. Dibrell, former member of Texas Supreme Court, I believe--a long argument trying to develop whether or not certain parts of the Guadalupe River were navigable in the legal sense, because it had to do with certain riparian rights that were growing out of the oil fields that were developed in Darst Creek area in Guadalupe County. I was just a young lawyer, but I just sat there spellbound because he was so intimately familiar with what was then a new field of the law. I think his practice and his influence and activities as a member of the senate put on the statute books a lot of the present Texas water and irrigation law of today.

So I don't think there's be any inconsistency, in any real sense, between him favoring independents or the majors. He was an honorable attorney that gave his best to whatever client he had, and when the client employed him he was aware of his other connections.

G: I get the impression that he often played the role of a country lawyer in concealing--

H: Well, in his droll way, that would probably be so. But he'd do it very, very effectively. You know, he was very deliberate in his manner of speech. He was not a rapid talker. He spoke rather

deliberately, but very effectively and rather factually. If you want to call it a country boy style of approach, why, he knew how to handle it, and, if it was called for, he could be very polished or otherwise if you want to call it that. He was an accomplished man.

G: Do you think Maury Maverick had anything to do with his getting that under secretary of the interior position?

H: I'd have no doubt, without having any direct knowledge, because I was in Washington at the time that Maury espoused his cause. But, hell. Lyndon got that place.

G: Did he?

H: No question about it in my mind.

G: Do you recall any of the specifics?

H: I know Lyndon told me before Wirtz was named that he was working on it, and I know that Lyndon had built up in his own inimitable way his connections with Secretary Ickes, through a long series of events beginning at the time Lyndon was secretary to Dick Kleberg and was running chores for Wirtz up here on the Colorado River Authority. He made his connections with PWA, and that's where he first knew Abe Fortas, Tom Corcoran, Ben Cohen and that sort of thing. I just almost would be positive that Lyndon was the one that made the proposals to the President and the one that was successful in obtaining the appointment, and I'm almost positive that Wirtz looked upon it the same way. Although that's not to say that Maury wouldn't have been most helpful to Wirtz. He may have, and probably did, make representation

to the President. But the moving force, the initiator of the idea, the one who conceived it and carried it out, was Lyndon.

G: Let me ask you a few things about President Johnson's father. In the years that you knew both men, did you get an impression of how Lyndon Johnson regarded his father?

H: Let me put it this way: While I knew Mr. Johnson before I knew Lyndon, I knew him better after I knew Lyndon. I knew him because Mr. Johnson used to be in and around Austin, around the legislature and working for the state railroad commission. But pose your question to me again.

G: Did you get a sense of how Lyndon Johnson regarded his father?

H: A very deep, genuine love and affection of son for father. I think he had a deep, abiding respect for his father's judgment. I think he recognized that his father had not been a financial success in the business way, but I think he looked upon his father really as a father and son relationship should be. I never heard him speak anything other than a reverent word for his father, and I know how deeply grieved he was when his father entered into his last illness and at the time he died.

I've lost it, I guess, but one of the nicest letters of that kind that I ever remember I got from Lyndon. I was out in Illinois. I think it was in 1938, or whatever the date of his father's death. I'd had a visit with Lyndon in Washington a couple of times before I went out there in September, and we talked about his father. He

hadn't been well. I was in touch with him a couple of times while I was in Springfield. Then I heard of Mr. Johnson's death, and I recall that I talked to Lyndon over the phone, or wired him or wrote him, maybe all three. Then I had a letter from Lyndon written to me in Springfield--I was there about four months in trial--and it was one of the finest letters that I ever read in my life. I don't know whether I had it in that batch of things I turned over to the Library or not. I doubt it. I moved around a good deal in those days and didn't keep up with my files very well. But it would run to part of the answer to your question: to my recollection and observation, there wasn't anything other than the best of relationships between son and father.

Lyndon adored his mother, of course, and she outlived his father. But it was entirely on a different level.

G: President Johnson was always regarded as a impatient, aggressive sort who had to get things done today.

H: Yesterday. And the day before.

G: Was his father same way?

H: No.

G: Of course, his father was much older.

H: As I remember him, he was an industrious man in his way. He had been a cattleman and a farmer and a rancher. In the years when I knew him, he was not fast in his physical movements, he wasn't fast of speech; he was a good, clear, quick thinker, I think. But he didn't have apparently, that I could recall, the drive and the tremendous ambition

that put drive into a man that Lyndon had. He had a good mind, I'm sure, and I think had a political mind, because he himself was in politics on the county level. But I don't think he was a man of the vision that Lyndon was, and one reason for it, probably was his limited opportunities. Lyndon was that way by nature, but of course the times and circumstances expanded and enlarged his horizon of activities.

I would say there was a good deal of physical resemblance, particularly in Lyndon's later years. I could see his father in many, many ways. He was shaped like his father and developed a rather large abdomen like his father. He had some movements like his father and he had long arms like his father. His father didn't use them as actively as Lyndon did in his younger days, but a good many characteristics I could see.

G: I think you mentioned in your interview with Joe Frantz, or perhaps Eric Goldman, that Lyndon Johnson likened his trip to California to the Okies in The Grapes of Wrath.

H: (Laughter) Yes, I think he did.

G: Did he talk much about that trip? That's something that we really don't know much about.

H: Well, you see, the trip was old by the time I first knew him.

G: I realize that, but I'm just wondering if he ever reminisced about it.

H: A bit. He went out there, as I recall, with two or three of his boyhood companions from Blanco County, one of the Crider boys and maybe one of the Stubbs and I've forgotten who else. I've heard

him talk about how they went out there in the old Ford, and somewhere in New Mexico they had to stop and grind the valves a couple of times to get over a certain mountain peak, because the old thing was about worn out. I can recall he talked a little bit about how disappointed he really was. They thought they'd go out there and make a lot of easy money quickly, and they didn't. He began to see some of the hard sides of life in a city way rather than in a country boy way.

G: He spent most of the time, I guess, in San Bernardino.

H: In and around Los Angeles and that vicinity, and maybe San Bernadino was the place. I don't recall.

G: I'm wondering why he stayed as long as he did.

H: I think it was kind of an adventure with them to begin with. They hoped to make some money out there, and it was kind of young boys' adventure. Then they came back with their tail between their legs, kind of, I think, glad to get back home. They'd seen the hardship of the Okies. Lyndon was forever reading the books of--who was it wrote all about the Okies?

G: John Steinbeck?

H: John Steinbeck. The Grapes of Wrath and so on. As a grown man, he'd read and talk about Steinbeck's books. In fact, he wasn't much of a reader, as you probably know, in his younger days. Sometimes I used to say to him, "Lyndon, I don't think you've read through a book completely in the last twenty years." He'd read at it and he'd absorb a lot of it, but he wasn't a lover of reading. That's not to say he couldn't devour what was in front of him in

print damned easily, because he had a photographic mind and recollection in many ways. But he was not a reader.

I drew the inference always, that his thoughts and ideas in later life were influenced by that experience, because of the Okie background and the hardship that he saw and experienced. To what degree it would be hard for one to say, because he was also influenced by the rather hard financial life that the Johnson family had. No need to go into that, you know it as well as I do. But those factors made him a better man, I think, and gave him a sympathetic understanding of the problems of other people and the small people.

G: I gather that his Uncle George was a powerful influence on him also.

H: I'm sure he was. I never knew Uncle George very well. I met him any number of times in and around Blanco and down in Houston I think once or twice, and I always understood the very close connection that Lyndon and his uncle had. I think his uncle not only was his counselor and adviser, but I'm quite sure that, from time to time, he quietly helped him financially when he was a boy and a young man. I'm sure he did. Lyndon had a very deep love and affection for him. I didn't know him intimately, but I'm sure he had a decided impact on Lyndon's life.

G: He was a teacher, wasn't he?

H: Yes, and again I can't be specific, but I think he was teaching in the Houston school system. That's the way Lyndon got his place, I think, through Uncle George, to begin with.

G: I'm wondering if he could have been the reason that LBJ went into teaching.

H: Entirely possible. If I were going to conjecture, I would say probably he did have some influence on him turning that way. Maybe before Lyndon went to Cotulla, I expect, no doubt he talked to Uncle George about it. But I have no knowledge on that.

G: Moving up to after his election as congressman, I know that after he was elected he got out of the hospital from his appendicitis attack, operation, and he then met President Roosevelt's boat at Galveston.

H: I believe it was. I was up here at the time, of course.

G: Yes. Then he rode the train, I think, to Fort Worth, and then flew up to Washington and spent that first evening with you.

H: That's right, he did.

G: I believe Bob Jackson was with you. The three of you were out, according to one newspaper report at the time. Do you remember that evening?

H: Before he was sworn in the next morning? I remember it very, very well. Bob Jackson may have been in it, but I'd have to stop and think a little bit. I know that Alice and I were living out on Volta Place, out in Foxhall Village, and I knew Lyndon was coming. So he came out and spent the night with us and went from there straight to the Capitol the next morning to be sworn in. It may be that Bob Jackson was in town. Maybe we did go out together that night, but at the moment Bob doesn't come back to my recollection. I thought he was in Corpus Christi at that time.

G: The newspaper article said that he didn't tell anyone but you two that he was coming.

H: I think that's right.

G: Do you remember that?

H: I knew that he was pretty close-lipped about it. I don't recall precisely whether he told me he'd told Bob Jackson. Perhaps he did tell me that. My general recollection was that he came out to my house, spent the night and talked late into the night, and the next morning I asked him if he wanted me to go up to the Capitol with him and he kind of said, no, no, he was going to go on up there. I think he said that Wright Patman was going to escort him up or introduce him. I think it turned out that way, but I think maybe Sam Rayburn may have been on the outskirts of that little ceremony, too. I think he was. I didn't go up to his swearing-in. He indicated that he'd like to go by himself. I was prepared just as a friend to go with him. I would have liked to have gone, but he indicated to me he wanted to be on his own. So as I recall, he just either took a cab or went by streetcar and partly by cab up there and was sworn in the next day.

G: Did he talk about his flight up, about having flown up to Washington from Texas?

H: I would assume he did, but I have no clear recollection on that precise point. About whether he flew from Texas after seeing Roosevelt and coming up here, you mean?

G: Did he talk about having seen Roosevelt?

H: Not at that particular occasion. I think some mention was made of it, but most of the time that I heard that topic of discussion

was in later years. He and Wirtz and I used to talk about it.

G: What did he say about it?

H: Nothing. He'd just reminisce about the occasion. I think Wirtz was the one that arranged that for him, too. I think he went through Wirtz. Wirtz may have used Maury also to arrange a meeting in Dallas or Fort Worth, wherever it was.

You see, I was up here, as I say, and wasn't on the ground. It was kind of after the fact topic and talk between us, so I can't embroider that very much with detail for that reason.

G: The newspaper article that reflected this first night in Washington said that you all reminisced about old times in Texas and that he talked about the campaign.

H: I think we did. That's my recollection. I don't think we left the house that night. We may have gone out with Bob Jackson, and if Bob said we did, we did. He's no longer living, though, is he?

G: No.

H: Was Bob still in Washington at that time?

G: Yes.

H: He went to Corpus later on.

G: I believe he was working for--was it Senator Connally?

H: Oh, yeah, that's right. He was with Connally. He was there with Perry. What's his first name?

G: Arthur Perry.

H: Arthur Perry. Bob was there, left the paper and went with Connally, and then I think he went to Corpus afterwards, in later years, maybe.

I wish I could be more clear on that. My recollection is that Lyndon and Alice and I sat and had a few drinks and supper and we talked way into the night. Lyndon and I, after Alice went to bed, had a lot of talk to make with each other about bygone days and current and his campaign, things like that.

I had taken a part in Lyndon's campaign in Texas by indirection, because I was up here and actively engaged in my work in the department. I knew something of what was going on down there and helped to interest Charles Marsh on Lyndon's behalf.

G: Oh, is that right?

H: I knew Charles Marsh then. He'd never met Lyndon. I was in Florida when Lyndon announced his candidacy, and Marsh called me and asked me what about this man, "What do you know about him?" And I told him.

Marsh was one of those fellows, as you well know, the owner of the paper there in Austin at the time, [who] wanted to be in on everything and wanted to be one of the big "High Jessies," so to speak. He wanted to get in on this race, and he did. But he asked me about Lyndon, because he knew I knew him. Mutual friends had suggested to Marsh that he ought to call me, and he decided to support him and he did. I think that he created the Belden Poll for that particular race, from my recollection, and I think it was a real factor in electing him.

G: The poll was?

H: As I recall. Marsh I know was effective, because he put the power of his paper behind him openly.

G: Well, the poll indicated that about 90 per cent of the people in Austin or in the Tenth District supported the Court Packing Bill.

H: Well you see Lyndon espoused it.

G: Yes, I know.

H: I never agreed with him, but he did.

G: (Laughter) I am just wondering how accurate the poll was.

H: (Laughter) Well, I don't know. Because I think the people in the country thoroughly and roundly disagreed with Roosevelt on that, as later events proved.

G: Evidently they didn't in the Tenth District disagree.

H: No. (Laughter) No. That was a fortuitous set of circumstances, Lyndon taking the National Youth Administration place there. If he hadn't have done that, he wouldn't of been on the ground and prepared to step into that vacuum created by Buchanan's death.

In fact, Lyndon had talked to me several times before that, before he left Washington. By the time Lyndon left Washington he already had some considerable entrees, not on his own volition maybe but at the suggestion of others, into the White House. He saw the President on occasion. I think that the President saw in him a rising young politician, and I think he made one or more suggestions to Lyndon to do other things. I know that Lyndon talked to me one time at quite length about becoming director of the Passamaquoddy Tidewater Power Project in Maine that he told me that the President had suggested to him. We talked at length about it. My recollection was that I told him that I didn't think that I'd touch it with a

hundred foot pole because he would die on the vine out there. He was too far away from his home base.

G: There was also some talk that he might be appointed secretary of the navy if Frank Knox resigned.

H: Yes.

G: Do you remember that?

H: In a general way. I couldn't be specific about it, but I knew the rumor was there. Was Fulbright in the Senate from Arkansas at that time?

G: No, not at this [time]. This was during World War II.

H: I'm trying to come back to my memory. I knew of the rumor, but I can't recall enough of the circumstances to comment on it accurately.

G: I was going to ask you about another offer to change jobs, and that was an offer that he reportedly got from Newton Baker to go into business with Baker. Have you ever heard that?

H: In later years I may have heard it referred to. That would have been what year? While he was still in the Congress?

G: Right.

H: He was cutting such a fast and high swath and record up there in those days. Things were happening so fast, and I was away a great deal on a trial of cases. I might draw on my imagination a little bit and tell you, yes, I knew about it, but I think it would more or less be in the retrospect. I'm sure Wirtz would've known it, because Wirtz was a very close confidant of Lyndon's in

those days. He was a very constant confidant of Lyndon's.

G: Let's talk some more about some of the individuals that influenced him and brought him along. You mentioned Charlie Marsh. He's a difficult man to know for those of us who never met him.

H: Even those who knew him found him difficult. (Laughter)

G: What was he like?

H: Oh, Marsh was a high-rolling, J. Rufus Wallingford type. I learned in later years that his father was a minister. I think Charles was born in Chicago maybe and raised in Oklahoma or vice versa, I've forgotten which. [He] came down to Texas. I didn't know him then, of course, until I came to Austin in 1928 when I became a member of the Texas House of Representatives. He was the owner of the paper. He made various and sundry approaches to me as he did to anybody that he thought had a little promise about them politically. He always wanted to be the great manipulator behind the scenes. He had grandiose ideas. He would have liked to have been a little William Randolph Hearst, because he got into very much of a newspaper broker position. He bought and sold papers all over the United States. At one time or another, along in the late thirties and forties, I think he had eight or ten or twelve papers up through the southern states up into New England.

So he was a very possessive type of fellow. He liked to surround himself if he could with political figures. He would like to believe that he was a manipulator a little bit. Like he used to say that he could do this and that with Henry Wallace. Well, maybe he could and maybe he couldn't. I know he had Wallace in and around

him a lot. Maybe he did influence Wallace some, I don't know. But he was helpful to Lyndon, no doubt about that. I think he helped him financially in those days when he was running for the Senate the first and second time. I think that Lyndon was smart enough to see through Marsh all the time. I don't think that Marsh was out-thinking Lyndon a damn bit.

G: Marsh's partner was Mr. Fentress, wasn't it?

H: Who?

G: Harlen Fentress.

H: Yes. I never knew Fentress except casually, but that [was] his partner.

G: I get the impression that the two were not very much alike.

H: I think no. (Laughter)

G: I have the impression of Marsh as being a rather abrasive, very opinionated man.

H: Very abrasive. He could be very rude at times because of his overweaning ego. Charlie Marsh, to himself, would think he could do anything, get anything done that he wanted done. He was a very forceful fellow, and to some people he was rather persuasive. I always looked upon him as I said, as kind of a "J. Rufus Wallingford" type. But hell, he had a bright mind, no question about it, and he accumulated and lost a couple of fortunes. I don't know what he died with finally.

G: How about E. H. Perry, Sr.?

H: Again, my recollection of the Perry family goes way, way back, although I never knew them intimately. I first knew Mr. Perry

when I was just a young boy in prep school in Austin in 1913-14. Mr. Perry's only son, Edgar, and I were classmates at this little school called Austin Academy located at the corner of Rio Grande and 19th Street in Austin, now out of existence. But in later years, when I got into the law practice at home, I didn't know Mr. Perry well. Through the later years, when he became more or less affluent as a figure in public life in Austin, I knew him only casually. I know Lyndon had many contacts with him, and occasionally Lyndon talked to me about him. But outside of that I couldn't comment too much, I don't think.

G: Mr. Perry became chairman, I think, of the Austin Housing Authority.

H: He did. I think Lyndon got him appointed to that, because I think Lyndon had acquired Perry's friendship in some way. Even in his National Youth Administration activity Lyndon was great, as you know, at trying to reach out and get support and friendly relations with all the people in the community where he worked. He sold himself to Perry to begin with in that capacity, and I think that he kept it. That would be my general observation about it. I'm sure Lyndon put him into that position. Again, in those days I was not on the ground in and around Austin, and so I'd have to have my recollection of Mr. Perry kind of more or less vague after I left Austin in 1936.

G: Did you ever get the impression that Lyndon Johnson picked up any of his political legacy from Joe Bailey? Did he ever talk about Joe Bailey?

H: We talked about him because I was a great friend of Joe Bailey's. I had known his father casually before him. When I was just a youngster I remember going around to two or three of the Senator Bailey speeches when he ran for governor against Pat Neff along in the 1920's, somewhere in there. Young Joe Bailey went to Congress, and then he ran for the Democratic nomination for the Senate against Tom Connally. Lyndon was up here at the time, and he was supporting Connally with a vengeance. I made a number of speeches for little Joe and had a joint debate with St. John Garwood down in Houston. He was speaking for Connally, and I was speaking for Bailey. It was a large political dinner at the Rice Hotel.

But you asked me a question if Lyndon was influenced. I think the old friends of Old Senator Bailey transferred their friendliness for him to their sons. In other words, I think it could have been entirely possible that Mr. Sam Johnson was a Bailey man, and Lyndon may have formed an admiration for the Senator in that way because he espoused the repeal of prohibition and a great many other things that were not popular in Texas. So Lyndon may have seen a good deal of Joe Bailey, young Joe, when he was in the Congress, and may have been influenced by him. I don't know.

G: I was wondering more about the elder.

H: I expect some of Lyndon's ideas may have come from admiration through his father for the Senator like some of mine. But I doubt if Lyndon ever had any chance to have any contact with him. Because I don't think Lyndon was old enough or in a position to have known Senator Bailey, Sr.

G: How about the Ferguson family? Do you have any particular recollections of the Ferguson family's relations with the Johnson family.

H: Let's see if I can reconstruct it. When Ferguson was impeached, one of his principal lawyers was a man from Stonewall, Blanco County, who was related to Lyndon.

G: Martin.

H: Yes, Clarence Martin. Of course, Clarence Martin and Sam Johnson were very close, and Lyndon was a very great admirer of Clarence Martin. To that degree, I'm sure, through Senator Martin who had also been in the state senate at one time, Lyndon may have formed a liking for the Fergusons and for Jim Ferguson's political theories. I don't know that Lyndon knew the Fergusons too well. You know, they didn't support him in his first race for the Senate.

G: When he ran for the Senate they didn't support him?

H: No, they did not support him. They supported him in the second race, I think.

G: Jim Ferguson was dead by then.

H: Mrs. Ferguson, because I know I had a letter from Ma Ferguson one time in the second campaign.

G: Did you?

H: [She] asked me to support Lyndon. It was one of those pro forma letters. It had a little personal touch to it because I had known her when she was governor, just as I had known Jim Ferguson when he was governor.

G: Why do you think Jim Ferguson did not support him in 1941?

H: I don't know.

G: He ended up--that was territory where . . . .

H: He was running against Pappy O'Daniel, wasn't he? Pappy O'Daniel was more or less one of those rabble-rousing sort of fellows that Ferguson may have had some--I don't know; I'd have to speculate. I really don't know.

G: Some people have speculated that one of the reasons that O'Daniel got some of the votes he did was that people wanted to get him out of the state. (Laughter)

H: Oh, I think that's so. I always felt that. (Laughter) It's just kind of a strange, backhanded twist on the successful campaign, but some people did want to get rid of him, I think.

G: In your earlier interview you indicated that you were responsible for Lyndon Johnson getting that naval commission that he had.

H: Yes. If the inference was given that I was the one, the one responsible, that wouldn't be accurate. I participated in it in a way and made some recommendations to people in and around the White House and wrote the Secretary of the Navy, as I recall, in reference to him. I think I was queried, as I remember, by some functionary around the White House about him. But if I left the impression that I was responsible for it, that would be an inaccuracy and I wouldn't have intended it that way.

G: Perhaps I am using the wrong word. Do you remember when he went to bat for Walter Winchell, who was also a lieutenant commander in the navy?

H: Only in the vaguest sort of way. I was in and out of Washington in those days a great deal, and some of the things were kind of past events by the time I caught up again with them. No, I couldn't really comment on that, except I recall it in a way.

G: Did he ever talk to you about his World War II experience and his commission to Australia?

H: When he first came back in a general way. He never talked in any specifics or in any recitation of particular involvement of his own. We sat and talked, of course, a great deal when he first came back.

G: What was his attitude after having come back?

H: You mean, towards the war? As I recall a great deal of urgency about getting about our business and winning the goddamned thing.

G: Did he seem alarmed?

H: Yes, as I recall. He spoke of the effectiveness of the then Japanese warplane that was so successful. What did they call them?

G: The Zero?

H: The Zero. That would be my general recollection of that phase: "Get on with this business!"

G: I also understand from the earlier interview that you talked to him the day of Pearl Harbor, or the day after Pearl Harbor, on the telephone?

H: Now Pearl Harbor, I was in Kentucky. I had already gone with the mine workers, and we were down there preparing to go to trial on the Monday after Pearl Harbor Sunday and defending on a murder charge. I talked to Alice, I know, my wife, because my daughter was just a few

months old and the two of them were there alone. I talked to him over the phone from Middlesboro. (Interruption) If you ask me my recollection of the conversation I couldn't be very comprehensive, because it was an exciting sort of time. We were all standing on end. The thing that had happened, I think Lyndon felt like all of us did, that it was coming. We didn't know how or in what shape or form or when. But I know I was down there and had to go to trial the next morning to defend a man on a murder charge. I thought, "My God, what a hell of a time to go before a jury in Kentucky representing the mine workers and one of their men charged with murder--right here on the heels of Pearl Harbor." But we did, and he got an acquittal.

But going back to the conversation with Lyndon, I can't recall it in detail, I just recall the incident. He was highly excited, of course.

G: He did talk with President Roosevelt, I think, a day or so later.

H: I did?

G: No, he did.

H: Yes, that is my recollection. And within a very scant few days after that, why, he was up and gone with Admiral Ghormley.

G: There was one incident, I believe in 1940 at the time that the third term was an issue, that I wanted to ask you about. John Nance Garner was opposing a third term, I think.

H: That's right, I think he was.

G: John L. Lewis made a statement to the effect that--

H: About Garner?

G: Yes.

H: Yes. I think I can recall that, but I think it was in connection more with Garner's decided opposition to some of the legislation that Lewis was sponsoring in the Congress. It may have been influenced by the third term position, too. But, you know, Lewis broke with Roosevelt, too. I have forgotten the exact year, but I think it was 1940. He supported Willkie.

G: Right. But evidently the Texas delegation decided to offer some resolution or take a vote refuting Lewis' characterization of Garner?

H: Did they really seriously do that?

G: Lyndon Johnson didn't vote for it. I am just wondering if he ever talked with you about that?

H: The Texas caucus no doubt did, because Lewis was very powerful in those days, and he knew how to use words. I think he called him "that whiskey-drinking, poker-playing, evil-minded old man." I believe it was something like that. But as a matter of fact Lewis and Garner respected each other, and in later years then they became friends. Garner had a respect for Lewis, and I know Lewis did for Garner because Lewis had talked to me about him in later years.

G: What did he say?

H: Not about that incident but in a general way. I knew he had a respect for Garner. As I say, Lewis broke with Roosevelt, too, on the third term issue.

But the possibility of the Texas caucus doing something abcut it, Lyndon never talked to me about it. If he did, I have forgotten it.

(interruption--machine shut off)

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview III]

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Welly K. Hopkins
Donor

January 20, 1981
Date

Alice I. Hopkins
Donor

January 20, 1981
Date

Robert M. Warner
Archivist of the United States

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