

INTERVIEW I

DATE: June 4, 1969
INTERVIEWEE: DOUGLASS H. HUBBARD
INTERVIEWER: THOMAS H. BAKER
PLACE: Mr. Hubbard's office, Department of the Interior Building, Washington, D.C.

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B: Douglass H. Hubbard is deputy assistant director for Interpretation of the National Park Service. Do I have that title correct?

H: That's correct.

B: Sir, just for the convenience of anyone using this in the future, would you briefly summarize your career up to your taking over this job?

H: Yes, I'd be glad to. I was born in Oakland, California, on May 22, 1918. I was raised in California, went through school at Fresno State, University of California, where I received an A.B. degree in Zoology. Then [I went] on down to Texas A & M for a couple of years, where I obtained my Masters degree in the Department of Fish and Game.

From there I went into the Immigration Border Patrol down on the Texas-Mexican border for almost three years. This was at the beginning of World War II, when I applied for a military leave from the Border Patrol. From there I went into the Navy for a couple of years and then was released into the National Park Service [which picked me up without loss of time from the Border Patrol].

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I spent a year and a half at the Millerton Lake National Recreation Area in central California and from there transferred to Hawaii National Park, where I was one of the park naturalists. Then I became chief park naturalist, and after almost five years my family and I transferred back to Yosemite National Park, where I was the associate park naturalist for several years and ended up being the chief park naturalist there. [After] a full fourteen years of time spent there I came back to this present assignment here in the Washington Office of the National Park Service.

B: Please correct me on this, but this present assignment as deputy assistant director for Interpretation, that involves the expository material that is in the parks?

H: Interpretation is a word that the park service uses for education. We have determined that people in a leisure situation don't like to be educated, so we found a new word. We have a list of taboo words such as "lecture" and "tourist" and things that we don't use, and "interpretation" is one that we have sort of used to cover the activities that involve visitor services. We're responsible for the ranger naturalist activities in the parks, the campfires, nature walks, the museums, publications, and audio visuals. These things all come under the heading of interpretation.

B: You do a superb job. I am an enormous fan of national parks.

H: Thank you.

B: In this, sir, when did you first meet Mr. Johnson?

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H: We became involved in this project of the LBJ State Park in a very interesting sort of way. I guess it was almost midnight on the night of New Year's Eve two years ago, which would have been 1967, when a call came from George Hartzog, director of the National Park Service. My kids answered the phone and were a little disbelieving when they got me out of bed to talk to George Hartzog. Mr. Hartzog was rather direct, and said that he wanted me to be on the White House courier plane which would be leaving Andrews Air Force Base about six o'clock the following morning and that a park policeman would be by to pick me up at five-thirty.

Well, not knowing for sure what all was going on, I put a few things in a handbag, and I was ready for the park policeman who came by and was on the plane with Charles Krueger who was the assistant director for Design and Construction, a landscape architect by profession. He and I went together on this plane to the Ranch, where we were cordially met by the Johnsons when we disembarked from the plane.

That was my first encounter with both of these very charming people.

B: Did you have any idea what you were going down there for?

H: No, I sure didn't.

B: Did you suspect that it might be something to do with the Johnson park?

H: I kind of got that idea from talking to Chuck Krueger, who had been there one time before, that it had something to do with this. Actually what happened was that in response to the unfavorable

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publicity that had been centering around the purchase of this land for the park, which is right across the river from the Ranch house, the President was very anxious to get some things done that would improve his image. One of the things he thought of first was to get some facilities out in this state park. So Chuck Krueger and I spent most of two days going around very quickly trying to decide which groups of trees should be retained and which ones should be bulldozed. We were flagging good trees and leaving the bad ones to be taken out. This was the first way to get this project started.

B: Did Mr. Johnson accompany you on that survey?

H: Sure did. He spent every minute of the first half day or so with us, and it was remarkable to me how single-mindedly he went about this task. He seemed much more concerned about the fact that those bulldozers were sitting there with their engines turning over and the operator leaning against them smoking cigarettes, when he thought they ought to be out there pushing over the mesquite trees than he was about the worries of office, which I'm sure must have been hanging heavily on his shoulders.

B: But no mention or no interruptions recalled during that time?

H: Not a bit, not a bit. I remember one time Mrs. Johnson told him that, I think it was Mr. Brown, the assistant secretary of the Air Force, perhaps was trying to get in touch with him. This is when we were riding along in a car, but that's the only time that I

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can recall his ever making any mention or her making any mention of any official business.

B: Did he have pretty definite ideas about what he wanted in the way of facilities?

H: Yes, he did, and Chuck and I had a little problem. We tried to convince him that some of the mesquite should be piled up to make shelters where bobwhite and cottontails and armadillos could come in [and hide and live] within this enclosure which was being designed to hold the buffalo and the longhorn and some white-tailed deer. I don't think we made our point, and I suspect that the piles of mesquite were burned as soon as they were piled up. But this was perhaps one example of the fact that he did have ideas about--well, it was clean farming he was thinking about there.

B: Clean farming in the sense that he was not leaving piles of brush around?

H: Sure. [And clean farming eliminates the small creatures.]

B: One question arises here, that at that time the Johnson park was a state park.

H: Yes.

B: And still is, I believe.

H: Still is, that's right.

B: Is there any difficulty involved here in you people, the federals in effect coming down to do this?

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H: No, none at all. As a matter of fact, our first trip down there was done on holiday time; it was a New Year's holiday when we did go down. But we [the NPS] are able to cooperate with states in planning their parks, and actually there has been very little cost involved in our project, because most of our transportation, even, was on planes that were flying down anyway. So in the several years that we've been involved one thing has grown into another [as ideas have developed into plans for a larger national-type park].

B: Did you have some sort of liaison with state park officials?

H: Oh, yes, yes.

B: Texas counterparts.

H: That's right. They were down there. Mark Gosdin and Mr. Will Odon, others who have been very closely related to the state park system, were right with us. We thought that our role was more one of advisors and people that were there to be helpful, rather than the ones that were really running the park. Because it is their park, even today.

B: Is this unique, incidentally? Are there other cases not involving a president where the National Park Service gives advice to state parks?

H: Yes, there are, not only state parks but other government agencies. We have the capability of sending planning teams out, and oftentimes states that realize this have taken advantage of that on a "share the cost" basis.

B: You mention that this follows immediately behind the spate of bad publicity about the land acquisition down there. Was there any atmosphere of secretiveness about this? That is, did you get the idea that

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you should go out of the way not to let the press know what was going on?

H: No, nothing was said about that. The whole atmosphere every time when we've been down there has been one of cordial frankness. Certainly there were times when there were things being discussed that shouldn't be made public, but that didn't happen to be one of them. I know that part of the problem was that there was a threat to the land, a threat that the land would be subdivided. I think that was the big worry of the President's friends, that a series of little ranchos could be built across the river there on fifty foot house lots and you'd have a very unappealing, unattractive situation.

B: Were you involved in acquisition of additional land?

H: No, not in any way [except advisory--suggesting a buffer zone, e.g.]. The Park Service did become involved with the advising about the historic structures, of which there are several within this area. We have people that are involved with historic architecture. We had one of them go down one time and make a study, make recommendations about preservation of the Danz and the Sauer homes, which are within the boundaries of the state park. [I do remember suggesting that it would be desirable to include the Junction School if possible].

B: How do you spell those?

H: Danz is D-A-N-Z; Sauer is S-A-U-E-R.

B: Yes, I think I've read about those; they're old German settlers' homes.

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H: That's right. Now Sauer, I think it was Emil Sauer, became an ambassador and was a very well known person from that part of Texas, spent most of his career in the Department of State as I recall. A third name is Behrens, B-E-H-R-E-N-S, which was also an old historic cabin. It is now sheltered under the same roof that covers the existing Visitor Center, which is built on a slight rise a half mile or so from the ranch house in the middle of the state park.

B: What's a visit to the Ranch like? On this first trip I assume you stayed a few days at the Ranch itself.

H: Yes, we spent two nights and three days I guess it was. I've been down four or five times; I would have to look it up to tell you for sure. I found the atmosphere one of typical Texas friendliness. I've spent enough time in Texas to honestly say that I think there are some of the most hospitable people in the world down there. We were naturally a little bit flabbergasted to have the car drive up to the plane which landed and taxied right up behind the Ranch house, and have Mrs. Johnson sitting in the passenger seat at the front and then look across and see that the President himself was driving. We hadn't quite expected this, but everything was very informal. Everybody sat together at the dining table, the large oval table in the dining room. When there were more people, a second table was set, but everybody was included. The folks that worked on the Ranch were there, too, and if they didn't

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happen to get in [from work], well, the President himself or Mrs. Johnson would ask, "Where's 'So and So', aren't they going to come and eat?"

B: What sort of conversation goes on around the dinner table?

H: Oh, all sorts of interesting things, from a high level down to a pretty low one. I remember one time that we went down President Johnson was talking about the weekend before when he had been with General Eisenhower in Palm Springs. He said it was the best day he'd had since he'd become president. I guess they spent the day playing golf, or quite a bit of time playing golf, and the thing that impressed him was the conversation he had with General Eisenhower which evolved around the two greatest men that he had known. President Johnson asked us when we were sitting at the dinner table who did we think these people might have been, General Eisenhower's greatest men.

Well, somebody said, "Winston Churchill." They guessed that, and that was one of them. The President went on to tell General Eisenhower's story about Prime Minister Churchill's determination to take part in the invasion of France during World War II. General Eisenhower told Winston Churchill that if he went he'd have to divert a squadron of aircraft and a couple of destroyers to protect him. Well, Mr. Churchill was determined, said that maybe General Eisenhower had better go ahead and make those arrangements. About that time the King of England got wind of these plans and decided that he, too, would like to go. When Mr.

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Churchill heard this he changed his mind and decided they couldn't subject the King to such a great danger, so he gave up that idea.

But it wasn't so easy to guess the name of the next man. "General Westmoreland?" "No." "Franklin Roosevelt?" Someone facetiously said, "Lyndon Johnson?" Well, the answer turned out to be George Marshall. Ike always called him "General Marshall," and General Marshall always called him "Eisenhower." Ike described him as being aloof, said no one could get closer than arm's length to him, because he thought that to show emotion was to show weakness. But Ike felt that General Marshall's commendations were warm and almost "motherly." The plans that General Eisenhower and his staff prepared for the invasion of France took a long, long time, and when he took these to General Marshall he expressed the hope that General Marshall would give them his careful scrutiny. Well, General Marshall looked at him a few moments before he replied, and when he did reply he said to General Eisenhower, "You can be sure that I will do that. Because you not only have the job of planning this invasion, but you're the one that's going to lead it as well." Apparently this was Eisenhower's first inkling of what lay ahead of him.

President Johnson said that General Marshall was self-effacing and preferred to stay out of the limelight, to let someone else have the glory. He compared him at that time to General Earle Wheeler, who was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and at that

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time the country's highest military officer. He went on to say that he's back in Vietnam again and that he, President Johnson, was praying for his safe return, because he thought it would be a real feather in the caps of the enemy if they could pick him off while he was over there. That was just one of the things that we discussed one time around the table. That was sometime early in February, probably in 1968.

B: That's interesting. Did Mr. Johnson seem relaxed at the Ranch?

H: At all times. I never saw him when he wasn't relaxed. I remember one time in particular that he went in after dinner and sat down on his favorite "relaxacisor" chair, whatever you call that kind of an easy chair.

B: The kind that the back folds back?

H: Yes. This was a vinyl covered chair that had the presidential seal stuck on the back of it. So it was readily identified as his chair, except for one exception, and this was that little pooch, Yuki, that little white dog that Luci picked up in a service station somewhere. Mrs. Johnson told me that she had seen this dog there early in the morning, apparently it had been abandoned, and when she went back later in the afternoon the poor little pooch was still there. Her mother said, well, what could she do but bring it home? The little dog apparently won the favor of the President very quickly, and Mrs. Johnson commented one time about how she thought that Yuki and President Johnson loved each other just about the same amount.

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Well, I was getting away from what I started to say, that Yuki apparently thought this was his chair. He couldn't understand what that seal was up on top there. So this one evening after dinner the President went and sat down in his chair, and Yuki promptly jumped right up on his chest. The President put his head back and started to howl just like a dog, and Yuki very quickly joined him, and the two had quite a duet there for a couple of minutes.* Finally the little dog knew when he was licked, because he finally jumped down and trotted rather disdainfully out of the room. But that was relaxed if anything could be.

B: I believe you told me before the tape was turned on Mrs. Johnson was mildly embarrassed by this.

H: Yes. I commented about this particular activity on the part of the two singers, and she said that she blushed to the tips of her hair whenever that happened. But I didn't feel that way about it. I thought it just showed the humanness of this man.

B: In the meantime, what was happening to the park? Your first trip down there was essentially a preliminary surveying trip for the physical layout, I gather.

H: Yes. One thing led to another, and we had a very good rapport with the state park people. They were glad to have our help on any of these particular things where we had capability of assisting them. So using money that was donated for the purpose, the Park Service went ahead and drew up a prospectus for the exhibits that should go into the Visitor Center. We made suggestions about

* Recorded on the record, Dogs Have Always Been My Friends.
Produced by Awani Press, Fredericksburg, Texas

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ways of [restoring and] furnishing these historic buildings so they would have the appearance of the time of their use. The end result was that the National Park Service [researched, designed and] built a series of very attractive exhibits [at the Harpers Ferry Design Center] to go in this field stone museum, which was designed and constructed under the direction of Roy White, who is an architect in Austin.

B: Where did the money come from?

H: The money was given by Laurance Rockefeller, with the idea that it would in turn be matched by other people. As far as I know the matching hasn't happened, but I don't think we've exceeded the budget either.

B: Did the Johnsons take an active interest in the displays?

H: Well, they certainly did. There were times when we felt that maybe we were not getting through completely when we tried to present plans. This is often true with busy people. They have a hard time looking at plans, which are shown not always the way they are going to look in the final product. But we went down there one time, Russell Hendrickson, the chief of our Museum Division, and I, and while he flipped through the illustration of the plans, I read the labels that had been prepared to go along with them to the President. He obviously was giving them his close scrutiny. We got his approval and her approval on every one of these labels except for the one that was made by Alice Roosevelt Longworth, the comment that was made by her about something to the effect that there has never been a first lady like Mrs. Johnson. Mrs. Johnson's modesty was so great that she said, "Oh, you

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can't use that. Maybe after I'm gone, you can." The President said, "Go ahead and use it anyway," but out of respect for her we did not use that particular one.

Instead, we chose the one that was used for the Women's National Press Club Award, when they gave Mrs. Johnson the Eleanor Roosevelt Golden Candlestick Award citation. It says, "She aroused the nation's conscience to preserve America's natural beauty and its historic sites. She walked through slums, climbed the heights and hollows, rode the river rapids, and planted trees from coast to coast. All this and more she did to dramatize problems of poverty, education, recreation and conservation." I don't like that quite as well as the one that we originally chose, but it does tell of the very important part that this great lady played in preserving part of our country and adding or restoring to its natural beauty.

B: Do most of the exhibits revolve around the career of the Johnsons, as opposed to the history of the area?

H: No. The theme of the exhibits in the Visitor Center was something like, "This land produced this man." So it goes clear back into the early Indian days; it relates the Indian to the buffalo, which the visitors can see in the holding pen just close to the Visitor Center. It goes through the Spanish days; the longhorns which were released by the Spaniards which became an important part of the Texas economy; the cattle drives that President Johnson's grandfather and an uncle participated in, driving cattle from Johnson City up on the trail to the Chisholm Trail and up on

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the major drives. It told of the military activities in that area, and especially it emphasized the cosmopolitan nature of this part of Texas: the melting pot of nationalities, the German activity around Fredericksburg, the craftsmanship that these people brought with them and the fact that there had been a Mormon settlement at one time close to Fredericksburg, and the other nationalities that all worked together.

One thing that was interesting, we brought out the Meusebach Treaty, which was signed at the very early settlement of Fredericksburg [1847?] with the Comanche nations. I think seven of the Comanche chiefs put their marks on this treaty, which to me was a mark of civilization; that fact that instead of coming in with the idea of killing off these savage Indians that they would sit down with them and would work out a compatible way for them to live together. This is the sort of thing that is brought out by these exhibits, which are emphasized by the furnishings in the historic cabins nearby.

B: Did you find Mr. Johnson knowledgeable on the history of the area?

H: Yes, very much so, Mrs. Johnson too. Whenever there was any question about something that we wanted to know, if they didn't know the answer they quickly got on the phone and were able to find the right person to give the answer.

B: On the phone to old settler types in Fredericksburg and Johnson City?

H: Yes, we'd actually go and talk to these people. Sometimes there

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was a great flurry of excitement. Here again I was pleased to see the interest that the local communities gave to this project. The residents of Fredericksburg and the Gillespie County Historical Society participated in collecting all sorts of artifacts, old saddles, an old riata, and things of this sort for furnishings for the exhibits and for the historic cabins. In the other direction, the Edwards Plateau Historical Society were very active, and I guess still are in finding the things that will help furnish these cabins. It's just a real healthy situation, I think.

B: I guess someone in the future using this will know the geography, but this park would be just about on the eastern edge of the Edwards Plateau, wouldn't it?

H: I think that's right. I'm not familiar enough with the limits of the Plateau, but I know it's called the Hill Country and it must be right on the edge of it.

B: And it's right where it begins to break into the high land.

H: It's one of the nicer parts of Texas.

B: Did you ever have with the Johnsons a real conflict? Was there ever a time when either one of them wanted something in the exhibit that you thought inappropriate, or vice versa, you wanted something that they did not approve of?

H: No, I think we approached this whole project very gently. From the very beginning we worked out things that if there was any question we asked their advice, and there would have been no percentage on our part, in our rather peculiar situation of being

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advisors to this thing, to not work out the type of thing that everybody liked. Oh! I think of one instance where we had a, I guess you could call it a conflict. Our woodcarver out at Harper's Ferry, John Segeren, carved some beautiful plaques out of sugar pine wood. I guess these were about fourteen inches square, designed by Russell Hendrickson and others, showing scenes. Oh, there was a curled up armadillo; there was a bluebonnet; there was a cowboy roping a steer; there was a windmill with a peach tree growing along side of it, very beautiful wood carvings which were finished in a gray color. The idea being that these would hang on the stone wall of the Visitor Center.

We all liked them, but Mrs. Johnson couldn't get very excited about them. Somehow I think perhaps she had gotten a fix on the idea of hanging a, what do you call that kind of crewel work? Something like a patchwork picture. I can't think of the name of it right now.*

B: Collage?

H: Well, that kind of a thing. But there was a special name for this technique where you sew on pieces on a piece of cloth. Anyway, when our museum van got down there with these very beautiful wood carvings all mounted on a piece of velour material, and that was hung up over the fireplace, I'm sure that she agreed, as did everyone else, that this was a very nice way of treating this particular subject. I think that is probably as close as we came to a difference of opinion.

* Stitchery

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B: Is there any atmosphere in here of Lyndon Johnson wanting his part to be bigger and better than all the rest?

H: Oh, I think there is an atmosphere of impatience. He likes to get on with these things. And I think that he not only wants this to be a park that will be used, but he wants it to be a park that is an asset to the community.

Let me explain what I started to say. There was an appropriation made by the state of Texas for half a million dollars which was matched by Land and Water Conservation Fund money out of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, giving them a fund of a million dollars to go ahead in what we've called Phase II of this state park development. Phase I was a grant of, I think, a hundred and sixty thousand dollars, which was used to build this Visitor Center, to build parking areas, to build holding pens for these animals.

B: Was that the Rockefeller money?

H: No, no. Rockefeller money was used only to build the exhibits. I think the first probably was Land and Water Use, some type of recreational money; I'm not sure of the original source of that. Anyway, under Phase II they do plan such things as an auditorium with a stage where a conference could be held. I think the President, Mr. Johnson, is very anxious to make this a sort of a cultural center, but at the same time he wanted there to be recreation, because there will be a swimming pool*. They have built a number of picnic tables and shelters where people can stop and relax as they are traveling through.

* He said he wanted the neighborhood kids to have an opportunity to learn how to swim.

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Now one thing that came to my mind was a little bit of jesting, chiding between the two Johnsons. He has been concerned about the fact that he's afraid that people aren't going to come to this place. Well, to those of us in the National Park Service this is an incredible situation. We don't know any place where you say the word "park" that you don't immediately get inundated by people, and I'm sure that the same thing is going to happen there. But somehow he has had this fixation that maybe people aren't going to stop and visit. So he started a thought in his own mind, that maybe they would put up a series of signs, the old Burma Shave type, you know, where you scattered them along the roadsides; "Come and See the Buffaloes," or "Free Drinking Water at the LBJ State Park," thoughts of this kind. He thought he would just spread these all over Texas.

Well, he was really trying to get Mrs. Johnson's goat, I think. She would listen and say, "I hope he's kidding!" And finally we were riding in the automobile one time, and after he made this comment for the third or fourth time she very gently said, "Well, dear, for the last five years we've been taking down billboards all over the country. Don't you think it would be a little inappropriate for us to start putting them up?" I don't remember that we ever heard any more about them!

B: That's good.

H: To show how much he was concentrating on this, my wife and I went down to the Ranch over the last New Year's Day once again to sort

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of give a final look before these exhibits were taken down. As we were coming back on Air Force One the President himself walked through the cabin, and he stopped and reminded me that he was depending on the National Park Service to help get the word out about the park at the Ranch.. Well, I'm sure there's not going to be any problem. I'm sure that he'll soon realize that they are going to have more people than they can handle.*

B: Are you doing anything special in the way of advertising?

H: No. Ben Butterfield, our assistant director for Tourism and Information Services, has been in touch with the people down in Texas just to tell them what we know about this project, and the Texas folks themselves are taking care of the press releases. I read the other day that they had dedicated the first part of the Phase I Visitor Center. The President himself was not there. I know they do plan a more formal dedication a year from now when the project Phase II will be completed.

B: Were all of your trips to the Ranch on the same kind of rush, emergency basis as the first one?

H: I think the one we made most recently, the one I described last New Year's, was less pushed than the others. This was again during a holiday period and not quite so rushed, because we had to wait for available transportation. Once that was lined up we took off and spent three days down there, but [it was] a much more relaxed situation. One time we went down and back the same day.

B: Would it just suddenly occur to Mr. Johnson that something needed

* Close to a million, I believe, in 1978.

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to be done about the park, and he would call and off you would go?

H: Mrs. Johnson was the one that we had most of our dealing with. She was the key person here, and she was able to get to him for decisions that needed his concurrence. But for the most part she was the guiding light on this project, and when some particular part of it was bothering us, oftentimes we would suggest that maybe we should come down and meet with her. Several times some of us--Russ Henrickson and I--went over from the Interior Building to the White House in Washington--it was only a couple of blocks--to talk to her, or she'd have Liz Carpenter call us to work out some detail.

B: You mentioned a while back that at times during this there were matters that were confidential, I think were your words. What sort of thing would that be?

H: I can't remember what we were talking about. Perhaps it was the names of the people involved in the donation of the land that became the state park. I don't think that has ever been made public. John Ben Shepperd is the gentleman who headed up, I think, what he called it was the LBJ State Park Fund State Park Foundation. These were obviously friends of the President that chipped in together to get the money to buy this land. But although they have said that they would be named, I don't think those names have ever been mentioned.

B: Would it be appropriate to do so now? Under the restrictions?

H: I don't know them myself, so I can't. Beyond John Ben Shepperd, I couldn't even guess. *

B: Well, I'd think they would be on the record somewhere.

* But he should be asked, and the names recorded.

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H: I'm sure, and I don't see any reason for it to remain confidential.

B: I heard a little hint of an anecdote the other day that you could confirm. Recently, that is, recently from the date of this interview, there was a park dedicated to Mrs. Johnson in Fredericksburg.

H: Yes, I think it was just a month or so ago.

B: Yes. A park, Lady Bird Park, with a swimming pool, operated by the City of Fredericksburg.

H: Right.

B: And I heard that Mr. Johnson took one look at that and said, "Why isn't there a swimming pool in my park?"

H: That's right. He's been very impatient about getting this part of it done. I know this has given the architects some bad moments, who have tried an orderly plan for this project and [are] trying to find the best possible location for the swimming pool where it will not conflict, where you won't have the kids running around barefooted with their wet bathing suits through the Visitor Center. They've got to find the right place for it. It's got to be approved by whomever in the Texas government approves such projects, and then it has to be put out for a bid and constructed. So I would say that if they get all of this done within this coming year, they'll be doing quite well.

B: But Mr. Johnson wants it quicker than that?

H: Yes, indeed! And when he gets impatient about something, he makes his feelings known.

B: Does it ever get kind of frustrating working for a "driver" like that?

H: It hasn't been for us, because of what I call the rather peculiar

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structure of our part in this thing. We've not really been under anybody's specific direction. We've cooperated, we've helped every way we could, and we've at the same time found it a very enjoyable kind of a fringe assignment.

B: I don't know if you've been involved in this or not. I know vaguely that there is a Lyndon Johnson Birthplace, which I believe has been moved to the Ranch property.

H: No. It's built on the right site, but it's a reconstruction of the original cabin which was on that spot. Now, I don't think anyplace in the country do we have so many things related to a single president of a historic nature. What I mean by that is: starting in Johnson City is the Boyhood Home where he lived for a number of years; on the outskirts of Johnson City the beautiful old log and stone buildings that were built by his grandfather and his uncle and others when they were doing cattle driving out of Johnson City; as we come on in the direction of Stonewall and Hye and the park we come to the Junction schoolhouse, which is still there, where he went to school as a small boy; the Albert School is a short distance away; the reconstructed Birthplace is on the original site, although it is not the original building; the family cemetery is close to that; and then, to end this thing up, is the present Ranch home of the Johnsons. The President is buried only a few hundred yards from where he was born. It is a unique park.

B: Have you been involved in preserving or restoring those other facilities, too?

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H: No. But I did discuss the importance of saving them with the Johnsons. But the National Park Service soon will be, because Senator Jackson has introduced a bill a couple of months ago to set aside the Boyhood Home and the Birthplace as the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site, I believe it is called. I have every reason to think that this will go ahead and have the sanction of Congress, and that before long the National Park Service will be responsible for taking care of this reconstructed Birthplace, which again was done by a Mr. Roy White from all the material he could gather of an historic nature. It sits on a two-acre plot of land, and the Boyhood Home in Johnson City, which is a square block of land right in the middle of town, is a very well preserved boyhood home of Mr. Johnson.

B: Are the Johnsons equally interested in those?

H: Yes. Not only equally, but perhaps even more so, because I know that the Birthplace was reconstructed largely under Mrs. Johnson's guidance, and I'm sure that it's something that she has wanted very much to do. The President himself was very much interested and delighted when this was done. It is furnished in part with some of the furnishings that were in it. I think the bed in which he was born is, I'm sure, part of the furnishings in there. [Not so, but I'm told it is in a private home in Fredericksburg.] And the same way in the Boyhood Home in Johnson City. It has been managed by, I think they call it the Johnson City Foundation, which I think is a family type of thing.

B: Have members of the family been active in this type of thing, Mr. Johnson's brother, for example, Sam Houston Johnson?

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H: We have been able to get information from him. We sent an historian, Jerry Rogers, down to do some legwork in the vicinity of Johnson City and the Ranch to gain the background we needed in order to design these exhibits. I know he used the President's brother as a resource person in this regard. The President's sisters helped, too.

B: For the benefit of future scholars, you I know do a great deal of that kind of research in all aspects of this. Is the raw research material, the reports of people like Jerry Rogers that you just mentioned, on file in the Park Service somewhere?

H: Yes. We ran off quite a number of copies of it. Probably we should make a copy available to you or to whoever you think of to be placed in safekeeping.

B: Well, I was thinking we could use these kinds of things as clues to future scholars as to where to get even more material. I would assume that they would be available in the future in the Park Service files.

H: Yes. The final basic document was a Master Plan for the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site. Copies are available from the NPS.

B: While we are just talking here, it's conceivable that the Johnson Library would be interested in a copy.

H: I think that we certainly should send a copy, and I'll try and remember to send a copy down there. Because it not only has some good raw material, but it has a bibliography that ought to be useful, too.

B: The more of that kind of clues we give people in the future, the

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easier it will be on them.

Have you also been connected with Mrs. Johnson's other activities, in the realm of the National Parks and beautification?

H: Not too much, but I've become an expert in several fields as a result of my helping with this particular project. I had a call from Liz Carpenter one day asking if I could get over to the White House right away, that they had a problem they wanted to ask me about. It turns up that somebody has asked permission to mount a plaque on the Boyhood Home. I think they called this the LBJ Trail. I think there are a number of places that were related to Mr. Johnson, and they were trying to identify them with this very distinctive type of plaque. Well, I think the reason we got involved here is that we had had a discussion about the importance of not mounting things like this right on historic structures, that it was better to let them be someplace close by, but not detract from the structure itself by bolting the thing right to it.

I know what happened. We had seen one that was designed for the Birthplace, but luckily it was on a four by four and was going to be put out in the front yard. One time when Mark Sagan and I were down there with Mrs. Johnson, we commented about how we thought this was a much better way of doing it.

To make a long story short, Liz Carpenter asked did I have ideas about how this could be solved. How could they let this gentleman put his plaque up and yet not detract from the home? Well, I thought of two things. One was to mount it on the picket fence

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out front, which was a rather temporary sort of solution. I suggested the idea of dropping a big hunk of native stone in the yard and mounting it right onto that. Well, Liz Carpenter got on the phone right away and talked to the gentleman down in Texas who had asked permission, and that idea seemed to please him. So whether that has been done, [I don't know]. It wasn't there last time I went by, but I suspect that that will be the plan in the future.

B: Perhaps I shouldn't say this since I'm not clear about it, but I think the LBJ Trail is perhaps done by the Highway Department. I know in Austin you can get a little map of just how you can drive your car around past these things.

H: I'm not sure. I know there are people who are working on this particular thing. For the humorous side of it, I asked Mrs. Carpenter, "How did they designate places that were worthy of these plaques?" She said that she thought that every place that the President had stopped and gone to the bathroom was probably one that they would consider for such a designation.

B: Have you gotten other consulting calls like that?

H: Yes. One day I had a call from Roy White's associates of Brooks, Barr, Graeber, and White. In fact it was Max Brooks that called from Austin, rather distressed, because they were working on a parking area to go with the LBJ Library. There were a couple of beautiful big oak trees which were being isolated because the parking level was being bulldozed down, oh, four or five feet

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below what had been the original level of the ground. These trees were not looking very good, and he knew that they were going to have a very irate Mrs. Johnson on their hands and on their necks if these trees died. Well, I didn't know a thing about what do you do in a case like this. But luckily I was able to call Jim Lindsey over in National Capital Region Horticulture Office and say, "What do you do in a case like this?" He said, "The best thing is to go out maybe thirty feet and build a rip-rap wall of loose rock so that the roots will be protected, and in that way there's a pretty good chance the trees will survive." Again, I don't know what has happened, but I passed this information back to them in a very authoritative tone of voice without knowing anything about what I was talking about. The trees look good today [1979].

B: Any other calls like that?

H: Those are the only two that I think of so far.

B: Have you been involved in anything pertaining to the White House itself or this historic type nature?

H: No. I had the pleasure of going to a state dinner over there one time with my wife and to a conservation luncheon another time which certainly was involved with the White House. [These are] things that we'll remember, I'm sure, the rest of our lives. But no, I'm sure that they have a very competent staff of historians, and the Park Service, of course, is very closely tied in with the White House. It's one of the something like seven hundred nineteen areas that the National Park Services administers within the boundaries

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of the District of Columbia.

B: I may point out here--you mentioned it in passing but perhaps it's worth emphasizing--the Johnsons apparently had been kind enough to invite your wife, I assume as a gesture of kindness, to a trip to the Ranch and to the White House.

H: Yes. This trip that we made last New Year's was more than just a gesture of kindness, because before I came here I was involved with planning what we call the Pioneer Yosemite History Center in one area of Yosemite National Park. This involved historic furnishings of some old, oh, nine or ten structures each to a different period of history. My wife worked closely with me and especially with some of the older people who helped us furnish these buildings. So she has a good eye for this, and I took her along to work with us and to sit in on our sessions involving the historic furnishings for some of these structures down there. But it was a very nice gesture on their part, and certainly she enjoyed the trip, too.

B: Mrs. Johnson has done a good deal of traveling to national parks, and most recently, I believe, what was called her "Farewell Tour" involved a number of national parks. Has she ever commented to you pro or con on the interpretive facilities there?

H: Oh, she is a great backer of the national parks, and she's done many things. Like you say, she made this trip. Was this to the Redwoods, the trip you mentioned as her "Farewell Tour"?

B: Yes. That is the one I was thinking of, although I think there have been others.

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H: She made the trip down the Rio Grande and the Big Bend National Park. I saw a motion picture down at the Ranch. Another little humorous sideline, while we were down there New Year's. The aircraft hangar had been converted into a theater, and one wall was covered with paintings that had been given to the Johnsons or obtained by them. And there was quite a discussion around the dinner table of what motion picture should they show for their guests. There were about a dozen of us there. Well, finally, the one that they wanted to look at had been sent back. It was a full length feature. They finally ended up looking at one that was Mrs. Johnson's trip up into New England, and they tailored this selection on the basis of how long the President would be able to stay awake anyway. So they said, "Let's look at about a fifteen minute film. You'll be asleep, and after that it doesn't matter."

B: Is that the way it turned out?

H: That's the way it turned out.

B: Did Mrs. Johnson provide a live commentary?

H: No. It has a very good sound track with it. But she did say quite a number of things on the film. I think Mr. Udall went with her, Secretary Udall, on that trip.

B: Just like ordinary folks sitting around watching home movies.

H: Exactly.

B: If that's quite the phrase for the President of the United States and his wife.

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H: Although certainly they've taken a lot of motion pictures. They had a Navy camera crew covering many of their activities, and I know they were making a monthly summary of outstanding things. I think these were compiled from the President's press conferences and other activities that happened, which I'm sure, although they may have seemed costly at the time, are certainly going to be of value to the historians of the future.

B: I understand that they, too, are being deposited in the Johnson Library, those monthly summaries at least.

H: Very good.

B: Do the Johnson's use their park? That is, does either one of them go over and just be an ordinary tourist?

H: I don't think they could possibly just be an ordinary tourist, although this I do know: I've been with Mrs. Johnson in Frederickburg when she is just like ordinary people. When people speak to her, she just--

B: You mean just walking down the street, shopping, things like that?

H: Just walking down the street. She and Mrs. Carpenter both are on the National Park Advisory Board now, and they were back for a meeting here just a few weeks ago. I happened to meet her out in the elevator out here in the Interior Building, and she asked was I going up to the Advisory Board meeting in the Secretary's conference room. I said, "Yes." And she said, "May I go with you?" I said, "Please do." Well, in this trip from the first floor to the fifth floor three different people in the elevator commented to

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her about how nice it was for her to be back. One of them said how fortunate that she could be back at a time when the city was so beautiful because of the plantings that she had done. It really was beautiful this last spring with the tulips and the daffodils over on Lady Bird Island, I guess the new name that they've given to Columbia Island. So these three people each commented very informally and straight from the heart to her, and she received these comments very graciously.

B: But Mr. Johnson does go over occasionally and look at his park?

H: Yes. Now I didn't go along on this installation trip, but our NPS van that took the exhibits down just got back last week. One of the men, Russ Hendrickson, called me to report that the reception on the part of the Johnsons was very good, that they couldn't stay away from what they were doing, putting these exhibits in. Russ said that the first time that the President came he wandered around in the room without saying very much and left. In just a few minutes he was back with the Lieutenant Governor and two or three other people in tow. The third time he came back he had two station wagons full of people, and Russ said that he was grinning from ear to ear as he walked through the place. So Dorothy Territo commented that the way it looked every person that comes anywhere near the Ranch is going to get a personal tour of the new Visitor Center by President Johnson.

B: This is just recently, after the end of Mr. Johnson's [Administration]?

H: Just a couple of weeks ago.

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- B: Well, let's see, sir. I've just about run out of questions.
Is there anything else you think is applicable to this kind of record? Any anecdotes you remember about visits to the Ranch?
- H: I will probably think of a number of these after we sign off here.
- B: Just give me a call, and I'll be back.
- H: I think the informality, the homeyness of the Ranch was what really appealed to us. I remember the first time we were there Chuck Krueger and I went down to have breakfast in the kitchen, and Mary Davis, the cook lady who was very much a part of the Ranch, said that it was her thought that probably the First Lady wouldn't be coming down. She had quite a large dinner the night before, and she was very carefully trying to watch her weight. She wished that the President would take as much care about his weight as Mrs. Johnson did about hers. But it wasn't long until here came Mrs. Johnson. She sat down with us at the table in the kitchen, and under the table was a box full of beagle pups that Pat Nugent had come through to check on and went on his way. So we ate breakfast to the accompaniment of the pups and their mother down under the table while the pups had their breakfast.
- B: Did you ever go on a hunting trip with Mr. Johnson?
- H: No.
- B: On the Ranch there, I mean.
- H: No. I never got involved with that, but I did travel around a

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couple of times while he was taking people. He loves to show off the place, and he and Mrs. Johnson, again, had a pretty good rapport here. I remember one time we drove up, and there were a bunch of Barbary sheep in a large fenced area. He kiddingly said to her on the radio, "Would you like to put those over inside the new area?" She said, "Well, I want to put them some place, but that isn't it." So apparently these exotic sheep were something that they had a little contention about.

B: Is Mr. Johnson deliberately accumulating a variety of wildlife on the Ranch?

H: Oh, I think so. Yes, I think so. I don't remember where the bison came from, probably from one of the national buffalo ranges possibly, but there was a white-tailed deer that I think had been sent to him as a gift of the Governor of Vermont, if I'm not mistaken. A deer named Clarence that liked to eat cigarettes.

B: So tame?

H: A tame deer. They stopped and he got out and petted Clarence, and Clarence nuzzled around looking for somebody who would give him a cigarette to eat.

B: Was it penned?

H: The Ranch is fenced. As I recall, Clarence was not in a fence that he couldn't have jumped over if he had wanted to. But they were talking about the fact that he had sore feet, that he had not been there too long, and he hadn't gotten accustomed to the type of terrain that he was covering. He was limping around as a result of that.

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B: A trivial question perhaps, but where do guests stay at the Ranch?

H: The first time that Chuck and I went down we stayed upstairs in a very delightful new section of the house. I think it was a wing that was built on under the guidance of Roy White. Two other times, including this last time, we stayed out at the Lewis Ranch, which is about five or six miles beeline from the President's Ranch and is the property of Luci, given to Luci by her dad. It's a little old ranch house with everything it needs, including a bullet hole over the door where one of the original residents got shot at by somebody. But [it has] very comfortable modernized quarters with every facility, including immediate radio contact with Volcano Base, the Secret Service headquarters on the Ranch.

B: I've heard that practically the whole thing is wired for sound.

H: I'm sure that's true. Even now, while the Secret Service detail has been greatly reduced in size, they do use closed circuit television to inspect the people who come. It's rather spooky to come up to this gate and have somebody ask you your name and what your business is when you can't see anybody and can't see the source of the person asking the question. But if you satisfy them, well, then they push the buzzer and the gate unlatches and you're able to come on through and on to the Ranch.

B: And they have visually identified you, too.

H: Yes. Usually, I think that they know pretty well the people who are expected. I think the Johnsons probably are careful to tell them in advance the names of anybody that might be coming. The President's

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little office was right off on the opposite wing of the old ranch house, which was built by his aunt and which they bought not too many years ago, a very modern office. I took some pictures there last time when I was down, and one of the things that I included in one of these pictures was the White House flag, the presidential flag. A few minutes before, without realizing, I had taken it flying on its mast below the American flag out in the yard. Then it was brought down. This was the final time that this flag would fly, that any presidential flag would fly over the ranch house, because this was his final trip down to the Ranch while he was in office.

B: The flag flies when the President is in residence?

H: While he is there, that's right. I presume they fly the American flag much of the rest of the time. But only when he's there does the presidential flag fly.

B: When the Johnsons are at the Ranch do they have comparatively few servants?

H: Oh, I would say that now probably this is true. But when we were down there in addition to Mary Davis, who was sort of the boss of the kitchen, she must have had two or three helpers. Her husband was the man that also kept things running around the house. Dale Malechek is the Ranch foreman who takes care of the outside of the Ranch and the cattle. But there were two or three houseboys I guess you would call them, Filipino, or there was one Chinese, Chang was his name, perhaps, who was down here the last time. Apparently the

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President had found him in Honolulu.

I don't know all the story about it, but apparently it turned out later that neither he nor Chang could communicate with one another, because he couldn't speak Chinese and Chang couldn't speak English. But it turns out that the Chinese fellow has a family in the Red portion of China. But while we were down last time he was still there. He had been there the time before. So it will be interesting to see what the future holds for him, but I'm sure things are going to be greatly reduced. There was quite a fleet of cars and many things on the Ranch that now will be gone. The airport I don't think will be used as much, although I guess the President will fly around on some of his junkets and some of his trips in the future.

B: I'm not sure either. I think as a matter of courtesy, or perhaps law, the President does have some access to military air transportation. Sir, I've enjoyed this enormously. Is there anything else?

H: Well, like I say, I'll probably think of a couple of good stories once it's too late to tell you.

B: As I said, call me and I'll come back.

H: All right. I think in the time to come we're probably going to see more Park Service involvement in the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site.

B: Those are the homes you mentioned.

H: Yes. There are other things there that are certainly worthy of national significance, such as the family cemetery, the grandfather's old home, stone and log houses and so on.

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B: One thing that's just occurred to me, was there ever any thought of converting the Lyndon B. Johnson State Park to a National Park?

H: Nothing has ever been said about that. I would suspect that whatever happens in the future, the National Park Service and the Texas State Park system will work very closely together and help one another.

B: Thank you very much, sir.

H: You're welcome.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and of Interview I]

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