

Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Project

EARL WARREN: THE GOVERNOR'S FAMILY

Nina Palmquist Warren	<i>Notes from the California First Lady</i>
James Warren	<i>Recollections of the Eldest Warren Son</i>
Earl Warren, Jr.	<i>California Politics</i>
Nina Warren Brien	<i>Growing up in the Warren Family</i>
Robert Warren	<i>Playing, Hunting, Talking</i>

Interviews Conducted by  
Amelia Fry and Miriam Feingold Stein  
in 1970, 1971, 1976, 1977, 1978

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## PREFACE

The Earl Warren Oral History Project, a special project of the Regional Oral History Office, was inaugurated in 1969 to produce tape-recorded interviews with persons prominent in the arenas of politics, governmental administration, and criminal justice during the Warren Era in California. Focusing on the years 1925-1953, the interviews were designed not only to document the life of Chief Justice Warren but to gain new information on the social and political changes of a state in the throes of a depression, then a war, then a postwar boom.

An effort was made to document the most significant events and trends by interviews with key participants who spoke from diverse vantage points. Most were queried on the one or two topics in which they were primarily involved; a few interviewees with special continuity and breadth of experience were asked to discuss a multiplicity of subjects. While the cut-off date of the period studied was October 1953, Earl Warren's departure for the United States Supreme Court, there was no attempt to end an interview perfunctorily when the narrator's account had to go beyond that date in order to complete the topic.

The interviews have stimulated the deposit of Warreniana in the form of papers from friends, aides, and the opposition; government documents; old movie newsreels; video tapes; and photographs. This Earl Warren collection is being added to The Bancroft Library's extensive holdings on twentieth century California politics and history.

The project has been financed by four outright grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a one year grant from the California State Legislature through the California Heritage Preservation Commission, and by gifts from local donors which were matched by the Endowment. Contributors include the former law clerks of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the Cortez Society, many long-time supporters of "the Chief," and friends and colleagues of some of the major memoirists in the project. The Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation have jointly sponsored the Northern California Negro Political History Series, a unit of the Earl Warren Project.

Particular thanks are due the Friends of The Bancroft Library who were instrumental in raising local funds for matching, who served as custodian for all such funds, and who then supplemented from their own treasury all local contributions on a one-dollar-for-every-three dollars basis.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in the history of California and the West. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library.

Amelia R. Fry, Director  
Earl Warren Oral History Project

Willa K. Baum, Department Head  
Regional Oral History Office

30 June 1976  
Regional Oral History Office  
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University of California at Berkeley

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EARL WARREN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
(California, 1926-1953)

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Dinkelspiel, J.S.

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Earl Warren Oral History Project

Nina Palmquist Warren

NOTES FROM THE CALIFORNIA FIRST LADY

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## PROJECT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The following four pages represent an in-lieu interview with Nina Palmquist Warren, a heroic effort on her part which she contributed in spite of her deep-seated conviction that any memoir of hers could be "only incidental" to her husband's and should not deserve separate treatment. When she visited the Earl Warren Oral History Project on December 12, 1978, she took time after lunch to sit between our crowded desks and, in informal (and untaped) conversation, answer a few crucial questions about her family. These we typed up, mailed to her with new questions, and received in return the following typescript which is photocopied from the original.

So this is her own record, a great concession from a gentle and charming lady who on April 13, 1976, had written us: "So far as my own life being documented is concerned, I think that it is the Chief Justice's life in which the public is interested, and mine would be only incidental to that... While I appreciate your interest in having my views on these subjects, under the circumstances, I do not think that any meaningful purpose would be served by my consenting to an interview."

One of the fuller portayals of the first lady of California appeared October 30, 1977, in a Sunday Sacramento Bee, Section A, by Nan Nichols.

Amelia R. Fry

31 January 1980



**Sheraton-Park  
Hotel & Motor Inn**

SHERATON HOTELS & INNS, WORLDWIDE

2660 WOODLEY ROAD NW  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008  
202/265-2000

February 13th, 1979.

Dear Amelia:

Yesterday's mail brought your letter of February 7th and it arrived within five days. However, I don't know if my letter will ever get out of Washington as we really had an unexpected snow-storm last night. Instead of 2 inches we got eight inches, and this caused a terrible traffic tie-up everywhere. Hundreds of cars were left stranded and the tractors couldn't clear the main arteries until they were towed away. Washington does not know how to cope with snow. All the schools are closed so the youngsters will be happy.

As promised, I am enclosing the answers to the memos on the copy you gave me during our delightful visit on December 14th. I think I have covered "all the bases" - if not, let me know. I am not proud of my typing and really should re-type it, but as it is just a rough draft, I hope it answers the purpose.

I am sending you our Christmas cards. Those drawn and designed by our son, Jim, entailed a lot of work and detail. He was in the advertising business with B.B.D & O in San Francisco when he returned from the war. Now he is in real estate in ~~Francisco~~. *St. Helena.*

Ray Brown, who had a shop in the Farmers' Market in Los Angeles, made the silhouettes.

I am also sending you a copy of a book written by my sister, Eva. She was a wonderful person, as was her husband, Tom Moseley. Thought you might enjoy reading this in your spare time - if you ever have any!

Warmest love to you, and please remember me to the wonderful staff.

Enc.

*Nina E. Harmon*  
DIAL 800-325-3535 TOLL-FREE FOR SHERATON RESERVATIONS WORLDWIDE

*Book forwarded to Amelia you in Washington, D.C.*

ANSWERS TO AMELIA FRY'S QUESTIONS ON VISIT TO BANCROFT LIBRARY DEC. 14. 1978.

My father's name - NILS PETER PALMQUIST - Osteopath and Baptist Minister

Born in Sweden April 18, 1856  
Died in Oakland, Calif. January 19, 1907 (51 yrs. old)  
" of Tuberculosis.

My mother's maiden name - Hannah Olivia Elise Malmstrom

Born in Malmo, Sweden April 14, 1869  
Died in San Diego, Calif. November 23, 1898 (29 yrs. old)

leaving 5 little ones.

Enoch Nicholas born in Sweden (changed his name to Edward)  
Eva Marie " " " " " " " James  
Jacob Emmanuel " " " " " " "  
Nina Elisabeth " " Visby, Gotland, Sweden  
Hannah Elise " " South Bend, Indiana.

The family left San Diego after my mother's death and established a home in Oakland. My father remarried - Sophia Albertina Rosenberg, who also was born in Sweden. She was a devout Baptist who kept the family together.

My brother, James, was stricken with tuberculosis when 19 years old and sent to a sanatorium in Arizona. There the disease was arrested, but he died when 29 years old during the "flu" epidemic in 1919.

My brother, Edward, also died in Arizona with tuberculosis the following year.

This made it necessary for my two sisters and me to find employment. All three of us were employed by Crane Company, (wholesale plumbing supply company) in Oakland, and also in the San Francisco office. (Crane Company's main office is in Chicago.)

I attended Heald's Business College at night in order to obtain my technical business training.

My sister, Eva, married Thomas Moseley, who was Dean of the Nyack Bible Institute, Nyack, New York for 18 years. Before that they spent 25 years in China on the border of Tibet. They were called home by the Board of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, due to the danger and disturbance in China. They have two children, Elizabeth and Robert.

Dr. Thomas Moseley was born in England March 1886  
Died in Glendale, Calif. December 1959.

My sister, Eva, was born in Sweden, July 1889  
Died in Glendale, Calif. June 1, 1976.

My sister, Hannah, married James Ross Gordon, who died many years ago. She remarried, Dr. Ralph W. French of Sonoma, who also died. She has two children, Myra and James.

My first husband, Grover Cleveland Meyers, a pianist of note, died of the incurable disease of tuberculosis, and I was left with a very young baby, Jim. This illness used up the resources of the family and I was compelled to return to work. I took a position in the office of a woman's Specialty Shop in Oakland, which I later managed. Jim was 6 years old when I married Earl.

-2-

I met Earl at a birthday breakfast party (swimming) on a Sunday morning given by mutual friends. During the period of our engagement, both of us were very busy - Earl as Chief deputy district attorney, and I at the Specialty Shop. After Earl was selected by the Board of Supervisors to succeed the late Ezra Decota, who was appointed to the Railroad Commission, we were married in the First Baptist Church in Oakland, by Dr. John Snape on October 14, 1925. (Earl was then District Attorney).

Our first home was a flat on Greenwood Ave., in Oakland. Virginia was born here. We then moved to 958 Larkspur Road where Earl, Jr., Dorothy, Honey Bear and Robert were born. Five children were born within six years and four months. Needless to say, it was difficult to get help with so many little ones, consequently all my time was devoted to my family and the maintenance of our home. When Bob was a baby we bought a large home at 88 Vernon Street. It was spacious and ideal for our large family.

Earl was always most understanding of my situation and never expected me to fill social obligations.

Sunday was "my day off" and Earl took all the children visiting, to the zoo, the recreation parks, beach, and many other places as long as they were happy. Honey Bear and Bobby rode in infant's seats. These trips necessitated bottles of milk, cookies, toys and diapers. Earl had no driver in those days, and I marvel how he could take care of so many little ones, but he looked forward to these outings.

He gave up playing golf, and to my knowledge the clubs have not been removed from the bag since 1925. (Perhaps because they are left-handed clubs).

Our children will never forget Christmas at 88 Vernon Street. It had all the traditional features, but to them was added one unique custom. Each child had his, or her, own Christmas tree, corresponding to his or her size, and around it were the gifts. Our recreation room was very large. The trees were ranked in size, from a big one for Jim, to the smallest for Bob.

Here is a list of our children, and their children.

James	James Lee, Jeffrey Earl, and John Albert Warren
Virginia	John Warren, John Jamison and Nina Elisabeth Daly
Earl, Jr.	Wendy Jean, Earl III, Ross and Clay Warren
Dorothy	No children
Honey Bear	William Warren, Earl Warren, and Heather Brien
Robert	Debra Arleene, Leslie June, and Linda Susanne Warren

I mentioned to you that I bought the following "on time" as we started housekeeping from scratch:

Portable Washing Machine.....	\$7.00	per month
China.....	7.00	" "
Crystal.....	7.00	" "
Vacuum Cleaner.....	7.00	" "
(Britannica) Encyclopedia.....	7.00	" "

It took a long time to pay off this indebtedness.

Regarding Earl's family. He had one sister, Ethel, who was four years older than Earl. She was born in Minneapolis, November 15, 1887, and died June 17, 1966 in Oakland, California.

Ethel was married to Vernon Roland Plank. He died at 45 years of age, suddenly on the golf course.

They had two children, Dorothy who spent six years in a tuberculosis sanatorium and died in her twenties.

(World War II)

Warren Roland, their son, returned home from the Marine Corps in the Pacific and spent several years in the hospital. He was released as an "arrested case". He married - had three fine, healthy sons, and a lovely wife. "Bud" as he was always called, died while jogging in 1976. (5/4/77) (H.W.)

I think your memo regarding the first Christmas in the Mansion reminded me of our first tree. The State Dept. sent a huge, beautiful 16 ft. tree to the Mansion. It was placed in the front living room where it could be seen by passer-bys on the street. I brought cartons of lights and ornaments from our Oakland home. Shortly after the housekeeper and I had trimmed the tree, the telephone rang and someone from the Capital wanted to know what color ornaments and lights we wanted - that someone would come over and trim the tree. Of course, I was delighted. We dismantled the tree. The following day, I received a phone call informing me that the State had NEVER furnished ornaments, lights, etc. for the Mansion tree. I assured them that I had made no such request, and was surprised when the offer was made. However, I did tell them that I had been greatly inconvenienced, especially removing the lights. As a result, an electrician arrived and replaced the lights, and I retrimmed the tree.

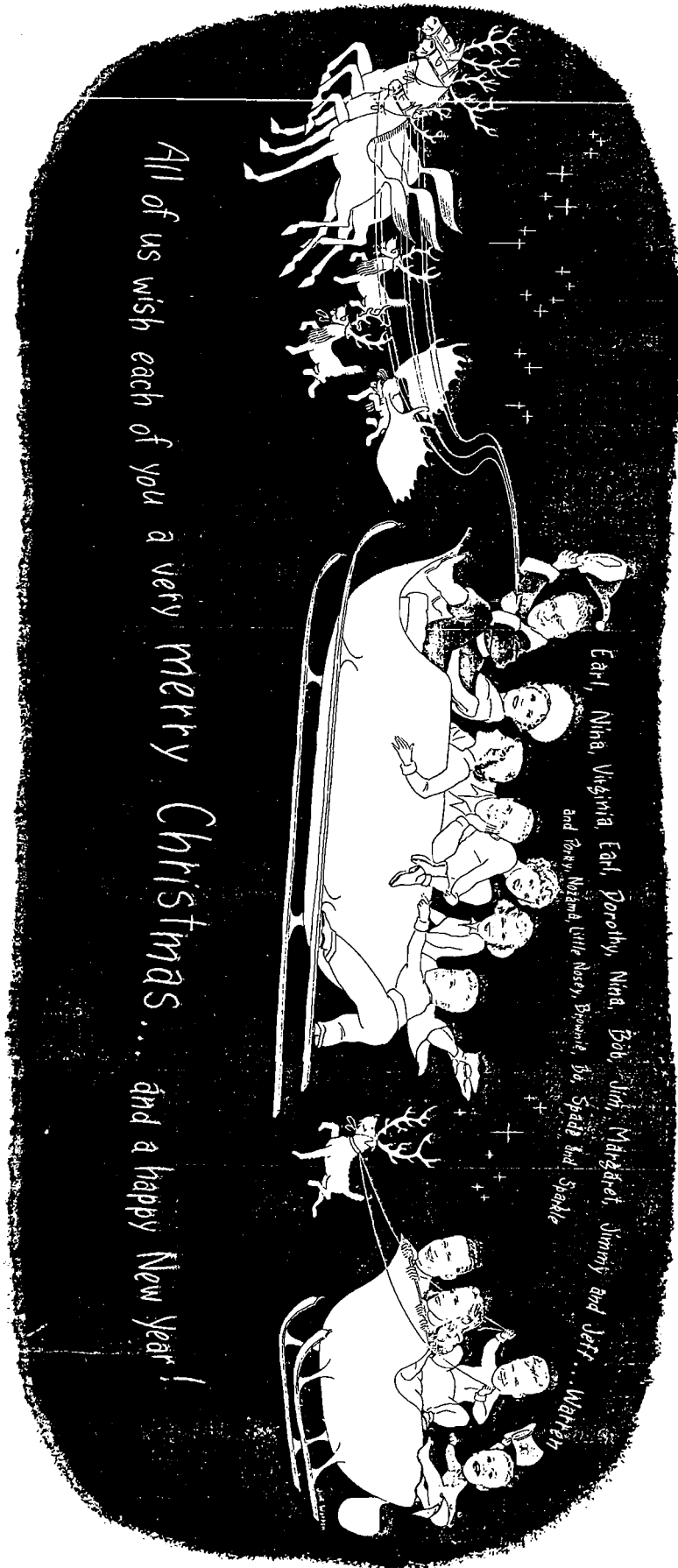
I am sending you a set of our Christmas cards. Those made by Jim entailed a lot of work - he is a perfectionist.

Ray Brown, who had a shop in the Farmers' Market in Los Angeles designed the silhouette cards.

I eliminated the Willis B. George plumbing shop episode as Crane Co., was a repetition, if you want to include it, your notes tell the story. Perhaps I had better repeat the situation. My sister, Eva, worked as a bookkeeper for Willis B. George & Co. in Oakland, Calif. The manager of Crane Co. often called at this office on business, and was impressed by her efficiency, etc. and offered her a position in the Oakland office. When she left, I took her place - then I went to Crane Co. and my sister, Hannah, took my place. She, too, joined us at Crane Co.

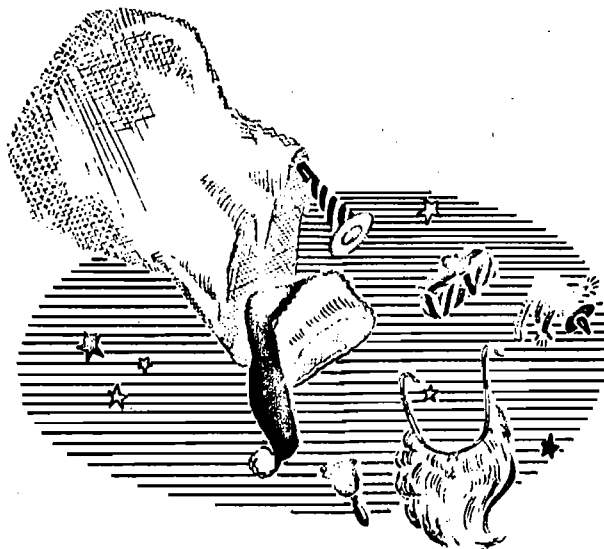
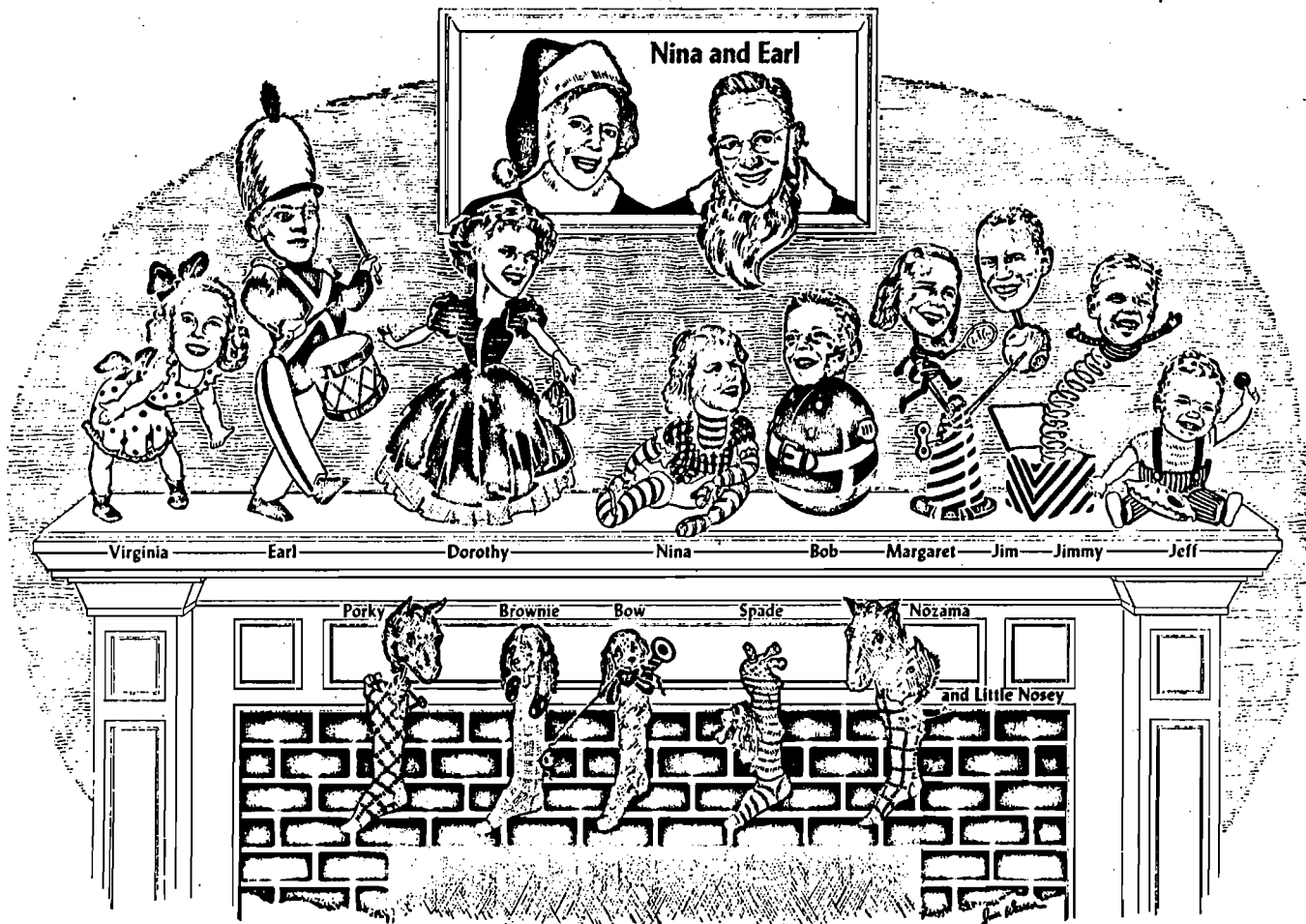
I think this covers all the memos on your papers.

*W. E. H.*



All of us wish each of you a very merry Christmas... and a happy New Year!

Earl, Nina, Virginia, Earl, Dorothy, Nina, Bob, Jim, Margaret, Jimmy and Jeff... Warren  
and Rocky, Noland, Little Noddy, Brownie, Bo, Spack and Sparkle



In the friendliest spirit of the Yuletide season  
Saint Nick left his bundle...for a very good reason;  
It's packed full of greetings, and toys, bells and horns  
...For a resounding **MERRY CHRISTMAS** from

ALL THE EARL WARRENS

\*Additional Warren family Christmas cards designed and drawn by James Warren  
may be found in The Bancroft Library.

Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

Earl Warren Oral History Project

James Warren

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ELDEST WARREN SON

An Interview Conducted by  
Miriam Feingold Stein  
in 1976



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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

James Warren was interviewed by the Earl Warren Oral History Project of the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library in order to record his reminiscences of life in the Earl Warren family. As the Warrens' eldest son, he provides important insight into the personal side of Earl Warren's life and into the family that was his focus and mainstay.

Interviewer: Miriam Feingold Stein

Time and Setting of the Interview: A single interview lasting several hours was held on July 26, 1976 in James Warren's real estate office in St. Helena, California.

Conduct and Editing of the Interview: Mr. Warren was eager to assist the Warren Project, and before the interview had carefully reviewed and annotated the interview outline and chronology of Earl Warren's career that had been sent to him by the interviewer. During the interview session he kept telephone interruptions to a minimum, and after the tape recording was completed he and his wife, Margaret, provided lunch and informal reminiscences at their ranch located high in the hills overlooking St. Helena. The ranch had been and continues to be the site for numerous Warren family reunions.

Both at this and at a subsequent meeting, Mr. Warren pulled out boxes of family photos and memorabilia, including a file of Christmas cards that he had designed and drawn, several of which he kindly loaned to the Earl Warren Project for inclusion in this volume.

The tape recording was transcribed, then edited by the interviewer to correct typographical errors and to maintain continuity. Mr. Warren carefully reviewed the edited transcript and made several additions and corrections.

Narrative Account of the Interview: A robust man of medium height, with salt and pepper hair, Mr. Warren reminisced easily about life in the Earl Warren family and his own career. He opens with several characteristic stories about his mother, Nina Warren, then turns to his own education and upbringing. He describes the rigorous education and discipline at the Del Monte Military Academy, and his subsequent transfer to the Oakland public schools, (--it was at this point that the widowed Nina Palmquist Meyers, his mother, married Earl Warren, who immediately adopted the seven-year-old James. James hence-forward regarded Earl Warren as his natural father.--) and discusses with enthusiasm his involvement in high school athletics. His schoolday recollections shed light on Earl Warren's great concern as a father in encouraging his children's widely varied interests and talents.

Continuing with his college years at the University of California, Berkeley, James Warren describes his growing interest in art, his organizational affiliations (which closely paralleled his father's) and the influence of his father's philosophy of pursuing with discipline and responsibility a broad range of activities that were challenging and that gave one "a good mental workout".

Mr. Warren paints a warmly vivid and personal picture of life in the district attorney's and attorney general's home. Warren as a father devoted his entire attention at home to his family and carefully shielded them from the pressures and controversies of his office. He showed deep interest in his children's activities, attending their sports competitions and school events whenever possible. And he and Mrs. Warren did little formal entertaining and accepted few evening invitations that would interfere with family life. James Warren describes the family's Vernon Street home in Oakland, a comfortable, rambling house large enough to hold the myriad of family activities, from the Christmas trees (one for each child) to the Shriner's band's visit on New Year's Day.

Mr. Warren's graduate education at Harvard Business School was interrupted by World War II, and he describes his service in the army, navy, and the marines during the war. After the war, and now married, he relates, he found work in an advertising agency, learned everything he could about the industry, and gradually worked his way up the corporate ladder. The purchase of the ranch property in St. Helena and growing dissatisfaction with corporate advertising led Warren ultimately to change careers to real estate sales and management in the Napa Valley.

Mr. Warren offers valuable insight and vignettes about Earl Warren as a grandfather, to the James Warrens' three sons, and to the thirteen other Warren grandchildren, and he shares his recollections of the family's involvement in Earl Warren's political campaigns. He concludes the interview with reminiscences of his father as chief justice.

Miriam Feingold Stein  
Interviewer/Editor

27 October 1977  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California  
at Berkeley

I BIRTHPLACE AND BIRTHDAYS

[Date of Interview: July 26, 1976]

Stein: Could you begin by telling me your birthplace?

Warren: My birthplace is the funniest thing in town. I don't know anybody else who ever was born there, but I was born in Pismo Beach, [California]. [Laughter.]

Stein: Pismo Beach?

Warren: Pismo Beach, yes.

Stein: What was your mother doing there?

Warren: That's what I've wondered. It was in March, you know. It wasn't even a vacation--I don't know. But every time I put down Pismo Beach on my driver's license, or when people say, "Where were you born?" and I say, "Pismo Beach," the room just falls into laughter, because everybody's heard about it but nobody believes anything's there but clams. [Laughter.] They don't believe there is such a place as Pismo Beach.

Stein: At least there was a hospital in Pismo Beach.

Warren: I don't know what's happened down there. I guess it's built up a lot, and they've got all kinds of restaurants and tourist traps and all the rest of it. Pismo Beach has always been to me like Waukegan was to Jack Benny, I think.

Stein: Let's just get on the record your birth date.

Warren: Twenty-sixth of March, 1919. Wish you hadn't reminded me of that. In fact, half the family is born in March, I think. My mother was March 9 and Dad was March 19 and our son is March 18 and I'm the 26th and Maggie's mother was March 19, same as my dad, and Maggie's aunt is the 26th, same as mine. It's just been a phenomenon.

Stein: It sounds like you could have one big family birthday party in March and take care of everybody.

Warren: We could actually, and we could stretch a pretty good gamut too. One of my aunts' husband just had his ninetieth birthday. Of course we don't know how old Irene is either; we never know how old any of the women in our family are, including my mother.

To this day I'm not sure. I've never taken the trouble to look it up because it would be sort of an affront. Well, maybe not an affront, but that's something she's so--

I got a laugh out of it the last time we were back in Washington. It was Dad's eightieth birthday, and John Daly and Virginia [Warren Daly] put the party on. John is sort of infamous for doing this, but just before you're going to sit down for dinner he goes up to everybody in the place that he wants to do this to. First he starts with the three brothers--he never picks on the girls--and each of us had to stand up and talk for two minutes on what it meant, what it was like to have been a member of the Warren family. There are all these dignitaries in the room. The place was just loaded with everybody from chief justices to Toots Shor.

The laugh came from one of the anecdotes I pretended to recall. My mother, I said, had her birthday on the 9th of March and here it was the 19th of March and she can not figure out--she's walking around mumbling to herself because she can't figure out--how Dad got to be twice as old as she is when their birthdays are only ten days apart. Everybody in that room picked it up, too, because nobody's ever known how old she is and I don't think we'll ever find out. [Laughter.]

Stein: She's done what every woman dreams of doing, to keep her age a secret.

Warren: Yes. She's got everyone faked out.

I know one of the things that caught John Weaver was my recollection that she never stops moving; she's always in motion. When you go in to have breakfast you never get any frozen orange juice and stuff like that. She squeezes them all by hand. It takes ten times as long but it's always fresh and she's always moving.

When we were back there at one of the functions--I forget which one it was--all of the kids were back there and, after whatever the festivities were, we'd take off and head for a beer. Just a big bull session or whatever, and we'd come back in around 2:00 or 2:30 in the morning. Walk in, here's the light on in the bedroom and Mother says, "Hi, what have you been up to? Did you have a good time?" You walk in there and here she is, watching television on this bicycle, going up and down like this at two o'clock in the morning. [Laughter.]

Stein: She had an exercycle?

Warren: Yes, she was on an exercycle at two o'clock in the morning watching television when we came home.

The rest of the time, during the daytime, she's got an iron going back and forth on the ironing board and she's watching all of the soap operas, As the World Turns and all those. But she's moving all the time. She's not sitting there watching, she's ironing or she's squeezing or she's mixing. She's always doing two things at once.

Stein: She's still doing this?

Warren: Yes, as far as I know. Our oldest boy, Jim, is an attorney in San Francisco now. He has to go back to New York and Washington occasionally on business and when he does, every chance he gets, he goes and stays with his grandmother. He says now he's getting to the point where he's afraid to open the door because there's almost always three cakes. There's never only two. It's unthinkable to have only one, but she's got three cakes baked by the time he gets back there.

He'll come home after dinner, after a meeting, come home around 10:00 or 10:30 at night. He's had dinner and he's all ready to go to bed or whatever, but he wants to sit around and chew the fat with his grandmother. But he always has to eat a cake and a half while he's doing it. [Laughter.]

Stein: I've heard about her famous chocolate cakes.

Warren: Angel food and devil's food, the only two kinds she ever makes. I'm not sure what the record is, but every year at New Year's, when the Shrine football game was played at Kezar Stadium, the whole Shrine band would show up at twelve or fourteen different homes in the Bay Area. They always started at our place because we had a bunch of young kids and they had to get to bed. So they'd show up at our place first, and they had this crazy little model-T Ford thing that they'd run around the stadium in and shoot cannons off the top of.

In order to get ready for it, my mother would make just platter after platter of ham and cheese on rye and all of these cakes. And then of course there were all the liquid refreshments that the Shrine band always expects to be there. [Laughter] I thought she made eleven cakes in one day but I think she said fourteen. But what's the difference?

They're all made that day; none of them are made the day before. They have to be made the same day that they get there. This is the right way to do it and the only way she will.

## II EARLY CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

Military Academy

Stein: Is this how you remember her when you were a young child growing up?

Warren: Yes.

Stein: I'm thinking about even the years before she met the Chief Justice, if you can remember back that far.

Warren: I remember the flat we lived in with my grandma, Nana, Nana Palmquist. It was one of these old-fashioned places where you open the door--we lived upstairs--and there was a handle, a mechanical handle, at the top of the stairs that you could pull to open the door down at the bottom.

Mother was working then; she worked for Mrs. Roller, Roller's Dress Shop. I remember we lived right across from the Yellow Cab garage in a neighborhood where everybody was Ol Olson and Lars Larsen and Sven Svenson and Jon Johnson. I know one of the guys was a sheet metal worker. The junk man would come by with a horse, and pick up newspapers. I remember little things like that. I used to walk to work with my mother in the morning. This is only about the first five years; I can't go back too much. I remember burning my hand on a wood stove in the parlor and that kind of thing.

Stein: What did she do with you during the day when she was working at the dress shop?

Warren: I just stayed with my grandmother. She was home; she lived there. This was pre-school years. I guess the first schooling I ever had was at the military academy. In those days I don't think they even had kindergarten. I was five years old when I went to the military academy, so that was kindergarten age anyway.

Stein: What military academy was this?

Warren: It was called the Del Monte Military Academy in Pacific Grove. I was there from the time I was five until I was ten and when I left I think at that tender age I had seniority over every single kid in the entire academy.

Fantastic educational background from the standpoint of getting into things that--I ran into things there in English, particularly English, and grammar that I didn't see again until I was in the tenth grade.

Stein: So it was a really rigorous education?

Warren: Really a rigorous education. Of course discipline, military discipline, was what it was all about. In addition to bed checks and all that sort of stuff, you had to go to bed at a certain time, get up at a certain time, stand in line for meals. Punishments were very, very specific. You'd get slapped on the palm of your hand with a ruler and you'd get whacked on the behind with a hairbrush. In fact, there were a couple of instructors who used razor strops.

Once every so often--I forget whether it's once a week or once a month--we had to get Argyrol in our eyes and drink Epsom salts and castor oil. I mean everybody, the entire student body, would line up. This was part of the health program.

Stein: Was this a nutritional sort of thing?

Warren: Yes. You'd walk through the line and you'd get a spoonful--you had a choice: a spoonful of castor oil or a glass of Epsom salts.

Stein: Quite a choice!

Warren: Oh, it was just brutal.

Stein: What was it that they put in your eyes?

Warren: Argyrol.\* This is a health thing, too. There were just continual checkups all the time. The academy was about a mile from town and we'd march into church every Sunday. I guess the big thing was going

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\*A trade name for silver vitellin. In the form of an aqueous solution, it was used as a local antiseptic for the eyes, ears, nose, and throat.



Warren: to the movie in town on Saturday night. I remember Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. was playing in the Black Pirate, and for some infraction of the rules, I don't even remember what it was--maybe I was out of step or broke ranks or talked after taps or whatever it was--but I was not allowed to go to the movie. I've never forgotten that punishment.  
[Laughter]

Stein: That would be a mighty severe punishment for a young boy.

Warren: Indeed.

Stein: Do you know how your mother came to send you to a military academy?

Warren: Didn't really wonder about it at the time. But looking back on it, I think it was a very thoughtful combination of things. It gave me a chance to get a good start in schooling and it gave them a chance to get to know each other.

Stein: So you were sent away about the same time that she met Mr. Warren.

Warren: My mother tells me that I used to know when Earl was coming over, and I'd say, "When's Earl coming?" I think I used to climb all over him, sit in his lap, but I'm really going more on what she remembers than what I remember.

But the only thing I do know is I have never been without a father. This is a strange thing I guess, but any inference or reference to step-father always seemed to me something that would offend him. It's never crossed my mind, except in later years, more mature years, but I never knew anything about my dad. As I understand it he died about the time I was born.

Stein: That's what Weaver says, in his book.\*

Warren: I'm not sure. I think maybe before I was three weeks old. He obviously must have been one swell guy otherwise my mother wouldn't have married him. I wouldn't ever want to--I don't know, what am I trying to say here?--ignore, disregard, overlook the fact that he must have been a fine man, too. In fact, I remember my mother once saying that the worst tragedy in her life turned out later to be the greatest thing that ever happened to her.

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\*John D. Weaver, Warren: The Man, the Court, the Era (Boston, 1967), p. 40.

Warren: But as far as my childhood memories are concerned, I've always had a father, and I never called him anything but Dad. I don't remember ever calling him Earl. He certainly made that completely easy.

In later years I've run across people that, when we're introduced, seem to get some subtle sort of satisfaction out of being able to say, "Oh, sure, Earl Warren's family. You're his step-son." Or, "I knew your step-father." It always hits me as going out of the way for some sort of a dig or a gig of some kind. I wonder why. And I have to confess I bridle a little inside, because all of our friends--and they all know, of course--have never, not once that I can recall, ever referred to other than "your dad" or spoken of us as anything but Jim's dad or Earl's son.

I've even wondered at times if I owed my own kids an apology because his blood is not in their veins. But that's dumb, of course, really ridiculous. Yet I know the sensation. And when some people, on the other hand, when we're introduced and they put the names together say, "Why, sure, I can certainly see the resemblance, you look just like him"--I know they're sincere and they mean it, but I'm always glad there's not one of the other type around who'd like to set the record straight. It would be so unkind and unfair to Dad. That's why I've never been curious or probed around about--would you believe that I don't think I've ever even seen a picture of Cleve Meyers. But Maggie has managed to learn that his name at birth was Cooper and when his father died he acquired the name Meyers in exactly the same way that I became a Warren.

Stein: Women do get into these things more, don't they.

Warren: Sure do. But men have their ways, too. I think the nicest handling of the whole matter was when we were flying back to Dad's funeral and--in some way I can't even recall--the topic came up when I was sitting with one of my sons. I only remember this young man saying, "Pop, he was your real father. The distinction is simply between a real parent and a natural one."

Stein: What a nice way to put it. Really the proper way, too, when you think about it.

Warren: Mother and Dad got married while I was at the military academy and I remember the first time the roll was called after my name change. There was another kid in the same squad whose name was Jackie Ward, and when they called the roll and they got to him--Ward comes before Warren, alphabetically--when they said Ward, I yelled, "Here!" [Laughter.] I was so anxious to answer to the name.

Stein: Did you come home for visits?

Warren: Yes. It seems to me we could come home once a month. I don't remember that I did come home once a month all the time; that was too expensive. But it wasn't all that necessary. There was no distance between us at all. We were very much in touch. They'd come down to the academy once in a while. It was not terribly different from going away to school except for the nature of the academy itself.

Transfer to the Oakland Public Schools

Stein: Well then, what happened at age ten, when you left there?

Warren: I think that was simply a case of by then I'd been there for five years, I'd had the education. In fact, I think the academy went broke the next year. I don't think they opened--I was ready to come home, for sure. It's just like having gone through the elementary phase of your education, and now you're ready to come home and go to a different school.

Stein: What grade was that?

Warren: Well, when I came home, let's see. During that period I guess they were living near McChesney High School in Oakland. What was it? Not Greenfield, Greenview, Green something--Greenwood Avenue, that's it--in a duplex. The family that owned the place lived downstairs, the Otto family. They were all mechanics and very German and a very fine family, all craftsmen of some sort.

I guess that's when Dad bought 958 Larkspur. I remember the flat but just coming back and forth from school. Virginia was born when I was down at the academy and I think that they were living in the flat when Virginia was born and then they found this house at 958 Larkspur. [Pause] Yes, because I was tenish and that was the fifth grade at Crocker Highlands, and so I started school in the fifth grade.

Stein: So you went to Crocker Highlands School in Oakland.

Warren: Yes.

Sports and Injuries

Stein: When did the family move to 88 Vernon?

Warren: I'm going to say it was 1934, because 1935 was the year I broke my elbow, and everything revolved around September 12, 1935. [Laughter.] I usually add "about 3:47 in the afternoon." [Pause] I was fifteen when we moved into 88.

Stein: So by then you were past elementary school.

Warren: Yes. Then I was a sophomore in high school. I was a junior in high school when I broke my elbow.

Stein: What high school was this?

Warren: Oakland High.

Stein: How did you break your elbow?

Warren: We were scrimmaging the day before the first game against Piedmont High and we had not run any punt formation practice. We'd only been practicing for two weeks. This was our first chance to pick up the specialty performances. I was an end, going down under punts, and they were switching off the defending backs on the ends, and the kickers and everything else--you know, just a routine practice. I was going down under this punt when I saw this guy coming at me, the defending half back, and I cut to the left and something hit me. I didn't even see it happen. I spun up in the air and landed on my arm in such a way that it bent the elbow at a right angle back the wrong way.

It turned out later on, when we reconstructed the thing, that the guy that was coming at me wasn't coming at me at all. He was just leaving the field, taking his helmet off. But I cut away from him and ran right into this other guy who really spun me like a pinwheel.

Stein: I read somewhere that you had almost lost your right arm playing football at Oakland High. Would that be the same story, or is that a different occasion?

Warren: It's an offshoot of the same story. It was diagnosed as a dislocation. They took me down to the family doctor instead of a bone specialist. There was no reason not to, I guess. He put a fluroscope on it, rather than taking an x-ray, and it looked like a simple dislocation so he set the thing. I just remember waking up at two o'clock in the morning and my whole arm was on fire. The next day, and from that time on until it was operated on in March, I think, these two fingers, the fourth and little fingers of the right hand, were paralyzed. I put my hand on a hot stove one time and picked it up and there were blisters and I didn't even know it. All the muscles between the thumb and forefinger and from my wrist to the elbow went down to nothing but bone.

Warren: It was sort of a gruesome session there trying to get that arm straightened out, and the reason it wouldn't was because at the time it was dislocated it was also chipped, and the chip slid out and grew. This big bone grew in there and that's why they couldn't straighten the darn thing out. When the doctor finally operated--we finally got to Harold Hitchcock and he operated--he took the bone chip out and moved the nerve to the outside. But my arm has never straightened out since; it stops right there. [Demonstrating.] That's as far as it goes.

Stein: Was that the same injury as the elbow business?

Warren: The same thing. Yes. I think I read somewhere that my dad said that I almost lost the arm. I don't know. I was never aware of it if that was the case.

Stein: I gather that you were active in football.

Warren: Yes, I was. Every kid's dream then, I guess, was to play in the East-West Shrine game.

Stein: Were there any other things you were involved in in school? Politics or drama or music?

Warren: I used to dive a lot, springboard diving at the Athens Club. There was a fellow named Morty Macks, who was quite a swimmer. Our coach even talked about our trying out for the '36 Olympics. But then I broke the elbow in '35 and whether I--you can always look back and say these things when you never had to perform, you know. But I don't know that I ever would have continued diving to that extent.

I did do a lot of exhibition diving at the Athens Club, and one time they asked me if I would compete for Oakland High in a diving meet. I'd never even been on the team until they asked. I guess we practiced for a couple of weeks and the end of the story, of course, has to be that I won it! [Laughter.] So I was the Oakland Athletic League diving champion for one year there.

Schoolwork

Stein: Were there any subjects that you particularly excelled in at school, or that you enjoyed?

Warren: Well I guess, in an unlikely sort of a way, English, and English grammar. It was something that was so thoroughly ingrained in us at the military academy. As I say, I didn't run into sentence structure and grammar and that sort of thing again until I was in the tenth grade. I'd had it all by the time I was ten years old.

I guess in a sense I've always revered and admired good writers as a consequence of it. Some of these columnists in the periodicals today I think are just fantastically eloquent in the way they express things. And to see what happens today: so many of the kids can't even spell, they can't write, they can't conjugate, they can't do anything. They just don't even teach it anymore.

Same with Latin. I took all the Latin that they ever gave in high school, I guess for no other reason than it was the basis for all languages. I have a doctor friend now who's quite a researcher and he always talks about the usefulness of useless knowledge. Learning Latin is like that.

Stein: Did you get much help from your parents in schoolwork?

Warren: Oh yes, to the extent that I asked for it. Dad was always very willing to discuss, debate. He was just terrific with all of us, any time we had a question or a problem or something to discuss. He just did everything humanly possible to help every one of the kids, who are all unlike each other, to develop his own bent. He would always, in this area, at the dinner table or any time we were all together, he would always turn the conversation toward any one of us and get something going.

Then, invariably, we'd get into something that would be debatable or controversial and he'd take the other side, on purpose, to make you prove your point.

Which reminds me, Mimi--if I might make a point that brings this right up to date--are you aware, from any of your research or interviews about how Dad went to the lengths he did to keep Justice Harlan active on the bench because of this opposite viewpoint business?

Stein: Gee, I'm not sure. So, please go on.

Warren: Well, Justice Harlan's eyesight became quite impaired as the years went on. Dad told us how he (Harlan) literally had to use a jeweler's eyeglass to do some of his reading and one day he came to Dad and actually wondered if he shouldn't resign because he felt he was slowing down the case load of the Court. And Dad told us he said, "No, John, your

Warren: contribution from the opposite point of view is too valuable. The Court needs you too much"--or whatever words, you know. But what Dad did was to hire an extra secretary--out of his own pocket--to provide Justice Harlan with the help he needed to keep up with his work. But Harlan never knew how the secretary was provided! The point being: I'm quite sure I've read that of all the decisions handed down while the two were on the Bench together, Harlan--more consistently than any other Justice--voted on the opposite side from Warren. That, to me, speaks a volume about the kind of man we're talking about.

Stein: It does, indeed. And I'm impressed that you can take it back so readily to when you were kids at the dinner table.

Warren: Oh, yes. Dad never missed a chance to provoke a debate. He could really cut you to ribbons in a very kind way. You'd realize later what was going on, but if you didn't know what you were talking about, then don't talk about it, or if you can't say what you mean you don't know what you mean.

I can't say that he would sit down and actually help you work out an arithmetic problem or something that obvious. I mean, there are sources you can go to yourself to find how to multiply or divide. But he was always intensely interested in any of the activities that any of the kids got into.

Earl [Jr.] became, I guess, almost a professional taxidermist; he was good at it. I mean, he would stuff birds and animals himself. Earl and Bob became very interested in hunting and fishing from Dad, who loved it. I guess I was just an age beyond, by the time they got into all that. In fact, I never went duck shooting until I was married. But they grew up hunting and fishing. That's strictly an age difference I guess.

Stein: Were your folks at all involved in the school? Was there a PTA or anything like that?

Warren: Yes. I can remember their being at PTA meetings. I can't remember that they were frequent or that big a thing, but if there was ever an occasion for parents' night or PTA or whatever--I know when I went into the Boy Scouts, Dad would always come to whatever functions there were. But, once you started something you were in it until you went as far as it was possible to go. I didn't dare quit until I became an Eagle Scout. I think Earl and Bob are too, but I'm not sure. I'm not sure. Once you start something you never quit, no matter what.

It happened with ROTC. Here, after all of this military academy stuff, there was a requirement for ROTC in high school in our day. You had to take a certain amount of it, and I think because of my

Warren: military training I was not required to take as much as the other guys. But at the end of six months I'd had it, I wanted out. You know, I was bored with it, but no way. You're in it, you're in it for at least a year. You can't quit.

Stein: That was your father saying that to you, that you've got to see everything through?

Warren: Yes, oh yes.

#### Summertime and Household Chores

Stein: What did you do during the summers in school, in high school? Did you have summer jobs?

Warren: Yes. I had the usual spate of paper routes, and when we lived at 88 Vernon, that piece of property was a project. I mean, it was big enough, overgrown, and with enough lawn and enough things to take care of. There was plenty of work just on weekends to do. We all had chores. We all had to cut the lawns and do certain specific things.

I remember one time, just after we bought the place, Dad got ahold of a flagpole that somebody gave him, real old, beat up, warped, cracked, chipped, checked and everything else. I remember the hours I spent on that thing, taking the paint off and oiling it and getting it back to where it was supple and alive again. Then he thought it would be nice to have the flagpole out under these trees. It wasn't a case of just digging a hole and putting it in. I dug a good hole and I lined it with redwood and I put cement on the bottom. When Dad came home that night he looked at it and said, "Gee, it would be just great if it could just be maybe fifteen or eighteen inches over this way so it wouldn't be in the way of that tree." [Laughter.] I had to take the whole thing out and move it.

Stein: You undid the whole thing?

Warren: I had to undo the whole thing and put in a whole new hole because it was a few inches off. Well, this is fine. It was not an unreasonable request.

Stein: Then on holidays would he run a flag up there?



Warren: Oh yes. We had a flag every event, every holiday.

I guess one of the most telling characteristics of the man was that--I don't think any one of us ever participated in anything that he wasn't there, and we all participated in something. Honey Bear got into horses and jumping, and so did Bob for a while, and through all of those years at the Athens Club and the exhibition meets, he always came to watch me dive. When each of us got into high school, he came to every football game or event that he possibly could. These were all Friday afternoon games in those days, and if he could get off early in the afternoon he would always be there. I've never known a man who was so dedicated to what his kids were doing. He was always there. No matter where you were you could look over and he was sitting there.

Stein: An ideal father.

Warren: Yes. He really was. A very uncommon guy.

### III UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

#### Studies

Stein: To finish off your education, after high school where did you go?

Warren: Went to Cal, and that was in the days when Cal only started in the fall and I had graduated from high school in December. I went to business school for six months and learned typing and shorthand and all the stuff that I thought would be helpful in taking notes and writing them up by the time I got to Berkeley.

When I entered Cal I was one scared kid. To get into college and stay in college was to me, I guess, the greatest, one of the toughest things that anybody was ever expected to do.

Stein: After all you had learned by that time, at the military academy and everything, you were still worried?

Warren: Oh yes! I think I got one C in high school. And I'm not sure that that wasn't in one of those upper division Latin courses. They had the course at seven o'clock in the morning before school started. I'm not sure what course it was, but I got one C and I don't think there was ever a time from my sophomore year on that I wasn't on the honor roll. I mean, this was expected, in a way.

I've got to be careful about the emphasis there because the whole point was that C was average. Anybody could get a C. And nobody ever settles for average. So as long as you got a B average, okay. Nobody expected you to get all A's or demanded it. In fact, it was a lot better to have a B average and to participate in a lot of other activities than it was to get all A's and not participate in anything else. He was really for the well-rounded individual.

Warren: So he encouraged all the activities that we could possibly get into and certainly sports was one of those at the top of the list. This carried through the rest of his life. I have read some of his statements--and I know we've heard him say--that when he picks up the morning newspaper he always starts with the sports page because the sports page is a record of man's accomplishments and the front page is a record of man's failures. All the problems are on the front page but all of the good things that people do are on the sports page.

Toots Shor, when he was asked to speak at that eightieth birthday party, called him the best informed public official on sports of any man he had ever known in his life. He really followed it; it didn't make any difference whether it was football, baseball, basketball--anything that was going on. He was an avid sports fan.

Stein: It's remarkable that he was able to keep all that in his head along with all the workload that he was carrying.

Warren: I remember when--we're jumping back and forth here, if it doesn't make any difference--years later, when Dad went back to Washington, the first time he came out to California as Chief Justice, he came up to the office. I met him in the lobby of the building (it was the Russ Building, I remember that.) We got in the elevator and he reached into his wallet and pulled out a clipping from the green sheet and said, "I just clipped out the starting line-up for the Bears this coming fall. What do you know about these fellows?" That's the first time I'd seen him in months--since he'd gone back to Washington--and here we are going up in the elevator, and he was directing the conversation to me again. What I was interested in he wanted to talk about.

Stein: Getting back to Cal, what did you end up majoring in?

[Telephone interruption]

Stein: We stopped just as you were about to tell me what you majored in at Cal.

Warren: Well, I had always copied the funny papers when I was a kid and I thought I wanted to be an artist. So I entered the university as an art major, very sheepishly, and I was very embarrassed about it. But as far as anything else, economics or math or physics, I knew certainly that they were not going to be my field. After two years I had an equal number of units in art, philosophy and public speaking, plus all the required courses that you've got to take. Going into my junior year I was determined I was not going to be a general curriculum major, so between the three I decided to become a philosophy major and I guess I took every philosophy course I could cram in there to fulfill the requirements. So I majored in philosophy.

Stein: Did you get any direction at all from your parents about what you would major in?

Warren: No, I think Dad thought that was good, because I don't think there's any question--he certainly implanted in our minds early in the game that really the university is a mental gymnasium. It doesn't really make much difference, that much difference, what you major in unless you're going to be a specialist in one of the sciences or medicine or whatever. Going to college is not necessarily going to help you get a good job in your major. So as long as you get into something that tests you and that tries you and gives you a good mental workout--and philosophy certainly would qualify in that category.

Stein: What did you see yourself preparing for? Did you have a career in mind?

Warren: I still thought I wanted to be an artist. In fact, when I got out of the Marine Corps I sent some cartoons into the New Yorker, and I guess the best thing that can be said about them is that I got them back. Most people told me that when you send things in to the New Yorker you never see them again; they just take them and toss them aside. But at least I got them back with a printed, not a typed, a printed notice, "We acknowledge receipt of your work, thanks very much" [laughter] and so forth. "Returning it with our best wishes," type of thing. I guess all of these instincts and intuitions came together in a notion that the closest thing to being in a creative field was to work for an advertising agency. So that's where I started.

#### Organizations and Athletics

Stein: I see. Just to finish up at Cal, my notes list a number of organizations you were active in on campus.

[Tape 1, side 2]

Stein: My notes indicate that you were a member of the Golden Bear?

Warren: Yes.

Stein: What was that?

Warren: Cal has a number of different societies: the junior year was Winged Helmet and the Order of the Golden Bear--for senior men--are the two honor societies for upper classmen.

Stein: Then they're honor societies?

Warren: Yes. In that category, of course, Skull and Keys, among the fraternities, was the big aspiration. Then it turned out that there were some others that I had heard about but didn't know about until I got there. Anyway, I knew that my dad had been in Skull and Keys.

Stein: Was that also strictly an honor society?

Warren: Not an academic organization. It was really a beer drinking society among fraternities. It's an honor society in the sense that the houses with the most guys in Skull and Keys were the strongest on the campus that year. Mostly made up of athletes and team managers.

But anyway, I think when I graduated from college I had been in every single organization that my dad had ever been in, and one more, which was Golden Bear. He was taken in as an honorary member of Golden Bear when I was the president of Golden Bear. This was just great. In fact--this is nice, because I remember Dean [Monroe E.] Deutsch, the provost--I had to make the welcoming speech and introductions as president of the organization. Then Dr. Deutsch introduced Earl Warren as the father of Jim Warren, [laughter] which is very nice. He was a really thoughtful guy.

Stein: Yes. That was a gracious thing to do.

Warren: Well, it was a first time ever--and I really thanked Dr. Deutsch. But the most significant thing about making all the societies that Dad had been in--actually, it was a big deal for the house to have as many guys in your fraternity make as many of these organizations as possible--but the biggest--well, thrill, I guess you'd say, came a college generation later when our middle son, Jeff, was taken into another outfit I can't really talk about much. Really hush hush, you know. But it's sort of the ultimate, you might say. And Dad had been in it. And when Jeff was taken in a generation later it just--well, Jeff called me at two in the morning and I just about yowled and said, "My god, have you called Papa Warren?" and Jeff said, "Yep, I just hung up." He'd already phoned him in Washington, regardless of the hour of the night. But the thing that makes it so big for all of us is that it's the first time in the history of the University that there have been three generations of the same family in there. In fact, just before Dad died--which was a Tuesday and this was the Thursday before--Jeff and I were in the hospital room with him and the three of us had a private little meeting all our own.

Stein: Sounds quite profound.

Warren: It was.

Stein: I can't press you for a little more detail?

Warren: Sorry, Mimi, I really can't say too much. John Weaver's book mentions drinking beer at Pop Kessler's--which is about as far as I can go. But I did feel it ought to be mentioned in some way because it's such a big factor--almost a milestone, maybe--in any story about Earl Warren's family.

Stein: Well, thanks for this much. Maybe somebody knows something I don't know, but I think I see now why my notes include a heading on Organizations and Athletics.

Warren: Oh boy, that gets into the big-one-that-got-away department. The only organization I would have given almost anything to make--but it just didn't work out--was the Big C society--you know, lettering in a major sport at Cal. Dad was in Big C, but as an honorary member. He was taken in later--maybe as early as DA, maybe as late as governor, I just don't recall. I lettered in freshman basketball and three years running in rugby and a rambler--that's junior varsity--letter in football in my junior year. But rugby fouled up spring practice in my senior year, so that crack at a big C in football my last year just didn't pan out.

Stein: Was Jeff in Big C, too?

Warren: Really should have been. The kid's a great athlete--had a football scholarship and all, but injuries and mono kept cutting him down til he finally decided it was time, as he put it, to "hang 'em up." That's jock talk for "cleats". [Laughter.] So, like father like son, he ended up playing rugby, too.

Stein: Where there's a will there's a way, right? And, also, don't quit.

Warren: You got it. All through college I played--when my elbow got well enough so that I could do things with it--I went out for basketball as a freshman. I couldn't go out for contact sports for a while, until I tested the elbow out. So I went out for basketball, and the coach cleared the bench often enough that I made my freshman numeral in basketball. [Laughter.]

Then I learned about rugby, which I'd heard about, but I'd never seen or played. So I tried out for rugby. I had a metal cup on an elastic brace that was to protect the elbow here. So I ended up playing three years of rugby. Again, every game that he could make, Dad was always there. And of course he'd come to all the annual functions of Skull and Keys or the rugby club or whatever organization would have them. He was always very much around.

Stein: Were you in a fraternity?

Warren: Yes. I was a Chi Phi, [spells it] which is the oldest national fraternity in history. I guess its main strength is in the south.

Stein: Was your father in a fraternity?

Warren: He was a Sigma Phi, which was called La Junta at the time [spells it]. The La Junta Club was a local when he was at Berkeley. Then they were taken over by the Sigma Phi's. They were an old one, too. I think they only had ten chapters across the country, but wherever they were they were very strong.

One thing--this is probably very, very tough on a father, because you don't know you're doing it at the time--but the one thing I was never going to do was to be a member of his fraternity and I was never going to go into law. I was never going to do anything that would create any impression of riding on his coattails.

Stein: I was going to ask you what your feelings were about law.

Warren: I guess that I never really gave it a fair chance because I eliminated it so early in the game.

Stein: Was that strictly your own feeling, or was that something that he felt also, that he wanted you to make your own mark?

Warren: Oh, he was great about it. He never pressed, pushed; he understood. We never had any talks about it. I think he probably just intuited it. He never put any pressure on, never made anything uncomfortable, just whatever any of us wanted to get into he just encouraged no matter what direction it went. There aren't many like him.

Stein: Do your own thing, in other words.

Warren: Well, yeah--in a sense. But not just any dumb thing. There had to be some what--some merit, maybe--or certainly some discipline. Be your own man, but not to the extent that you slacked off or chose something easy or ran away from a challenge. Slacker--yes, I remember slacker as a big word when I was a kid. And "a lick and a promise" was what we'd call today a "no no". Give, give, give--all you've got--to whatever it is that you want to be. And certainly, for sure, no distinction between pursuits in life, so long as they're honest work. I remember his reverence--yeah, I'd stick with reverence--for a master mechanic as compared, say, with a Phi Beta Kappa. He used to talk a lot about the fact that a boy who can't be comfortable with books but who can do great things with his hands should never be put in a class that should make him feel inferior. We need both, he'd say, and then he'd look at his own hands and say, "I can't even drive a nail or draw a picture of a straight line."

Warren: Even--gee, I'm talking too much, maybe, but you can cut out what you don't want--he even applied this philosophy to his kids when we got old enough to drink. "If you decide to," he'd say, "and I went to college, myself, I only hope you won't do it badly. I'd rather see a man drink everybody in the room under the table and not show it than I would an arm-waver. So, if you do, handle it. Don't be a jackass or act like a hot shot."

Stein: Man talk, I guess, is what you're saying.

Warren: Of the best order. And Maggie and I have always hoped that he saw his influence rub off on our kids. Because they're as unlike as his approach would allow for. Jim's an attorney in San Francisco, Jeff's a free lance writer in New York and Jocko is a location manager with Universal Studios in Hollywood. And each time any of them took a long step in the right direction--got a job, passed an exam, got a promotion or whatever--we'd always hear that famous "Well, well, well. . . isn't that fine".

We do know, in fact--Maggie and I--how pleased he was at their various stages of development. That all three of them made it into Cal made him one proud Papa Warren, I can tell you. And earlier--I think it was after Jimmy's sophomore year in high school--the kid got himself a summer job on a Standard Oil tanker and worked, mostly below decks, at that, with--well, you can imagine what a crew of professional seamen would be like. I know his grandmother, "Beeb", (that's Maggie's mother) used to imagine!

Stein: Beeb?

Warren: Yeah. [Laughter] Beeb. She used to call him "Sweetie Pie" when he was a baby--before he was old enough to talk. And it was one of the first words he ever tried to say, and Sweetie Pie came out Bee Bye--which later got shortened to Beeb. There was a pair, by the way--Earl and Beeb--he called her that a lot, too. But these two bulwarks of the old school, these--well, examples of a generation of--what--propriety, good dealings, hang in there boys--you know, the good old tried and trues. The world may never see another generation like them, but Maggie and I sure lucked out and so did our boys to have known their influence. And it was there, too. All the grandparents--and may I never fail to include Mama Warren, too--she had ways that so complemented everything Papa Warren did. But these grandparents were on our kids like a blanket--all through their lives, really. The personal interest was remarkable, actually--really a factor in the kids' growing up.

But Jimmy's independence and self-assurance sure began to blossom after that sea-farin' adventure [laughter] in the big wide world. And then, when he graduated from the university and he took off--alone



Warren: again--to make his way through Europe--Golly, the jobs he took on in college to scrape up the money including [laughter] he even emptied bed pans in a hospital. But he took off with not much more than a Eurail pass and a brave smile and I can remember Papa Warren saying, "Well, well, well--isn't that something. I know I'd never have had the gumption to do a thing like that when I was Jimmy's age."

And then to have the eldest grandson become the first lawyer--what a way for him to see the next generation start off, huh. Cast bread upon the waters and--how does it go--it always comes back to you or something. You can see how often I really did cut Sunday school. [Laughter.]

Stein: Sounds like you got away with it, though. Heaven has still been pretty good to you, I'd say. Now, let's see, we've already got some good mileage on Jeff--how about number three son. I love that name "Jocko".

Warren: It certainly fit him growing up. It's "John", of course, but this guy has been a variation or a take-off on a lot of things ever since he entered the scene. Hey, I just made sort of a funny without realizing it because Jocko is in show biz. But Jocko entered a world in turmoil--I think I mentioned it was June 25th, the very day the Korean War broke out--and things have never been dull since. [Laughter.]

He started out as an appendicitis operation but, of course, we didn't know that until it was all over. The doctor had to take him about three weeks early after an experience Maggie had on that Sunday afternoon at Bolinas Beach. Whoops--let's get out of that one in a hurry. [Laughter.] But, really, it was a wild one. We thought the baby was coming right there. That tortuous walk across the sand--then a truly god-awful drive over that long, windy road to Kentfield--then in an ambulance across both bridges to Oakland and Dr. Sherrick waiting for us and operating the elevator himself. And that's what it turned out to be--a red hot appendix. Someday I'll let Maggie tell you the whole story.

Stein: I have a feeling I've heard enough already.

Warren: Well, when I say John is a spin-off--or take-off or whatever I meant--it's a compliment, actually. He probably bears the least likely semblance of his grandfather's--oh, style, I guess you'd call it--of the three boys. But he has all the talents and aptitudes that are just not a natural part of Papa Warren's make-up--like being--well, Jocko is an accomplished artist--he did some pen and ink drawings of the Napa Valley wineries when he was in high school here that were so good he had them made into stationery and sold them through local shops--and he had emerged, some years earlier, from his bedroom with this Charlie McCarthy dummy and proceeded to demonstrate this incredible ability to throw his voice that he'd been practicing secretly without

Warren: any of us knowing. He worked up his own routine--his own scripts and all--and he'd put on this show for the family at Christmas or whenever and Papa Warren thought he was the greatest thing since the wheel. [Laughter.]

Then--and this really broke the pattern--John got into Cal--he made it into the university all right--but on the strength of his art work and a scholarship award for students in specialized fields. He was hardly his grandfather's model of the industrious book worm, but he made it into Cal and that was really big for all of us.

It worked out, though, that when he saw daylight--he broke for it. And at the end of his freshman year he got a job as a tour guide at Universal Studios in Hollywood--and he never came home! But somehow Papa Warren sensed the picture--and he never made Jocko uncomfortable about it. Sort of like the master mechanic point of view, I guess, and the books-aren't-for-all-people thing.

But we'll all say this: Jocko had called his own shots and he sure paid his price--but his grandparents--all of them--and his brothers sure came to recognize what tenacity and determination are. Hollywood, you know, is so fickle--every other day there's a new strike and no work--and so heartless and so insecure. But John cleaned rugs, found odd jobs, got a few commissions to do art work and managed, somehow, to keep body and soul together between films. And today he's one of the most respected location managers on the lot. He's worked some big network TV shows and, though life is still precarious in Lotus Land, he really loves what he calls "The Industry". And don't ever think Papa Warren wasn't aware. In fact, there always seemed a sort of special affection there--because of his respect for their differences rather than their similarities. Which was another example of the scope of that man. He was something else.

IV GROWING UP IN THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S AND ATTORNEY  
GENERAL'S HOME

Bridging Office and Home

Stein: Yes. I'd like to back up a little and talk a bit more about Earl Warren as a father, when he was still district attorney and attorney general. Was there much crossing over between his work life and his home life? Did he bring work home and were you aware of his work?

Warren: He never at any time in his career, from DA to Chief Justice, ever brought home any problems, in the sense of foisting them on his family, as far as his work was concerned. He used to read an awful lot when he was home, in bed. I couldn't say for sure whether they were briefs--I'm sure some of them must have been--but the rest of the time he was reading history or biographies or similar heavy stuff. He wasn't a western cowboy magazine reader. Everything he read was heavy. And I just always assumed it had something to do either with his work or background research or whatever. It never intruded on his coming home at night and our having dinner and when we all went to study he went to do what he had to do. I don't remember ever seeing him in bed without a book or a newspaper or something. He was always doing two things at once.

Stein: So he went right along with your mother in that respect.

Warren: Yes, exactly.

Stein: I gather there were one or two times when the cases he was prosecuting as DA were so controversial that there were threatening phone calls to the home. I wonder if you remember that. One was the Sheriff Becker case and the other was the shipboard murder case.

Warren: The significance of whatever you heard or read or know is the fact that none of the kids ever knew it. It was years later before we ever found out that our parents had these problems.

Warren: I can remember when I first heard it, that I had seen a car parked up the street a couple of blocks but I didn't pay any attention to it. Sometime later I found out it was somebody keeping an eye on the house. But none of the kids were ever aware at any time that there were any problems going on like that.

I always wondered how my mother and dad could keep it in that much, and not let anybody know. But they really rode over rough spots for us and we didn't even know they were going on. If we were being shadowed or trailed or under surveillance or whatever on the way to and from school, we never knew it. And to this day I don't know for sure whether we were or we weren't. We may very well have been and not even been aware of it.

Stein: During the shipboard murder case I think there were pickets at the house on one or two occasions.

Warren: If that happened I don't remember seeing it. I don't remember any occasion where I had to come home and walk through a picket line to get into the house or if there were any crowds or anything.

The only inference I can recall on that score was that I was out cutting the lawn one day when an old man came along stenciling numbers on the curbs, repainting the house numbers. It was only a quarter or something, so I said, "Swell." Ours was all worn out; you couldn't read it. So I paid the guy a quarter and he painted 88 on the Vernon Street curb.

My mother and dad didn't even know I did it and I said, "Hey, look what I've done. It only cost me a quarter and you have a whole brand new number here." My mother told me later that it was just as well that we didn't emphasize the number because they didn't want people to know the address. But that's as far as it went.

Stein: Were you ever aware of your father's position in the community? Did friends or teachers treat you any differently because your father was the district attorney?

Warren: If there was a difference it was always one of respect and I was just totally proud that they knew him and liked him and respected him. I never got an impression from anybody in those growing up years of anything except here was a man who was greatly admired and respected.

Stein: That's what I meant. He had an enormous reputation statewide and nationwide of being one of the best DA's in the country. I wonder if that set you apart in school at all?

Warren: No, it just made me feel that I was among friends. Everybody who did know him had nothing but good things to say and it sure kept the--I shouldn't say kept the pressure on, but made you aware that, don't blow it for this guy. He's got too good a reputation and don't do anything that's going to louse it up. We tried to be very careful.

Family Life at Vernon Street

Stein: Was he able to be home a lot for dinner and things like that? Or did work interfere with the home schedule?

Warren: I don't recall any extended absences at all. He'd have to go away to a conference for two or three days, something like that. It was a pretty organized routine. He'd come home about the same time every night. If not necessarily the same time, we'd have dinner together at home almost every night. Or if he didn't my mother would fix a sandwich in the kitchen or whatever, then dad would come home later and the kids would stay up. One thing we never did, one thing they never did do that I found everybody in the world that I've ever known since has always done, they never had any cocktail parties at home or entertained at home, just for entertaining. Any time anybody came over it was--except for Sunday afternoon lunches which were very casual--there was no, what we've become so used to, business entertaining, that type of thing. There was never any of that.

Stein: That's a very interesting insight.

Warren: In fact I never even heard of a babysitter until after I was married, but then I guess when you look back on it, with all the kids, they always had somebody in the house. My mother always had help, but not maid service. They were housekeepers, really. They were there working just as hard as she was. But it was not in any sense a social advantage to have help in the house--they were needed.

Stein: Would the help live in?

Warren: Yes, always lived in.

Stein: I see. So there was always somebody to watch you, if your parents did happen to be going out. But I gather from what you're saying that they didn't even go out much in the evenings.

Warren: Right, they didn't unless there was an official function of some sort, which didn't happen very often. My mother avoided everything she could. [Laughter.]

Stein: One of the things that Earl, Jr., stressed when we interviewed him was also what you've been saying about how available your father was all the time, and he told the story of being so amazed when he'd go in to chat while your father was reading in bed at night, and they'd be talking about something and he'd suddenly notice that his father had dozed off for a moment or two, but then he'd wake up and continue the conversation just as if he never stopped.

Warren: Yes, that happened all the time.

Stein: That seems remarkable to me.

Warren: Yes. Well, he wasn't going to hurt our feelings by cutting off the conversation but he just was so pooped he'd just fall asleep, then he'd wake up again and--

Stein: --carry on.

Warren: I remember laughing at the distinction between what I've since learned, as an adult and married, how everybody else does things. Dad would come home, and usually the first thing was, "How did practice go today?" I'd just follow him wherever he was going and we'd usually end up in the bathroom and he'd reach into the medicine closet there and pull out a bottle of bourbon. He'd have a couple of drinks while we stood there, while he was changing his clothes, and this was his cocktail hour. If Dad had gotten home and we didn't see him, we'd say, "Where's Dad, Mother?" And she'd say, "Oh, he's up having his medicine." [Laughter.]

My mother's always been a teetotaler. I don't think she's ever had a drink in her life. I remember one time Dad saying, "Nina, we're getting low on this bottle here. Would you mind calling down to the drugstore and ordering some more," you know, restock the larder. And she would say, "What do you want?" He'd say, "I guess we'd better get a couple of bottles of bourbon and a fifth of scotch." My mother got on the phone and called Stier's Drugstore and asked them to please send up two bottles of bourbon and one bottle of fifths.

### Sundays

Stein: Earlier you mentioned Sundays and I gather that Sundays your father always tried to give your mother a day off.

Warren: This was always the ritual.

Stein: How would that work?

Warren: Well, usually Sundays, my recollection is--because I was older than the other kids, at this point, so that what they did and what I did would be two different things--I'd walk to Sunday school and meet my cousin. Then as soon as Sunday school was over we'd take off and go down to the Athens Club and we'd spend all morning in the gym and the pool. We'd get back at 2:30, something like that, and in the meantime my dad would have taken all the rest of the kids out to the zoo.

Warren: And we'd all gather back at the house and I remember triple deckers, deviled egg sandwiches you know, sort of in the middle of the afternoon, and that was the big meal that day. I didn't go to the zoo with them because I was out of the zoo age. He'd empty the halls, and take them all out and let my mother have a rest. Something he always looked forward to and so did she.

Stein: I gather sometimes he took them over to his sister's, Ethel Plank.

Warren: Yes, Ethel Plank. They were very close. This cousin I'm talking about is Bud Plank, Ethel's son.

Stein: Was he about your age?

Warren: Oh, Bud's maybe four years younger, two to four, I've forgotten. But we used to manage to walk slow enough that by the time we got to Sunday school it was all over [laughter]. One time we got caught. One time we got caught and Mother and Dad found out that we hadn't gone to Sunday school at all, we had just gone over there and gotten on a street car and gone down to the Athens Club. My punishment was that for one month I could not go to a movie, and I don't think I ever missed Sunday school again.

Stein: I seem to remember that John Weaver tells that story and says that your father handled that in a very typical style, reasoning with you.

Warren: Yes, he did. He, in effect, let me levy my own punishment. He said, "This was a very serious breach." And I had to come up with something that was a real punishment.

Stein: So did you come up with the idea of no movies?

Warren: Well, I guess the fact that he knew I liked to go to the movie every Saturday afternoon was so important that okay, if that's the thing that's so important to you then that's the thing that you're going to do without. There was nothing I could do except acquiesce and agree that I was wrong and it's fair. I was heisted on my own petard. [Laughter.]

He would never, for example, deprive you of such privileges as going out for practice or take you off the team for a week or anything like that, because that could be damaging. That would really be unfair to the kid. He would always take something that was obviously innocuous but important to the child.

Stein: When you talked about going off to Sunday school I meant to ask you a little bit more about your religious education. What church was this that you went to Sunday school at?

Warren: Golly. At this particular time there was a church that was around the corner from where the Planks lived. It was a Protestant church; I don't remember whether it was Episcopalian or Methodist or which. Then when we were living on Vernon Street we went to the closest church--I remember the kids did.

My mother's father was a Baptist minister as well as a doctor and an art anatomist. I understand he illustrated medical books. Her sister Eva became a missionary, some sort of off-beat faith. It was a Protestant faith basically, I guess. Uncle Tom was a missionary in China and was over there with bullets coming through the window and working with the natives and the tribes and all this sort of thing. They traveled all over the world.

Aunt Ethel was a practicing Scientist, Christian Scientist. But I don't think Dad ever--I never did understand the relationship between his sister being a Scientist and his not. I guess he put down Baptist as his religion but I don't remember his ever going to church regularly. And then when everybody got married it's just a hodgepodge. We've got every religion in the book in the family. Maggie's family was Catholic; I'm not. Honey Bear's husband is Jewish. Well, there's a Baptist thing on my mother's side, I suppose. It just seems to me that somewhere along the line we've got just about everything you want.

Stein: It's a real melting pot.

Warren: Yes.

#### Family Recollections

Stein: Backing up to the visits to the zoo, Earl, Jr. tells the story of how Honey Bear [Nina Elizabeth Warren] got her name. I wondered if you had your own version of that story. It had something to do with the zoo and a bear in the zoo.

Warren: What I would be able to repeat would be what I have heard also, because I wasn't at the zoo that day. But it had something to do, I think, with Honey Bear seeing this bear and whether or not one of her brothers said, "Looks like you, Honey Bear," or "You're just like that honey bear," or whatever, but anyway the "Honey Bear" and the bear and the girl all seemed to come together at the same place at the same time. So she's been Honey Bear ever since.

Stein: I think it was Bobby who told us a story of playing a game at dinner, I guess this is at Vernon Street, when the family would all be eating dinner together. It was patterned after Information Please, the quiz show on the radio.



Warren: I noticed your note on that [on the interview outline] and I've wondered myself what that was.

Stein: The story, as he tells it, is that the family had a sort of a quiz show where people would be asked questions about current events. Bobby, because he was the youngest, would act as moderator.

Warren: Maybe I was studying [laughter].

Stein: Maybe you were already at the university.

Warren: Yes. That doesn't bring back a great deal to me. Maybe I was at Cal.

Stein: You mentioned not going to the zoo on Sunday, being too old, but I gather that all six of you were a fairly close knit family, as children go, even though you were all so different.

Warren: Oh, yes. I was so elated to have a sister when Virginia was born, I just couldn't stay away from her. And as each of the other kids came along it just got better all the time. I remember with Bob--I guess we're sixteen years apart--but I remember as soon as Bob was big enough we used to play football with him, and he was the football. I was in high school and some of the other guys on the team would be over at the house and I remember we used to get out on this big lawn and we would almost literally center Bob between our legs and throw forward passes with him [laughter]. My mother would be holding her head at the window thinking we're going to drop that child, don't do that. [Laughter.]

The kids were awfully close.

Stein: Do I gather that you played a role in Virginia's name?

Warren: Yes. There was a fellow down at the military academy whose name was Bob Jones. He was a big, good-looking athletic guy. If I was nine when Virginia was born, maybe Bob was fifteen or sixteen. He was a big athlete, and he had a sister who used to come to some of the dances or whatever, and she was a beautiful girl. Her name was Virginia and it became my favorite name. So as soon as the baby was born I suggested Virginia. That's my recollection.

Stein: That's a lovely story. You mentioned that your father read heavy books all the time. I wonder if you did any reading or if he encouraged the rest of the family to read.

Warren: He always encouraged everybody to read, and I think I was his biggest disappointment on that score. I was either always practicing for something or studying to stay in school. Pleasure reading was something that--I guess maybe that I had to read so darn much in college in this

Warren: philosophy stuff. Everything you read you were going to be tested on and you'd have to remember and be graded on and all that to the point that the pleasure of reading just doesn't exist in my life. I figure if you read something you're studying.

Stein: Were you involved at all in the summer vacations at the Uplifter's Ranch?

Warren: We were married, Maggie and I were married, at the time that the family used to go down there a lot. All of the grunion hunting and what they now call scuba diving and spear fishing and all that--the family used to go down there and spend the summer. Maggie and I went down a couple of times but only after we were married. We never did get in on the grunion hunts or that type of thing.

Stein: So you never spent the whole summer there?

Warren: No. I was working in San Francisco and vacations were two weeks at the most.

Stein: I see. John Weaver tells a story which I gather he was told by Mrs. Warren, and I wonder if you remembered it from your end of it. The story was of Mrs. Warren getting all the children to clean their rooms, and that as the result of cleaning the room you were then awarded your twenty-five cents allowance. One week she discovered that everybody had failed to clean his or her room except you. Your room was the only one that was clean. She gathered all the children around the table and piled all six quarters in front of you, saying that you got the pot that time because you cleaned your room, and everybody learned their lesson from that. Everybody always cleaned his room after that. I wondered if you remember that.

Warren: Yes, vaguely. I don't discount it or doubt it, but if anybody asked me to recall that I don't believe I'd be able to repeat it, but it probably happened. My mother was very devious that way. [Laughter.] I guess devious isn't the word. Indirect, indirect. If she wanted to make a point she slid it past you rather than hitting you on the head with it.

#### The Vernon Street House

Stein: I thought that was a wonderful story. I would like to check out a little more about Vernon Street. You mentioned that it was a very large house. Was there a lot of land that went with it?

Warren: It was a great big lot. I wouldn't be surprised if it was as big as an acre. I know it had a big back yard and a big lawn in the front and a good size lawn in the back. And then it had an area of just overgrown shrubbery. That part was just too much to make a garden out of.

But the house--it was pretty massive from the standpoint of having all the necessary rooms. What were there? I think there were four bedrooms and a big sleeping porch on the second floor and then upstairs there was another bedroom, no there were two other bedrooms and a library. I guess seven bedrooms and a library. That's big. And a big entrance hall and a big living room and solarium and a dining room and breakfast room and kitchen. It's in no way an ostentatious house; it's no San Simeon or anything like that. It was just a big house for a family with an awful lot of people.

Stein: So everyone had his own room?

Warren: Yes. It worked out everybody finally had his own room. And at 88 [Vernon] Dad had quite a formal library upstairs, with bookshelves and paneling. He had a desk up there; I used to go up there and study a lot. Whether he would go in there and study at his desk--you know in answer to "Did he bring work home?"--if he did I guess it was one of these times when we'd gone to our rooms to study or after dinner we'd broken up and gone to do whatever we had to do.

Stein: I gather you lived there yourself after you were married, when the family had moved to Sacramento.

Warren: We got married during the war and as soon as I went overseas Maggie stayed there. I think it was good from my mother and dad's standpoint. They liked the fact that they had somebody living on the place and taking care of it rather than have to worry about renting it out. Maggie's the one who lived there mostly during the war. And after the war, when I came back, we stayed there--my gosh, I can't remember how long. It wasn't very long because we were anxious to get our own little rose-covered cottage. But we did live there temporarily.

Stein: Just one more thing I wanted to check out about Vernon Street: I've read that your mother, every Christmas, got a Christmas tree for every child that was just the height of the child. Were you a part of that?

Warren: The entire basement--it was a big full basement--all finished off so the whole thing could be used. That's where the Shrine band used to come every Christmas. There was a great big open room and there was a Christmas tree for every one of the kids. I was the only one who didn't open his presents on Christmas Eve, but they wanted to let all the kids open their presents so they could sleep through the night.

Warren: I never broke the tradition, and to this day I hate to open a present any time but Christmas Day. The kids had their own trees and they'd all open presents and bring them over and show everybody what they got, and there would be a lot of huzza-huzza-ing.

Stein: Did everybody decorate his own tree? Or were they left in their natural condition?

Warren: Oh, they were all decorated. I think it got to the point where the kids decorated their own trees, but I'm not positive.

#### Jim Warren's Christmas Cards

Stein: Speaking of Christmases, weren't you later responsible for drawing the family Christmas cards? Could you tell me about that?

Warren: I suppose if any single thing more bespeaks the spirit of this clan it would be the way those cards originally started. Some gal in Sacramento did some Christmas cards showing every member of the family doing something. Sometimes it'd be around the dinner table, sometimes they'd not be doing much of anything except standing around, but they'd all be in the Christmas card. So I volunteered myself once--I tried it first before I spoke to anybody--and made a Christmas card. That got me into it. I made the Christmas cards for the next five or six years or so. But just the feeling and the character of those Christmas cards, I think, tells more about the closeness of the family than anything.

Stein: What would be on a card?

Warren: Everybody in the family and all the animals. I'm not sure that the annual Warren family Christmas card didn't start a trend. The idea seems to have been picked up and now everybody and his uncle sends out pictures of the whole family.

These were drawings and they always had some sort of a theme, either all the kids were toys on the mantle piece or hanging out of the socks on the fireplace or dancing marionnettes, or going through the sky on a sleigh with the dogs wearing antlers like reindeer. There was one cowboy thing and another with everybody climbing up and down the chimney.

Stein: Marvelous! Do you still have a file of those cards?

Warren: I've got some of them. Yes.

Stein: Would we be able to borrow them to xerox one or two of them and include them with your interview?

Warren: Oh, sure.\*

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\* See Appendix A

## V WORLD WAR II AND MILITARY SERVICE

The Fight to Join

Stein: I'd like to move on to your own career and family. After UC, what did you do?

Warren: Well, I graduated in the spring of '41, May of '41. A good friend of mine, Bill Joost, who was a classmate--we'd been all through high school and everything else together--Bill wanted to go to Harvard Business School. He was a very serious student, heck of a nice guy and all. The next thing I knew--I don't know whether Bill was trying to talk me into approaching the thing with my dad or whether my dad thought this was a good idea because of a guy like Bill--but somehow I ended up going to Harvard graduate school. To me the thought of going to a business school was--if I was scared about going to Cal it was like going to another country. I was going to be in an area I knew nothing about.

Stein: On the other coast, too.

Warren: You had to take Econ. 1A at Cal, I think, as a required course and I did that. I punished myself by taking a course in statistics, or whatever--it was accounting, that was the thing, in accounting, because this was supposed to be bedrock. It's the closest thing I've ever come to flunking a course in my life. I was completely a fish out of water in that course. I think the only barely passing grade I got in college was in accounting. I just detested it. But here again this is good for you. And Dad would say a business background was good for whatever you were going to do no matter what field it's going to be in. You ought to think about this thing seriously. He was willing to encourage it, so I ended up going to Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration for a year.

Warren: The war broke out when we were back there, but in the meantime with this elbow I was classified 4-F. So at the end of the first year I came back to the coast and I tried to--a lot of the guys at the business school were going into Navy Supply Corps, because that's where the navy supply school was, at Harvard. And I thought well maybe I can get a waiver on this elbow and be in the supply corps. So I applied for supply school and went to work at Mare Island shipyard for free, for nothing, and I worked there for three months under the supply officer. Went everyday just as though I were in the navy to learn the ropes so that if the waiver was granted I would have that much more experience.

Well, the waiver was turned down. But I can say I was in the navy for three months, in effect. Then I went down to the draft board and argued with them some more and finally got reclassified into 1-B and was drafted into the army. 1-B was limited service. Well, there's nothing worse than being in uniform and being in limited service, in my opinion. I was at the Presidio at Monterey, assigned to the Presidio at Monterey initially, interviewing and classifying recruits coming in.

After three months in the army I applied for infantry OCS [Officers Candidate School]. Of all the applicants who were applying for OCS I think I was the only guy who applied for the infantry. All the rest of them were trying for adjutant general school and quartermaster and all the Mickey Mouse stuff. I was accepted to OCS but turned down on the physical again.

I was walking down the hall--as I left the review board--and I went past a bulletin board twenty-five feet away that said paratroopers wanted. So I walked into their office and I faked the physical. I kept talking as I bent over to touch my toes and they weren't looking at my arm. I was accepted in the paratroopers, which meant an automatic promotion from private to PFC [private first class], and I'd been in the army long enough to rate a ten-day furlough. So on the furlough I asked Maggie if she wanted to get married. And we became engaged.

Then I was to take off for Fort Benning, Georgia. I had my duffle bag over my shoulder and one foot literally on the train to go to Fort Benning, when somebody called my name and hauled me off. It turned out that a fellow who later became a local politician in the area had heard that I had been turned down for OCS and how come I could be accepted for the paratroopers if I had been turned down for OCS.

I remember my dad just went through the roof. He thought, for crying out loud, how could any man interfere in another man's life. Who's saving who from what. I could walk across the street and get hit by a truck. A man should do with his life what he wants and for some guy to step in and think he's going to be appointed postmaster or something--I've never seen him so mad.

Warren: But then I was transferred up to the Presidio in San Francisco and commuted to the war on a streetcar, which is the most humiliating thing you could do. Here we were in classified records, all the secret documents, top-secret stuff that nobody was supposed to know about. I remember coming home one night and reading the headlines in the newspapers that the Americans had hit Kiska [Alaska] and there were no Japs there. Well, we had gotten this top-coded, secret message just a matter of hours before. Nobody else in the world knew this had happened. And here it is in the headlines of the paper on my way home that night. I couldn't believe it.

I guess I was in the army roughly eighteen months, sixteen to eighteen months. Somewhere along in that period, a college friend of mine who was a flyer in the Marine Corps mentioned that you can be discharged from one branch of the service to accept a commission in another--or if you're commissioned you can transfer to another branch for a higher commission. So I went down to the Marine Corps--here I am a sergeant in the army--and I applied for a commission in the Marine Corps. They granted a waiver, so I was discharged from the army to accept a commission in the Marine Corps. I ended up in an infantry outfit in the marines and got overseas.

Stein: Where did you go?

Warren: Went to Guam. It was secured by the time I got there. We went on a number of patrols, because there were still a lot of Japs on the island. I was in a reconnaissance company; snooper-poopers in tennis shoes behind the enemy lines and rubber boats off of submarines is the type of thing we were being trained for. But then they mechanized the whole outfit and instead of reconnoitering a few hundred yards ahead of our lines, we were supposed to be a few miles out front in jeeps and tanks and all that stuff. And about that time they dropped the bomb.

So I guess in a way I was in every branch but the Air Corps: in the navy for three months, the army for sixteen months and the Marine Corps for a couple of years.

Stein: So you saw your share of duty in the war. When you were at the Presidio in San Francisco did you have much to do with General John DeWitt?

Warren: He was commanding general; I saluted him on guard duty. As he came through I would pop to with the rifle and all that type of thing.

Stein: Were you at all involved in the work he was doing about the Japanese in California?

Warren: No. I was in no way--I was strictly in classified records and pulling guard duty.



Marriage

Stein: You got married somewhere in the middle there, right?

Warren: Got married on the tenth of May in '43. Yes. I went in [the army] on October 2, 1942. Yes. It was the tenth of May, '43.

Stein: Had you met your wife in college?

Warren: Yes. She was my eighth blind date in a row. [Laughter.] I never even went out with girls. Of course I went to the functions you had to go to, the house functions and inter-fraternity events. But I think over a period of two years I had eight blind dates, and Maggie was the eighth one.

Stein: That's a wonderful story. I gather that she was quite a tennis star.

Warren: She was. In the under eighteens [year category] she was national doubles champ and state singles champ. If she'd won the state singles championship for the third time, and nobody's ever done that, she would have had permanent possession of the trophy that Helen Wills and Helen Jacobs had their names on. Apparently nobody's ever won it three times going. Yes, she's good.

Stein: Does she still play tennis?

Warren: Oh, we play a lot of social tennis. She plays like a man, she's still a winner. [Laughter.]

## VI ADVERTISING

[tape 2, side 1]

Climbing the Corporate Ladder

Stein: When you got out of the service, what did you do?

Warren: That's when I started looking for a job in the advertising agency business. I had a couple of friends who were in the business. They were the first ones I went to see; in fact, I'd been through college with them. I thought I wanted to be in the art department. At every place I was interviewed they all said to me, "We can't hire you. You don't have any experience." You go around that big circle. How do you get the experience to get hired if you can't get hired unless you first get the experience.

I heard about a friend of mine who was starting his own agency, and they were just opening their doors. I went up and I talked--his name was Phil Boone--and I talked to Phil, and Phil said, "We don't even have an account yet. The only client we've got is the San Francisco Symphony. We're doing a brochure for the symphony. That's where we're starting. So if you want to put a desk over there you can take on any freelance work that you can pick up along the way and you've got an office. Anything that comes in here, well, you're our art director."

I'll never forget the first guy that came in from among the suppliers. He came in and introduced himself as a typographer. I thought he said topographer and I wondered what map reading had to do with the agency business. He was talking about typesetting. I mean I was that green; I knew nothing about it.

It wasn't long before I made up my mind that I just better get out and spend some time visiting the engraving shops and the printing houses and taking notes--going through all the processes for reproducing art work--to learn the business.

Warren: I was making the handsome salary of a hundred and fifty bucks a month with one son. I think I got it to \$185 and then to \$250 when Jeff was born, but I just couldn't make it on that. And also I wasn't really learning as much as I ought to.

So I went over and talked to John Hoefer, Jimmy Dieterich and Jim Brown, who had also opened an agency right after the war. Great guys, whom I'd known at Cal, also. I went to work for them at two and a quarter and Maggie almost wouldn't let me in the house. She couldn't believe I'd taken a job for twenty-five bucks a month less. But it seemed to have a lot more possibilities. So I worked there a couple of years, while everybody was starving to death, including the principals. Today, though, Hoefer, Dieterich and Brown, Inc. is one of the biggest agencies in the city.

I finally decided I have got to make four hundred bucks a month--I just cannot support my family--if I have to get a job driving a truck. I looked at some of the big agencies and went to BBD&O [Batten, Barton, Durstine, & Osborn, Inc.].

I remember Chuck Ferguson was the manager and he said, "Well, what have you done?" I said, "Well, you know in a small agency you do everything. I've been an art director, I've been a copywriter, I've bought some media." He said, "Did you ever sell anything?" I said, "Actually, one of our clients was Hooper's Chocolates, the handmade candy place. We were also their wholesale distributors. So each of us would take one day of the week and we'd load the car full of candy and go call on retail outlets and try to get distribution for their candy." That's the first time he listened to me, and it had nothing to do with whether I was an artist or a writer or media guy or anything else. If I'd sold something I'd had some experience, so he hired me. I was there for, I guess, about twelve years.

The great corporate world. BBD&O's clients were the telephone company and PG&E and Standard Oil and California Cling Peaches, MJB Coffee, the biggest blue chip accounts on the coast. So I was really into the great corporate world for a dozen years or so.

Stein: What did you do for them?

Warren: I was an account executive eventually, after the first six months of a sort of a training program. I was an account executive on the telephone account for about eight years, then one year on Bank of America and two years on Standard Oil.

You get to that great point of no return in the corporate world where you either decide you're going to go the corporate route and, if everything goes right, you may become a vice-president, and all

Warren: that sort of business, or make the break. I had seen what had happened to five guys ahead of me on the Standard Oil account, which was the biggest account on the coast at that time. I was the number two man on the Standard account, and from there you either become group supervisor on Standard or else you're transferred to another office, because there's nothing bigger in San Francisco they could put you on. You know, New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and I had no stomach for that.

### The Decision to Leave Advertising

Warren: We, in the meantime, had found this place up here where we now live, as a little weekend place. I realized that in the Napa Valley everything is the land; you've got to be involved with the land in some way or another, either grow something on it or be part of the land in some other way. So I went to night school and got my real estate license, without knowing whether I was going to use it or not, but just as a precaution, because I could see how things were culminating in the agency, corporate business. I loved BBD&O but these huge corporations that were our clients--they're just like the service. Everybody's on a certain level.

I came to the conclusion that most of the decisions were made on the basis of fear. Really, people are trying to please the boss or they're trying to outdo the guy on the same level, and they're scared to death of the younger people coming up underneath them and they don't make decisions based on whether it's the right decision but whether it's the safe decision. After a while this gets to you. So we finally made our decision. We moved up here and I went into agricultural real estate.

Awfully sweaty palms for the first couple of years.

Stein: By that time you had three children?

Warren: By that time we had all three boys. The third one was born on June 25, 1950, the day the Korean War broke out. You know, everybody's number was coming up again. We didn't know what was going to happen for a while. I think they called the guys in my class at Quantico but because I had gone through this 4-F thing and had come into the Marine Corps as a commissioned officer, my serial number was lower than the others in my class. So they called some of them up again but I didn't have to go back.

Stein: That was lucky.

Warren: Yes.

Stein: Did you consult with your father at all about that career shift?

Warren: Yes. Of course I told him what was going through my mind, what I was thinking about. Again this was another example: it didn't make any difference whether you're knee-high to a grasshopper or a grown man, he listened and he counseled but he never advised. I still have the letter that he wrote some time afterwards saying that, while this is a decision a man has to make for himself, the one thing he respected was that once I made up my mind I had the courage to go through with it. There was nothing better he could have said, nothing that could have made me feel better than when he said that, because I never knew whether he thought it was a good decision or a bad decision or a dumb one or a smart one. He never intruded.

## VII EARL WARREN AS A GRANDFATHER

Stein: Did your children get to know him well as a grandfather?

Warren: Oh yes, yes. In fact, he and my mother made a point as the kids got to a certain age--it seemed to vary upon how mature the kids were, somewhere between twelve and fourteen--every summer they would take one of the grandchildren back to Washington for about two or three weeks. The kids saw everything there was to see in Washington that was of any historical moment at all. And that gets pretty heavy when there are fourteen grandchildren around, and now there are sixteen, I guess. But every one of the kids of all of the families spent some time back there to the extent that they could accommodate them. They got to know their grandchildren as well as it's humanly possible.

And they maintained close contact throughout the years, too. For example, Dad would have all his grandchildren send him their report cards and he'd send them a buck for each "A" and, I think, \$5 for each semester they stayed on the honor roll. And there was always a note of congratulations with each check and a few comments about their various activities.

Then every Christmas--I think the happiest season of the year for them was to come out to California and get the families together for Christmas. I remember one of the later ones. We, being the oldest, we started the thing. They'd come to our place first and then as the other kids got married--eventually we switched around some and we'd have Christmas Eve at our place and Christmas Day at Bob's. But for many years Maggie and I had it.

At one of the later ones up here at the ranch, I remember Dad standing in the kitchen and the whole family running all over the house and his telling me how much he enjoyed Christmases and how much it meant to him to be together with the family, and that the one thing he regretted in his life was that he would never be in the position to leave anything to the kids; that he had never made any money in public

Warren: service. He said, "You know, in public service you just can't make any money," and his one regret was, "I have nothing to leave to you kids." I would have burst out laughing if I hadn't had tears in my eyes. Because of all the things that anybody can leave to anybody I can't imagine who could have left more.

Stein: Yes. It seems to me that I came across a couple of newspaper clippings that mentioned that he was coming out here to play Santa Claus to the family reunion.

Warren: Yes. And the numbers kept getting larger every year, of course. [Laughter.] I used to feel for those photographers who'd have to come out and get that mob to stand still at the same place at the same time while they took that picture.

Stein: And smile at the same time. In my reading, I came across some mention of a letter that your father wrote to one of your sons.\*

Warren: That was to Jeff.

Stein: Could you tell me about it?

Warren: I know Jeff has a copy of the letter; I hope we do. Jeff is our middle son, and he was at Berkeley during all the worst of it, People's Park and the march, when all of these feelings of social injustice and the like were so rampant on the campuses. Jeff wrote his grandfather a letter. Weeks went by and nothing happened, and Jeff thought he never even got it or Mama Warren wouldn't show it to him. He thought, "I'll never hear anything back from that." Then he got the letter.

Stein: What did he say in the letter? What was the gist of it?

Warren: The basic unfairness of racial inequality and unequal opportunity. Jeff was an athlete and he roomed with black roommates and became very conscious of all of the things that were going on at the campuses at that time. It all had to do with the inequality of opportunity and social injustice and prejudices and discrimination and unfair treatment of the minorities and all this sort of thing. What a terrible world it is if these things can go on.

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\*Excerpts of Jeff Warren's letter, and Earl Warren's reply, are in John Weaver, "Happy Birthday, Earl Warren; What Say You to Those Who Come Next," in West Magazine, Los Angeles Times, 3/8/70.

Warren: But the letter that he got back from his grandfather was a classic. I've seen it reprinted, maybe by John Weaver, in a Sunday supplement, I'm not sure. But it was worth waiting for. As I say, I don't know if we have a copy. If we do and you'd like to see it we'd be happy to let you have it.

Stein: Was this the same son who went to Mississippi?

Warren: Well, this same Jeff went to--he wasn't in Mississippi. He lived with a black family during the summer. Where was it--one of the Carolinas --anyway, it was in the south. He was a student teacher involved in teaching the kids and coaching them and anything that had to do with this program. It was sponsored by the university I think, or by some offshoot of the university. But he said it's a real trick to be on the other side of the line where everyone around is black and you're the only white one in the room. [Laughter.] At least he had the courage to do something about it. He and his grandfather were very close.

Jeff later on went to Europe, after Cal. He worked his way through Europe, digging ditches and tending bar and making beds or whatever. A couple of times, when he was there, my mother and dad were coming through on some sort of official business and they saw each other a good deal over there. They were very intimate.



## VIII POLITICS AND THE WARREN FAMILY

Stein: To switch gears a bit, the last area I want to explore is your father's political campaigns and his involvement in politics. I wondered if you ever got involved in any of that.

Warren: All of the boys in the family stayed as far away from that as we properly could. The girls went on the campaign trips. That's a different animal. The only thing that Dad ever asked me to do that I sort of--what's the word; I didn't recoil, I bridled--I didn't want to have to do, but of course I did as soon as it was explained--When I was at Cal, I guess they were mobilizing--this is before the war, but the country was mobilizing and they asked me to pose for a series of pictures about how you go in and how you volunteer and how you register and how you sign up and then try on the uniform and all this sort of stuff and there was a sequence of pictures that came out. It was the last thing in the world I wanted to do but I did get involved to that extent. That was not volunteering. [Laughter.]

Stein: How is it that the girls were so active in politics?

Warren: I think for years anybody who knew anything about the family thought that Earl and Nina Warren had three daughters. I don't think anybody knew they had any sons.

Stein: Did the girls really enjoy the campaigning?

Warren: I think so. They got to travel around a lot. At some point Maggie and I joined a campaign train. I think we went up to Oregon. I've forgotten how we got there, whether we flew up and came down on the train or what. But this was just being a member of the family and being aboard; we didn't do anything.

Stein: That must have been when he was running for vice-president in 1948, because that was the only time he would have been outside the state.

Warren: I guess that would be right. Yes. I'll never forget the night the [Tom] Dewey-Warren ticket--the night of the election. It was such a foregone conclusion [that they would win] in the minds of all the pros, and all the toasts were being made and all that sort of stuff at the Fairmont Hotel, I remember. But as the returns started coming in and as it became apparent that the Democrats had swept both houses, and I guess there was still an outside chance, just a vestige of a chance, that maybe Dewey might still be elected, I remember Dad saying it would be wrong for the country. "If we got back there," he said, "they'd just tear our guts out."

Stein: He was right in predicting the outcome.

Warren: Boy, that was a long walk through the corridor back to the parking lot. But in my own mind I have always thought that what happened just happened; he had no intention of becoming a vice-presidential candidate when he went back there. In fact, I remember I was at the office of BBD&O and Pete Motheral, the boss, came in and said, "Hey, what's this I just heard about your dad?" I said, "What's that?" He said, "He's just been nominated for vice-president and accepted it." I said, "You're kidding; he wouldn't."

I was told of the nomination by somebody else. And I've always thought that it was an obligation or duty.

Stein: That's what I gather from reading. Were you, in your own political development, influenced by his being in the Republican party?

Warren: Oh, I guess you can't say no to that. Sure. Although, I suppose the truth of the matter is that when you're a kid growing up you don't pay attention to it one way or the other; you just sort of do what your family's doing anyway. You never stop to think about it. But then his non-partisanship was such a unique phenomenon nobody could believe that people could be this way. And he really was.

I can remember walking with him along the street during his third campaign for governor. We were walking up Bush Street in San Francisco and some fellow coming from the other direction yelled, "Hey Earl, hi!" Dad replied, "Hello, Charlie," (I'll call him) "how are you?" And Charlie said, "By golly, Earl, this time we're out to get you." Earl said, "I know you are, Charlie. You've tried twice before. That's what makes horse racing. How's Mabel?" "Fine. How's Nina?" "Fine." And he walked up the street. Dad said, "He's been the chairman of the Democratic party in California for years." It was the most friendly, most open conversation, no bitterness, no nastiness. People just don't believe that men like this are around.

Stein: I've read about Earl, Jr. and the story of his own political development, when he finally decided to switch to the Democratic party, feeling that he was still in his father's tradition but just that the Republican party had moved so far in another direction that it no longer really stood for what his father stood for.

Warren: That's exactly what Earl thought, and I think Dad always respected him for it. [Pause.] Now you've probably read this a thousand times, but he did refer to it so often--whenever anything came up, no matter how thin you slice it, there's always two sides to a pancake. He believed it; he lived it.

Stein: One of the things I wanted to check out with you is something that appeared in the Sacramento Bee where CBS reported that, according to former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, Earl Warren had been denied admission to Bethesda Naval Hospital.

Warren: You mean before he died?

Stein: This was shortly before he died.

Warren: We heard that, too.

Stein: It was alleged to be because of Nixon's inaction.

Warren: We have heard that story but I don't know where it came from other than something like that. If that was so it's quite a shocker.

Stein: You have no independent information that would confirm or deny that?

Warren: No. We saw him in the hospital. In fact, we were talking about Jeff who was working in New York at the time, and still is, in fact. When Dad had this angina thing--it was known some months before, and he was cutting down on everything--and then he went into the hospital. He was in the hospital for a while and when he came home they had oxygen tanks in the apartment and all that. We'd keep calling and asking should we come back. My mother would say, "No. There's no need to come back; he's all right. I'm taking care of him and I don't want him to start worrying by having the family come from all over."

But then he went back into the hospital once too often, and I think this was on a Tuesday that I was talking to my mother about him, and he'd just gone in. Maggie and I talked and I said I'd better get back there. Maggie couldn't go because her mother was in the hospital, too. So I called Jeff in New York and said, "I'm on such and such a flight and I'm coming into Washington tomorrow, Wednesday afternoon." And Jeff says, "So am I." He didn't know I was coming, and I didn't know he was going. So we met at the airport and stayed overnight with my mother. It was too late to go to the hospital.

Warren: Jeff and I went down the next morning and we saw Dad. This would have been on Thursday and we went back again on Friday. He and Jeff had one of the greatest talks about anything and everything from sports to the latest decision of the court. The more they talked the more Dad came to life. And we had that little reading I alluded to earlier. He was really sort of skin and bones at the time; he didn't look well at all. But when we left on Friday he actually stood up and clapped his hands and said, "Well fellas, see you the next time you're back here."

We came home and he died on Tuesday. This was on Friday. We were so glad that we got back there. He was really very much alive and alert. Just physically beat.

Stein: That's all the questions I have. Is there anything you want to add?  
[Telephone interruption.]

Warren: Well, Dad told a very interesting little anecdote to Jeff and me the last time we saw him, how close he came to giving up the law. He said when he first started practicing he, too, was aware of all the injustices and the bribes and the payoffs and the things going on around him. He became very disenchanted at one point. But he was asked to deliver a letter--he was a courier, I mean acting as a courier to deliver a letter--to the then-state supreme court chief justice. He said here he was just a young kid in his early twenties. He went up to the chief justice's office and opened the door.

He [Warren] said, "I was in this magnificent mansion. Actually the room wasn't any bigger than this hospital room we're sitting in right now, but to me at the time it looked like a palace. Here was this man sitting behind this imposing desk, and he looked up and he said, 'Mr. Warren?' and I said, 'Yes.' He stood up from behind the desk, walked around, shook my hand, introduced himself to me. The impression was so great," he [Warren] said, "that it changed my entire thinking.

"What has happened," he said, "is there's such an absence of manners in the world now, that people just--I'm not talking about pulling-chairs-out-for-ladies-when-they-sit-down type of thing, but just open decency and good manners among people." And then he recounted this story. If this judge hadn't done that he may very well have become so disillusioned that he would have dropped the law.

Stein: That's interesting. I've read that he had never planned on staying in the DA's office for very long. He had thought of it as a stepping stone.

Warren: Could be.

Stein: And then he just got so involved that he never left.

Warren: Well, I've always maintained this. Other people have said I'm naive, and Maggie among them. But I had always contended that he was never a politician, that he started out as a law enforcement officer. I had always imagined as a kid growing up that the greatest office anybody could aspire to, the biggest position in that field, would be United States Attorney General. I didn't even know it was an appointed office.

I thought, boy, if you're elected DA, then you're elected state attorney general and you go from there into the FBI or the attorney generalship, that's got to be the deepest thing in law enforcement that you can get into. I had always thought that would have been his choice and that this whole business of having become governor during the war was really a matter of having to do something because the state was in such dire straits when the war was going on that he changed direction for the duration like everybody else did who got into uniform. He did what he had to do. And the fact that a political career came out of it was something that I felt he took on as an obligation rather than as a matter of choice. But there are a lot of people, I guess, who don't think that that's the way people are. As I say, maybe I was just naive.

## IX CHIEF JUSTICE EARL WARREN

Stein: There are a lot of people who wonder about his evolution from law enforcement officer in Alameda County to Supreme Court Chief Justice.

Warren: Yes. And I don't think there's any better example of it than whoever it was that described--maybe it was John Weaver--that the higher you go up a mountain the more your perspective changes. You can be the same person but you see things from a different point of view. His [Warren's] feeling about representation in northern and southern California when he was governor was one thing. And when one man, one vote came later on, which appeared to be a hundred and eighty degree switch--it's not uncommon in a person like this. You've got a different job with different obligations--boy, if anybody knew at the age of twenty-five what he knew at forty-five nobody would make any mistakes, wouldn't make any bad judgments.

Stein: The remarkable thing is that he seems to have learned from all that. If he made mistakes or bad judgments or whatever, he seems to have remembered it all. It all went into the hopper.

Warren: Did anybody talk to Edward Bennett Williams or do you know if anybody plans to, as far as his most recent years--

Stein: I don't think so. Is he an important person to talk to?

Warren: He's an attorney in Washington. He also owns the Washington Redskins. He's taken on a lot of controversial clients but he's in the forefront of the equal justice concept as far as what's fair under the law. Ed gave one of the eulogies when the court adopted a proclamation [after Warren's death] and his concept of Earl Warren was just fantastic. He's what you'd call a lawyer's lawyer. I would imagine that if anybody wanted to talk to people who really knew the man, Edward Bennett Williams would be one of the guys you'd want to include.

Stein: Yes, that's a good suggestion.

Warren: Eric Severeid wrote a magnificent eulogy in one of the books about him. There aren't too many people who knew him--well, I shouldn't say there aren't too many people. I guess among the people who didn't know him well you'll get a different reaction than from those who knew him intimately. People just don't believe that there are men around who are that decent.

I don't know if you got it in any of your anecdotes--well, this is, again, after California, but it shows the mark of the man. The first time Maggie and I went back to Washington my mother put up a bed in my dad's library for us. On the wall there is framed his appointment duly signed by President Eisenhower, his appointment as Chief Justice, and right underneath it is the original of the Interlandi cartoon that appeared in the New Yorker: Whistler's mother embroidering, "Impeach Earl Warren." [Laughter.] That's hanging on the wall right underneath the appointment. Mother said, "Dad thinks it's funny." [Laughter.] But he always did have a really basic sense of humor.

To meet those justices back there was one of the most inspiring things I've ever gone through. We went back there for a week. My mother and dad had given us a couple of suitcases as a Christmas present and Dad said, "Now Jim, these aren't going to do you any good sitting in a closet collecting dust. We want you to pack them up and come on back there and see us." He said, "As a matter of fact, in January there's a"--this was at Christmas--"in January there's going to be a dinner back there, the Alfalfa dinner. We can bring guests to it, so if there's any way you and Maggie can get back there, you're invited."

So we made it work; we made the effort. We went back there and spent a week. The court was in session and we all went in for the first day and listened to them and then broke for lunch. Then the Court comes back again for a couple of hours in the afternoon, which I did, too. The others did something else. The next morning, and every morning that I was there, I just went down to the court with Dad and sat there and listened to every single case that they argued all day long.

It's an incredible experience. These men are so--if you want to get an impression of fair-mindedness and openness and decency and what really looking for a solution to a problem--

I remember being amazed too--Mother and Dad were out here on one occasion sitting around on our patio up there when the phone rang. It was for Dad. He came back and he said, "By golly, Nina, they've appointed Abe Fortas as the new justice." And he didn't even know it. He got the word after the appointment had been made. He was delighted. He said, "He's a good man." The goings on of the court, the facts and the impressions that people have are so different.

Stein: Since you were there watching him every day I thought I'd ask you this. One thing that a number of people comment on is how warm he managed to be, even as Chief Justice, despite the enormous formality of that whole situation: the high bench and the quiet in the room and the very august surroundings.

Warren: Yes, he was very friendly. He made these attorneys coming up there just feel at home. They've got to be under an enormous strain, especially the young ones coming up who haven't appeared there before. He always made it a point to call them by name, and I suppose if he could have found anything about them ahead of time he did, to throw in an anecdote here and there. It's overwhelming in the sense that the things they talk about are so heavy.

[Tape 2, side 2]

Stein: Is there anything more that we should add? [Long pause.]

Warren: Well, I think probably the thing would be--with the exception of Earl, who would have some really pithy things to talk about, as far as mutual or parallel careers or whatever else are concerned--I think you'd find that with the boys most of it was just what an uncommon thing it was to have a father like that, of such prominence, who was also such a regular guy. Also the fact that he always encouraged everybody to go his own way, to go after his own bent without any sort of arm twisting, and this whole concept of don't ever settle for being average. I don't care what it is that you do, but when you do it, do it better than anybody else. These were never pep talks; they were just good solid guiding principles.

Stein: Well, I'd like to thank you for spending the whole afternoon tape-recording. It will be a valuable addition to the Warren project.

Transcriber: Michelle Guilbeault  
Final Typist: Marilyn Ham



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Earl Warren Oral History Project

Earl Warren, Jr.

CALIFORNIA POLITICS

An Interview Conducted by  
Amelia Fry  
in 1970

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

DATE OF SESSIONS: July 8, 1970, and two separate sessions the following day.

PLACE OF SESSIONS: Judge Earl Warren, Jr.'s Sacramento municipal court chambers.

THOSE PRESENT: Judge Warren and the interviewer.

Born in 1930, Earl Warren, Jr., son of the chief justice, was a prime target for the Earl Warren Oral History Project not only because of his family but also because he had already attained significance in his own right in two fields: animal husbandry and law/politics. After following a bachelor's degree to its ultimate promise in agronomy and animal husbandry, he returned to school, won his law degree, entered private practice then Democratic politics. In 1960, he worked for Kennedy, and in 1962 he flew and spoke up and down the state for Democratic governor Pat Brown. He settled onto the bench in the municipal court of Sacramento in 1966.

The interview sessions were marked by his ability to answer questions with a forthrightness and sense of propriety reminiscent of his father but with a more open approach. He seemed to feel little ambivalence about taping for history and cleared his calendar, except for times court was in session, so we could proceed from beginning to end during a single trip to Sacramento by the interviewer. We sent a rough-edited transcript to him March 12, 1971, and with exceptional alacrity for an interviewee, he returned it, reviewed, ten days later with the note, "I don't think I did any violence to it--merely cleaned it up so that it more accurately portrays the intended thoughts." Because the page numbers of his copy had not been corrected to correspond to the Regional Oral History Office's chaptering, the location of some of our specific questions were obscured; a short conference over the manuscript April 20, 1971, resolved these tag ends and the manuscript was final-typed shortly thereafter.

But his role as interviewee was only a part of the invaluable aid he afforded the project. When the project first came alive, Judge Warren held an advisory conference with us July 9, 1969, in his chambers, as one of those to help judge who, among ten pages of names, was closest to his father and where they were. We also discussed the rough outlines of his own potential recording at that time. ("My memory of Dad's life and public affairs begins about 1935," reads my note on that session.)

The largest and perhaps most important undertaking was one he agreed to do not long after his father died, leaving his own 800-plus page transcript unreviewed. At this point Earl Warren, Jr., read through the manuscript (the same copy that Governor Warren's former departmental secretary, Merrell F. Small, had just finished reviewing and annotating). Except for one minor correction, Judge Warren gave the transcript an OK for final typing to the understandable relief and unending gratitude of our staff.

Earl Warren, Jr.'s own transcript has been held in limbo because the opportunity arose to interview, one by one, three more of the Warren family, and plans were correspondingly revised to put all four transcripts together as one volume and release them simultaneously.

Here, then, is the interview with the first willing narrator from Earl Warren's family.

Amelia R. Fry  
Interviewer-Editor

22 October 1979  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley

(Interview 1 - July 8, 1970)

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE YEARS

Life in the Governor's Mansion

- Fry: According to my notes, you were born in January in 1930.
- Warren: Right.
- Fry: Where were you born, in Oakland?
- Warren: I was born in Oakland, yes.
- Fry: And you went to public schools, right?
- Warren: Yes.
- Fry: You always had plenty of brothers and sisters around--I'm vague on the stair-steps in your family--
- Warren: I'm almost in the middle. I have an older brother, Jim, and an older sister, Virginia, and then two younger sisters, Dorothy and Nina, and my brother Bob, who's the youngest.
- Fry: I think Irving Stone told me that you kids didn't know that Jim was your half-brother until the first book was about to come out on your father in 1948. Is that true?
- Warren: I don't know about all the children. I knew about it earlier than that. I was a pretty good rummager, and as I recall I had run across some photographs or something of that sort, and also a couple of names that I had not seen before, and I made inquiries and found out at that time. I was about, maybe 10 or 12, at that time.
- Fry: Yes. That would have been earlier than the Stone biography.
- Warren: But that was of no particular significance to us. [Laughter]

Fry: It probably wasn't as significant to you kids as it was to the older generation, which generally felt it was an important and delicate matter.

Warren: No. It never was. It never was a secret. It just hasn't made a bit of difference at all that I know of.

Fry: Whatever pre-school life was like that you'd like to have go on tape, we'd like to have your account. Did you go to nursery school?

Warren: No. Pre-school was great. Just a lot of play in a comfortable neighborhood. Lots of children our own age, and very tranquil.

Fry: Then you started attending--what was the name of the school, do you remember?

Warren: I went very briefly to Crocker Highlands School and then went to Lakeview Grammar School for the rest of the primary schooling. Then I went briefly to Westlake Junior High, in Oakland. That was very brief because we then moved to Sacramento, and I went to California Junior High here, and then McClatchy High School.

Fry: When do you remember having definite interests in school, where one subject seemed to be a favorite?

Warren: Oh, I think in kindergarten I was very interested in certain things. I learned to read early.

Fry: You mean before you went to school?

Warren: No, in school. But reading was fascinating, and it came easy, fortunately. So that opened many other doors, and I became very interested in science early. I read a lot of books--advanced books--when I was young, and I became extremely interested in science.

Fry: Oh, is that right? And this continued all through your school?

Warren: Right.

Fry: Right up to the present? Do you still have a hobby in science?

Warren: Oh, yes, I do a lot of things in the scientific area, although frankly now I consider myself basically a social scientist, as compared with, let's say, the physical biological scientist I considered myself before.



Warren: I went to Davis and studied agriculture because of my liking for the physical sciences, and also a liking to apply things that are basic, so to speak. I like the out-of-doors and I always wanted to do things from the ground up--I never felt comfortable starting someplace along the line. I always liked to start from the most common denominator, I guess you'd say, and then work my way up, building as I went. That's the only way that I feel very comfortable.

Fry: You mean you would want, if you're studying science, to recreate the Boyle's law experiments from scratch, or do you mean that you like to read the basic readings in an area, and build on them with more specific ones later?

Warren: Well, both. I suppose if I was going to create a chemical compound, for instance, I would probably prefer to mix the sodium and chlorine myself rather than start out with the salt, initially. That type of approach. [Laughter] And I would rather have the basic things firmly done before proceeding on to something else.

In law, I feel much the same way. I think that, for instance, we should be talking about the spirit in which a law was conceived as being the most important thing--not the law as we presently see it in its hard, absolute form. I have since learned, of course, that that's my father's philosophy also, so perhaps I got this by induction--I'm not sure.

Fry: Or osmosis?

Warren: Yes. And I like to think in terms of the basic laws in the United States. We have our basic laws in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and the spirit with which these great institutions were devised. It makes it easier, I think, to operate within more refined areas, so to speak, that spring out of these things if you understand what took place below. I've found it a great asset, but it's also a very controversial position to be in.

Fry: But you're defining the meaning of the law in terms of the times in which it was put on the books. Is that right?

Warren: Yes. And what was intended by it.

Fry: Were you involved in junior high or high school politics? Did you run for office?

Warren: Oh, I was very active, but I suppose I shied away from running for the major offices, simply because my father was prominent.

Fry: He was governor by then, is that right?

Warren: Yes. The male ego being what it is--very fragile and very demanding--a boy generally wants to be known for himself so he will try to do those things where he feels that he can feel comfortable in knowing that whether he's liked or disliked it's for himself and not for his father or for somebody else in the family. So I feel now in looking back that that's the reason I did not run for any of those offices. But I was very active; I was editor of the school paper, as I recall, and the yearbook, and valedictorian, and a number of other things. I was always very active in school activities and I played athletics, of course.

Also it seemed to us children that we were always engaged in one continuous campaign, and I suppose this is why we didn't really want to get involved in any more campaigning than was necessary. Because there were meetings constantly, people coming over, our pictures being taken for this and for that. At least from the time Dad was Attorney General (by that time I was only about 7 or 8 or 9), it just seemed like one constant campaign. That was more public exposure than I particularly wanted, and, I think, probably more than most of the kids cared for. So most of us weren't very anxious to do very much more of an elective nature.

Fry: As I went through the governor's mansion this morning, I wondered about that, and how much privacy there was there, and, in view of the present governor's attitude against living in the mansion, I wondered if the neighborhood around it has changed. It does seem to be sort of crowded-in upon now, with motels and businesses.

Warren: It was an older neighborhood at the time we were there, but we had the same disabilities--noise, commercialism, and the fact there were no children in the area. It was not what you would call a residential area even then, and there was a big market across the street, and gas stations, and so forth. The mansion has been encroached upon even more since then, and it's unfortunately in a little pocket. I always wished they would make a park around it, at least that block, and preferably a couple of blocks, and really make it into what it was intended to be. But things haven't changed quite that dramatically since then. It always shook from cars going by, and trucks going by, and it was noisy.

Fry: Where did you kids play?

Warren: Oh we played all over the city. [Laughter] Any place. If there were five of us we were off in at least five different directions, at any one time. And we played at home. There never was a feeling of a lack of privacy.

Fry: There wasn't?

Warren: No. We felt very private at home.

Fry: Well, it does seem like all the public rooms are on the first floor, and above that--

Warren: And we operated it like a home. We had our friends in when we wanted, and nobody imposed on anybody else. And when there were receptions, people weren't running around upstairs unless we were notified ahead of time. We had as much privacy as any home would ever have, I guess.

Fry: Helen MacGregor tells of sometimes coming over through the day when she and your father had something to bang out together--coming over into the relative privacy of the study in the governor's mansion--and an occasional blonde head bobbing up in the door, and your father saying, "Now, just wait. You have to wait until five o'clock! Then I'll be with you! [Laughter]"

Warren: I don't remember that.

Fry: You don't remember any of that?

Warren: No, in fact it doesn't even sound like him. Because what--

Fry: I got the reverse story then from, I think, Oscar Jahnsen, or somebody, who said that your father never would bring his work home. That when he was home, he was home.

Warren: That's only partly true also, because Dad frequently brought work home. The part I dispute is his saying, "Wait," because the one thing that is truly amazing about my father is he always seems to have time for everybody. I don't think any father was ever mandatorily away from his family more than he was, and yet I don't suppose there ever was a father that was as much there all the time. I can never remember a time when he said to me, "Not now, later."

Fry: Is that right?

Warren: I'm sure the other kids feel the same way about it. And most everybody who really knows him feels that way. It's one of those rare qualities that very, very few people possess, but he has it. He has the ability to make you think that he has only your interest in mind at the particular time.

Fry: Yes. He zeroes in.

Warren: And as a consequence, it only takes a moment for him to do something that would otherwise take a long time. And you always feel satisfied. So, although he may have been a physically absent father

Warren: most of the time, when he was there everything counted and there never was a time when we felt neglected or felt he was gone.

Fry: This is the thing I always was so skeptical about. I kept picking up all these stories about how he was with the kids a great deal: the Sundays when he took the kids out and things like this. And I thought, how can a man in the positions that he's held be with his kids like that?

Warren: I don't know. He just could make every moment--not every minute, but every moment--absolutely full and absolutely efficient. I don't know how he does it either. He used to bring--he still does --his work home all the time, and reads in the middle of the night. But, again, he's one of these people who can fall asleep whenever he decides he wants to fall asleep, and he can wake up whenever he wants to wake up. When he wakes up he's just as clear-headed as he was before he went to sleep. I have come home after a date when I know he's been absolutely exhausted--maybe 1:30-2 o'clock in the morning--and stopped by his room, because he'd be studying in bed, and talked to him, and finally he'd be so exhausted that he would simply fall asleep. And then I have walked by, maybe four or five hours later in the morning on the way to school, and he would hear me walking by and wake up and finish what he was talking about the night before. He would resume the conversation immediately--no yawns, no stretching--just take right off in the middle of the sentence, or wherever he was and go on. He just has that type of mind. In a car on the way to a meeting he could drop his head and nod for a few minutes--five minutes--ten minutes. This is probably a major reason why he has such tremendous stamina.

Fry: Yes. That's how he's able to go and travel at night and make his speeches during the day on those terrible schedules he used to have.

Warren: Yes. And he has an even nature all the way along, you know. His mood does not change.

Fry: It doesn't? That was another thing I was wondering about?

Warren: No.

Fry: His office staff said that only occasionally would his temper flare.

Warren: Well, if his temper flared--

Fry: No matter how much the pressure--

Warren: Right. If his temper flared, it flared for a reason, and it made no difference whether he was rested or tired or what had preceded it--it was always on that particular issue. If he was angry on a

Warren: subject, he would have a right to be angry, or it would be the type of thing that would make him angry at any time, under any circumstances.

Fry: Yes. He wouldn't bottle up, and then get angry at some small thing, later.

Warren: Right. He isn't the type of person where you see things welling up and the strain showing. Conversely, he was never of a mood where you felt anything went because he was particularly happy. He's the most even-tempered person I've ever seen.

Fry: So you kids didn't have to tiptoe around because father is tired and irritable tonight?

Warren: Never. Never.

Fry: Marvelous.

Warren: We never thought of him as being tired or rested or grumpy or happy. He was just the same person all the time. With one exception.

Fry: Oh.

Warren: And this is in later years. When he was working on the Kennedy Commission it was obviously a terrible, terrible drain on him. I was personally very fearful for his health at that time. He was carrying three tremendous jobs. He was carrying the job of a justice of the Supreme Court, he was carrying a tremendous burden on the administration of the courts at that time, and every other available moment he was spending on the commission, and doing tremendous research in the background on it, too. For the first time, strain really, really showed. Of course, he was living that tragic event over every moment. It had been a heart-rending thing to him initially anyway, that it was really quite cruel for him to have to go through it again and again.

Fry: Talking more about family recreation, somewhere I picked up a note: Sundays in Oakland with Aunt Ethel Plank in the park. Do you remember anything like that?

Warren: Yes. We used to spend a lot of time, when we were very little, in the parks in Oakland, and we used to go to the zoo very frequently. In fact that's how Honeybear got her name.

Fry: Was this the San Francisco zoo?

Warren: No, it was the old zoo in Oakland. It's no longer where it was. There's a new zoo, now. Up in the hills. About the time Honeybear

Warren: was born--just after she was born--we went up to see the zoo, and there was an animal there called the honeybear. There really is such a thing as a honeybear. But the honeybear had a little box in the cage, and it had a little round hole that it went in and out--sort of like a bird house. All we ever saw of the honeybear was a big bunch of blonde fur spilling out of this hole, because he slept with his back to it--almost all animals sleep with their back to the opening. And so that's all we ever knew of the honeybear. Well, when Nina came along--and she'd be asleep in bed, she'd always pull her head down, and all we'd see was a bunch of blonde hair coming out from underneath the covers. So she got the label, Honeybear. [Laughter] Now some people thought that she got the name from a book for there was a book that was very popular just before that time called HONEYBEAR, or something like that. But the naming didn't have anything to do with that. It came strictly from the zoo.

Fry: Well, I guess this note was an allusion to the fact that when your father would take the kids out on Sundays to give your mother a rest, you'd go visit your aunt, who also lived in Oakland.

Warren: Oh, we used to go visit her a lot. We sure did.

Fry: And did your grandmother live there with Ethel Plank at the time--

Warren: No. She had her own apartment in Oakland.

Fry: Could you give us some idea of the kinds of recreation, or games or something that you kids used to play with your father or without your father?

Warren: Oh, we played most everything.

Fry: There's a note about "Information, Please," with Bobby as quiz-master.

Warren: Oh, well-- [Laughter] -- at the dinner-table later on, as we got a little bit older, we used to play "Information, Please," and all kinds of quiz games, because of course that was the quiz era. And riddles, and anything anybody wanted to--

Fry: Sounds like sneaky education to me! [Laughter] This is what I do with my kids to make them think a little.

Warren: Yes, but I think it was more than that. Mostly the kids prepared the program.

Fry: Did you ever get any help on your homework or anything like that?

Warren: From my parents? No.

Fry: Maybe not help on an assignment, but help on whatever project you were doing in school--your "unit." I was just wondering if there was a lot of parent participation with your schoolwork.

Warren: No. It really wasn't possible. They just weren't there that often. So generally, we found other sources if we needed help. Of course, they'd always see, if we needed help that we were steered in the right direction. But the kids were pretty good students. And in those days we didn't have homework like they have now. It wasn't nearly as ferocious as it is now.

Fry: Yes. That was before Sputnik.

I was also going to ask you a little bit more about the mansion, since I went through it. I understand it was refurbished about 1943, at least there are some newspaper articles about it.

Warren: Yes. My mother did all that, with Oscar Jahnsen and a few other people. It was in terrible shape. I mean really horrible.

Fry: Really?

Warren: Oh, yes. The front porch fell in--they hadn't used it for years. Even big things like that were dilapidated. It was in really very, very bad shape.

Fry: It seems to be in beautiful shape now.

Warren: It's in good shape, except the third story, which, from the trucks and cars rumbling by, has great big cracks that run up the wall. It does get a pretty good shaking.

Fry: Yes. What's up there on the very top?

Warren: Nothing. Just a little bitty room. I understand that a long time ago they used to occasionally play cards up there. That's quite a hike!

Fry: Yes. I could imagine it as a hiding-out place for some kid who wanted to get away and read a book or something like that.

Warren: It could be, but we didn't use it. One of the things about the mansion that really, I think, impresses everybody is that even if you just confine yourself to the first and second stories, which is practically where you live anyway, those stairs are ferocious. [Laughter] And generally we used the back stairs anyway, which are almost straight up and down. You probably didn't see them, because they don't let people--

Fry: No, I guess I didn't go down those stairs.

Warren: I can remember that even when I was in the very best of shape playing football in high school, running up and down those stairs a number of times really was a pretty good workout. And if somebody--fortunately for us nobody had any disability--but if somebody had had a disability I imagine it would be quite an onerous task.

Fry: Yes. Poor Olson. I guess he was just confined to the--

Warren: Well, he didn't live there much.

Fry: Oh, didn't he?

Warren: The only person who lived there any really substantial time prior to us was Young. Olson did live there to a very limited degree, but mostly he lived away. There was a belief at that time that there was a requirement that you live there six months out of the year, or something like that. It was thought to be the law--that you had to do it. But, basically, Merriam, and Olson and Rolph didn't live there. They lived at the Sutter Club, or Elks, or in apartment houses. Oh, they'd come by, and they'd have their parties, and I do know that some of Olson's family lived there at least briefly. But I don't think he used it very much. The guards who had worked there--we had guards who had worked there since Young's time when we first went there. They could remember back, and of course they were delighted to have people around. [Laughter] Yes. But they told us that there was practically no use made of it at all since Young's term.

Fry: Well, it's kind of fun to look at from the outside, but when you get inside it's really beautiful, with those marble fireplaces--

Warren: Yes. It's much the same as we fixed it up. Virginia Knight was interested in the house, and she re-did the kitchen and she made a few other minor changes, but basically she kept it the same. She was a sweet soul, and rather sentimental, and she liked to keep things much as they were--not change them drastically. We had a very archaic kitchen. It was sort of a barny thing with a great big old black stove in it--very unwieldy for anybody working there--Virginia changed that. And since that time it's only had minor changes made to it. The Browns put in the pool, and made a few minor changes inside. The Reagans didn't do hardly anything.

Fry: Yes. Where did you kids go to swim? Surely everybody in Sacramento swims.

Warren: Yes. Dad belonged to the Del Paso Country Club then and we did most of our swimming out there, although we swam at all the public pools and in the rivers.



Fry: That sounds like fun. The rivers were very clean, at that time, I guess.

The Warrens' Southern California Residence

Fry: When I was going through some of the files over at the California State Library, there was something that I picked up: In the Sacramento Bee of October 25, 1960, an article was headlined, "Earl Warren, Jr., works as deputy county clerk." When were you a deputy county clerk?

Warren: When I was waiting for the results of the bar exam to come back, and I worked as a deputy clerk here.

As a kid, I worked as a gardener a lot. When I was in law school I worked one summer for the district attorney's office in Alameda county.

Fry: That must have been interesting, in your father's old haunts.

Warren: I did commercial diving and commercial fishing, and was a lifeguard for several years--beach boy.

Fry: Where?

Warren: Stunt man for the movies.

Fry: Good heavens.

Warren: That was mostly in Southern California, during summers. I had my own little sea urchin processing company, the only one this side of the Orient. I had three Japanese partners at the time.

Fry: How do you process sea urchins?

Warren: The sea urchins are those purple, prickly things. They're practically hollow, except that they have two layers of eggs inside that are very highly prized by the Asians and by Italians. The Portuguese eat them to some extent, but mostly the Italians and Chinese and Japanese.

Fry: Did you get into this while your family would be living at the ranch--

Warren: The Uplifters' Club? [Laughter]

Fry: The Uplifters' Ranch, yes, in Santa Monica--

Warren: Yes.

Fry: Is that how you developed your Southern California jobs?

Warren: Yes. We used to stay down there all summer.

Fry: Maybe you could explain to me what the Uplifters' Ranch was. Was that kind of a club?

Warren: I think it was formed either in the teens or the '20s, and initially it was a club. It was called the Uplifters' Club. At first it was sort of a retreat for men. And then they began to build homes in the area. But even long after that they used to have Bohemian Grove type of retreats for the men. The women weren't allowed in. This continued into the thirties, when a lot of these wealthy people apparently went down the tubes, or nearly so, in the Depression. Then the setup began to disintegrate, and by the time we started going there they still called it the Uplifters' Club, but it wasn't a club. It was just a very heavily wooded area where they had private homes. We had some friends who owned what they called a cabin there, and they loaned it to us in the summertime because they didn't use it then.

Fry: Oh, I see. So it was really a retreat-in-the-woods type of thing.

Warren: Well, not really. Not by today's standards, it wouldn't be considered very far out, because it was all built up around there, and since then it has built up almost solid. But it was in a wooded canyon.

Fry: Was this kind of a family summertime arrangement?

Warren: Generally speaking we stayed there all summer. Dad wanted to be sure he kept a strong political base in Southern California. He saw where Southern California was going very early in the game--long before anybody else did, and wanted to make sure that he had plenty of roots down there as well as up North.

Fry: You mean in population growth he saw where it was going, or in--

Warren: Population growth and in power. In political power. He wanted to be sure of two things: One, he wanted to be sure he understood that area and recognized it, which he did; but also he recognized the political punch that was inherent there and wanted to be well-known in Southern California.

Fry: What sports did you participate in? With your father's abiding interest in football and so forth--

Warren: I primarily played football.

Fry: You did? That must have given your father a great deal of pleasure. [Laughter] I'm sure he never missed a game. Is that right?

Warren: He couldn't see them all, but he went to every one he possibly could. We had a good team, too. We had probably the best high school team in the country at that time. We won the championship and had about a dozen fellows that went on to professional ball.

Fry: I always ask people I interview, too, what sort of magazines and reading material were lying around in the house that they were particularly interested in as they grew up.

Warren: Well, we had a pretty good exposure to various periodicals. I suppose they would be the ones, though, that are mostly found in every home. You know, Life, and the Saturday Evening Post-- various newspapers.

Fry: The general, popular magazines and newspapers?

Warren: Yes. Nothing exceptional that I can think of, although Dad always had so much reading material that we could have read most anything we wanted, I suppose.

Fry: Probably overwhelming.

[The following exchange was not recorded -  
Verbatim dictation 4/20/71:]

Warren: Yes. We had a very general library, very extensive, all the classics, and of course politics. Dad was primarily a non-fiction reader, a lot of histories, sociological studies, all these things that would seem to bear on his work.

Fry: Mysteries to unwind?

Warren: No. He never unwound really because he never got wound up in the first place. He was remarkably stable. After a hard day's work on one problem, he could come right home and read a heavy book on it.

Also, he never made us change the subject in conversation. He was always willing to exhaust the subject as much as we wanted to.

#### College at Davis

Fry: And then did you stay at Davis for your four years?

Warren: Yes. I was at Davis all four years.

Fry: Then did you graduate in agriculture?

Warren: Yes. I was an animal husbandry major, and I graduated in agriculture. Then I worked for a year on farms in Yolo and Solano Counties as a farm hand, farm worker, and then went on active duty with the army. After that, I worked several years as a Farm Advisor in Alameda County.

(Session 2 - July 9, 1970)

Fry: One of the things that I missed asking yesterday was about your life at Davis. You say that you were interested in the physical sciences, and so you took agriculture. I thought agriculture was the biological sciences.

Warren: Partly. The training for agriculture at Davis, or the University of California, is basically the same as a pre-med course for two to three years, and that's mostly the basic sciences. It does get in to the biological sciences, of course, but there is a lot of math, a lot of chemistry, and things of that sort.

Fry: And so you went on through that course. Did you have any outside activities there?

Warren: Oh, yes. And I was Picnic Day Chairman.

Fry: Oh, you were?

Warren: Yes. The day the wind blew. [Laughter] We always feared rain. Picnic Day chairmen, ever since the event had been started about 50 years before, had feared rain. And rain was predicted for our day. The morning of the session, it was just as ready to rain as it could possibly be. But about six-thirty in the morning we noticed a little breath of air starting to stir, and everybody cheered, and within an hour the wind was blowing strong enough to start moving the clouds away and we were terribly elated. However, by the time the parade started at ten o'clock it was in the 70-mile an hour category and tore all the floats apart, and it looked like an atom bomb had landed in the horse arena because of a cloud of dust that was going about 200 feet in the air. It was a complete disaster from a natural environment standpoint, but we had a good day anyway. [Laughter]

Fry: Oh, really?

Warren: Sure. This was when they still had the world's largest high school track meet there. Those fellows who were running the 100-yard dash with the wind were doing it in about 8 seconds. Of course if you ran it against the wind you were doing it in about 15 or 20! [Laughter]

Fry: Had a lot of world's records broken that day? [Laughter]

Warren: We had all sorts of bizarre things happening.

Fry: You must have made some awfully good friends with things like that happening; you go through them together.

Warren: Oh, yes. That was a great campus and still is.

Fry: Yes. I guess it's always been my favorite campus, except right now it's really getting crowded.

Warren: I was told that last year they had more applicants than they had combined at Berkeley and UCLA.

Fry: I'll bet they did.

Warren: It sounds fantastic, but I verified that with a high officer.

Fry: Did you run for any offices, or anything like that?

Warren: I was very heavily engaged in student activities. In those days the student body, or the actual governing of the college, was a joint venture by students and faculty partly through undisclosed secret organizations.

Fry: That sounds sinister.

Warren: It sounds sinister, but it was not. These groups of faculty and students had been formed years before, and they pretty much decided how the school was to be run, even to the point of who would be asked to run for the offices. And largely the person who was selected by these groups ended up being elected. It was really a highly democratic thing, even though it sounds like it was exactly the opposite. If difficult things had to be done, they would suddenly just be done. And nobody knew where or how it was done, but it was done. This ran a wide gamut, and it was really quite interesting.

Of course we had a very social campus, we had a tremendous number of organizations of all types, and they were very active.

Fry: Yes. Do you mean that these were combinations of political groups?

Warren: No.

Fry: Well, did they have continuity through the years?

Warren: Oh, yes. Tremendous continuity.

Fry: With a formal officer structure, and things like this? Or were they just people that a professor might call in or that campus leaders might get together?

Warren: No, these were groups that acted by consensus, and generally by just almost plain unanimity. It was absolutely fascinating. I know on other campuses they've had groups that have done this to some degree, but I know of none that have done it so effectively. And the reason for it is that there was such an immense feeling of pride in the institution, and such tremendous cooperation between faculty and students and the administration, that problems were stopped before they became at all serious. It was just great! Even to the point where we thought if things were getting a little bit quiet on campus, we would take a Model "T" Ford, disassemble it, and assemble it suddenly in the chancellor's bedroom, or something like that--with the motor running! [Laughter]

Fry: Shall I ask if you did that?

Warren: [Laughter] As we say in the law, "I neither admit nor deny." But it was really a fun campus. Of course now it's become large. But it still carries a certain stamp of this internal cooperation.

Even in those days, Davis was leader as to what happened in the entire University system. We could do things that Berkeley and UCLA could not do at all. In Cal Club--California Club--the inter-campus club that is designed to promote the well-being of the University in general, Davis always played a major role. Especially since the smaller campuses generally joined with Davis on major issues. Hence we were able to do a great deal for the University as a whole. So it wasn't a localized situation. And it's one of the reasons why so many Davis graduates have been such potent forces later on in the University structure.

Fry: Oh, have they?

Warren: Yes. Those were very exciting days and still are. I maintain all the contacts I think I ever had there.

Fry: Could you give some examples of your--

Warren: Practically all the faculty. For instance, Jim Wilson, the fellow who just burned his pants in dual protest over the war and the burning of bank buildings--he's one of my best friends. He was one of my profs there. And all the chancellors that have come through. I work very closely still with the University on all sorts of matters.

Fry: You mean as an alum?

Warren: As an alum, and privately, too.

Fry: Well, they need friends these days. [Laughter]

Fry: Were you ever in anything musical?

Warren: No.

Fry: Or dramatic, there? Davis had some good dramatic things.

Warren: Yes. I love those things, but in a performance role they're not my bag, so to speak.

Fry: That was another thing that I wanted to ask you--your dad played the clarinet, I think--or something like that.

Warren: Yes. He played clarinet.

Fry: And I saw a beautiful Steinway piano in the governor's mansion this morning when I toured through it, and I wondered if the music had trickled down into the second generation?

Warren: Not much. Virginia was the only one who had a talent for music--she had good talent for it. But she didn't pursue it.

Fry: What did she play?

Warren: She played the piano.

Fry: Was that Steinway there, when you were there?

Warren: Yes. It was there.

#### Decision to Go into Law

Fry: Where are we--Were you in the army during Korea?

Warren: Yes, that was at the end of the Korean war.

Fry: Did you go to Korea?

Warren: No. And then after that I was a farm advisor in Alameda County for about three years. And then went into law school at Berkeley.

Fry: At that point apparently you had decided, then, that you wanted law as a career, even though your father was in it?

Warren: Yes. Several things began to come home to me about that time. Dad had always wanted us to be sure that whatever we went into had broad enough horizons to satisfy us. He would always question us as to

Warren: anything we were going to do. He was the type of man that if you had the greatest idea in the world, but didn't have solid reasons for doing it, he could cut it into a thousand pieces and make you think it was a terrible idea. On the other hand, you could have a rather bad idea, but if you had honestly thought it out and decided you wanted to do it, he would be totally supportive.

I found, in agriculture, not owning any land or having access to it, or having any money with which to farm, that if I was going to stay in it, I was going to have to stay in a capacity much like I was in, basically a teaching capacity. And that this would require, if I was going to have good advancement, a doctorate. I had already become known in the state as an expert in animal husbandry and in agronomy. And this was as a very young man in a short three years' time. That took a lot of the challenge away. I began to think--

Fry: Yes. And also maybe you felt kind of locked in--

Warren: Well, I began to feel that maybe I had not stepped into a field that had enough challenge. So the answer was to get a doctorate if I was going to stay in agriculture, or go into something else that would offer more potential. I was delighted with agriculture-- I've never enjoyed anything as much as I did that experience.

My natural inclination was to go into medicine because having a scientific bent I always found medical type courses very easy-- I had a good feel for medicine. But, something that Dad had always infused in us began to come home pretty strongly. And that is he had always strongly counseled against running away from anything, or from abandoning anything simply because it became uncomfortable. He always wanted us to really search our minds and hearts to determine whether or not we were doing this for convenience or whether we were doing this because we were stepping on to something better, more productive.

I had decided that with my background, there were two things that I could do: I rejected the idea of going back and getting a doctorate in agriculture. I didn't feel that this would be very broadening at all. In fact I had a feeling that this might even further limit the horizons. So I decided that it would either be medicine, or, as an outside chance, law. And the more I thought about it, the more I thought that perhaps I ought to be able to apply more of what I knew in the area of law than I would in the area of medicine. And then I began to feel that perhaps I was running away from law simply because Dad was so prominent in it.

Fry: By this time he was on the Supreme Court.



Warren: Yes. Had been there about three years. I suppose that this, more than anything else, was the reason that I decided I would go into law instead of something else. I felt I should face up to that challenge, even though law had been the last thing in my mind. I'd never ever considered going into law, nor had Dad ever suggested it. Most people think exactly the contrary. In fact, most people had assumed automatically that I would be a lawyer, so--But anytime anybody assumed something like that, I just bowed my back even more! [Laughter]

Fry: Well, I had kind of thought that maybe it was a latter day decision; this happens in a lot of cases.

Warren: It definitely was.

Fry: Well, then you went to law school, and you came straight to Sacramento to practice in private practice?

Warren: I came straight to Sacramento, right. And opened my own office with two other young fellows--classmates--which is the hard way to go! [Laughter] And we practiced together, and then it became a two-man partnership.

Fry: Who were your partners?

Warren: Tom Hammer, and Al Fields.

Fry: And did you come straight to the bench from private practice?

Warren: Yes. I was in private practice for about six years, and then came onto the bench.

## ENTRY INTO THE POLITICAL WORLD

### First Campaigns of Earl Warren, Junior

Fry: Now, during any of this period were you active in California politics?

Warren: Yes. Very active--

Fry: When did you start?

Warren: Well, I actually started in the initial John Kennedy campaign in 1960, and then very heavily in the gubernatorial campaign two years later.

Fry: I'm trying to remember, because I was here then, too. Were you Northern California chairman of the Kennedy campaign--or you were Northern California--something, weren't you?

Warren: No, I didn't have a title in that campaign, I was just working independently. At that time I was a Republican.

Fry: Oh, it was after that that you were a Democrat.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: But at any rate you were working for Kennedy as a Republican? Or did that not have any--was that in the background? In other words, you weren't head of Republicans for Kennedy, or something like this?

Warren: Not that I know of. I don't recall whether I loaned the name, so to speak, to one of those groups or not. But I did work as a Republican because I felt that was where I would be most effective.

And then in '62, the Brown-Nixon gubernatorial campaign. I was very heavily involved. I was vice-chairman of Governor Brown's campaign then. I had become a Democrat in the interim.

Warren: I also, during that campaign, campaigned for a wide variety of candidates--I campaigned for Tom Kuchel, a Republican, that year, and many of the assemblymen and congressmen and senators that are still on the scene. That was a big time for me, because I really got to know the political scene well in California--and the players.

Fry: You also were in the Kuchel campaign, who was a Republican; this was the pattern, I think, with many voters who voted for Brown, a Democrat, and also voted for Kuchel.

Warren: It sure was.

Fry: I've always wondered how it is to work with the different little local groups in a campaign like that. I don't see how it's ever organized in California, because one town will have campaign headquarters for Brown and Kuchel--all in the same room--and another town will have all the Democratic candidates, right down the line, and a headquarters for that. It's not at all a neat paper organization.

Warren: No. Some organizations are very strong, and don't appear on paper at all. On the other hand, some of these political organizations are simply on paper--they don't exist, in actuality. They look great on paper, but they have no viability except for what PR value comes out of the names that are on the letterhead.

Fry: Yes! [Laughter]

Warren: So each individual situation varies, and when you go to one of these places, you have to know exactly what it is that you're going into ahead of time, and this takes a lot of planning. I traveled in that one campaign about 125,000 miles. I made about 400 speeches and public appearances.

Fry: And your speeches were not always just for Brown?

Warren: No. At times I was shot-gunning for local candidates as well.

Fry: Who arranged your schedule and your speeches?

Warren: I did it all on my own. I got many requests, but I did it myself, and I paid my own expenses practically all the way, too, except where I could hitch a ride on somebody's private plane or train that happened to be going to a certain area. Yes, that was really an interesting campaign, because that was truly a citizens' campaign all the way through. We were fighting tremendous odds. And we had to--

Fry: Yes. And tremendous stakes.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: Because I think that everyone felt that if Nixon failed to win the governorship, then he would be completely out as president--never again--

Warren: I think that was part of it.

Fry: And that therefore it was really worth working for. Didn't Brown use a public relations firm in that campaign? And if so, did you have anything to do with it? Or did he not in that campaign?

Warren: Well, they used firms in those days, but more often than not, they took people from various firms and sort of put together their own PR [Public Relations] staffs.

Fry: Incorporated them--

Warren: It's not like now when you say "Well Whitaker-Baxter handles all my stuff," or something like that. It wasn't that way. Maybe a candidate would have a certain firm that would do most of his basic work, but a gubernatorial candidate usually had people from various firms, and some old pros that did nothing but PR work for political candidates. And they had their own staff, which made it a sort of a loosey-goosey operation. But it had charm to it, too.

Fry: Yes. Well, I just wonder, who's the boss in a case like that? Just like your dad had a problem in '42.

Warren: It's always been a problem in political campaigns as to who's the boss when it comes to PR. It's a big problem.

Fry: At any rate, did Brown, then, appoint you to your judgeship?

Warren: Yes, four years later.

#### Democratic and Republican Parties Compared

Fry: Your background, I suppose, from your father up, is early-Hiram Johnson-type progressivism--am I guessing right?

Warren: Yes.

Fry: And you moved into the Democratic party from what in California had become a Republican party, as much as we have parties here.  
[Laughter]

Warren: Yes. Well, I first became really aware of the political mixture, so to speak, at about the same time I suppose most children do-- when I was getting into my later teens.

The first real awareness that I had that some of my prior concepts were shallow was when Harry Truman won the presidency the time that my father ran on the ticket with Dewey. There was something tremendously significant about that, and from then on I started to really deeply inquire into what it was, and for the first time I came to realize the basic differences between the two parties. I had always thought of the Republican party in terms of my father and his cohorts, the people that he surrounded himself with, and how he operated. But then I realized that his philosophy didn't differ from those of the major Democratic leaders, and that really, he sounded very much like a Democrat, and in many respects seemed to be more so than they were. Then I learned, through inquiry, that the traditional, organized Republican party had always been opposed to my father, and had tried to block him all the way along the line, and that everything he had done had been done in spite of it, and that all the great progress for which he was noted was done through Democratic support, and a general lack of Republican support--except for those few Republicans who were of his own brand of thinking.

I searched my conscience for a long time as to what to do, and at one time decided I definitely would stay as a Republican. But in the latter '50s it became obvious that to be a minority in a minority party was going to be a completely untenable position--you wouldn't have an opportunity to be really productive. And it appeared that Dad's brand of Republicanism was on the wane, very definitely on the wane. And that a more repressive type of Republicanism was going to be in control for a long time. So I decided I had better be where my philosophy and Dad's basically lay, and that was in the Democratic party.

Fry: Yes. Did you have any talks with your Dad about this, when he was still in Sacramento? Seems like you were working through it in your mind for a long time.

Warren: Oh, yes. In fact I talked to him constantly for about ten years. And he always simply said to go where I felt I was most comfortable.

Fry: And did he see too that a great many of his--well, the types of legislation that he pushed hardest were supported largely by Democrats?

Warren: Oh, yes. He certainly did. And I very strongly suspect that if he was in my position, he would have become--at the same time, and at the same age--a Democrat. I would not have changed parties

Warren: if I had thought that in any respect this would indicate a difference in philosophies between the two of us. In fact, one of the reasons I did become a Democrat was because I felt this was an indication that he also was.

Fry: I guess maybe it really wasn't as necessary, anyway, for your dad to change parties?

Warren: No. There'd be no sense for him to change at that late stage.

Fry: Because he had the support of the Democrats without being one.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: And actually changing parties probably wouldn't have helped him any politically.

Warren: Oh, no! It wouldn't. No, there was nothing to gain, and as a matter of fact--

Fry: He probably would have lost a lot of Republican support.

Warren: As a remaining example of progressive Republicanism, he was of considerable value to the country, and I'm glad he stayed there where he was, at that time. Because, after all, by that time he was on the Court, and to change parties would have injected politics into the Court, which is something that he never would countenance.

Fry: Oh sure. I was thinking about if he had changed in '46. Let's see, he ran on both tickets, anyway.

Warren: Yes. Well, he had control of --

Fry: That would have been the first time, I guess, when he was beginning to see that he couldn't get Republican support in the legislature, because his health plan legislation had failed.

Warren: He controlled the Republican party then just by his own dominance in the scene at that time, and the more reactionary elements in the party simply couldn't get a toe-hold.

You know, one of the most significant things in his background is the fact that right off the bat he was not supported by the traditional Republican party elements. When he ran for Attorney General, the party told him, "Well, we can't do much for you financially, because we're going to put all our money into beating Olson." So he went with his own finance people, raised his own funds, and didn't become beholden to anybody in the party. Then

Warren: when he--

Fry: Who was that in the traditional party in '38, was that Knowland?

Warren: No. Oh, no. These were the Republican Central Committees, and the people who held the purse strings. The big-monied interests, and so forth, that generally support the Republican campaigns. Then came the race for the governorship, and he declared for it, and the party told him, basically, that he could not win, and that they were going to put their support behind lesser candidates instead. So he said, "Fine. I'll go with my own people," and he did and he put together a campaign that darn near dumped Olson in the primary--came very close to winning both nominations. As soon as this happened, the party then said, "Well, now, here's what we're going to do for you--" and came up with offers of support. And it may have been one of my father's most brilliant moves when he said, "No thanks, I'll stay with my own people." He did, and of course he won handily. As a consequence of this action, when people in the party subsequently came to him and said, "Well, now, we want you to do this or that," he could say, "I'm sorry. I don't owe you anything at all. I'm going to go with the best people possible, and if you are that best person, you'll be appointed; if you are not that person, then it'll be somebody else." And he never, for this reason, ever had to answer to anybody. He was a completely free and independent man, and this probably is more responsible than anything else for his ability to move things through the legislature and do the things that he did as governor.

Fry: And his appointments were so--across the board, as far as political parties were concerned.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: You mentioned the tremendous strain on your Dad during the investigation into the John Kennedy assassination. What was his relationship to John Kennedy?

Warren: He felt very close to him. Yes. The President--

Fry: He did. Did they have quite a lot of intercourse together, or--?

Warren: When necessary. They were always tremendously cordial to each other, and the President did call him up in regard to certain judicial appointments, and asked his counsel and so forth, which has been quite rare in recent times. Of course this delighted him, and they--he felt very strongly about it, and was quite disturbed about the mood of the country which would have created an assassination like this.

Fry: You said you became very involved in the Kennedy campaign, after

Fry: you registered as a Democrat. Why did you choose Kennedy, rather than Stevenson or some of the other leading Democrats at that time? I remember at the convention the Stevenson delegates were very adamant.

Warren: Well, I mostly got in the general election phase of it, but I'd been quite impressed by Kennedy when he was seeking the vice-presidential nomination the term before, and had watched him since then, and I just had a feeling about the man. Well, I guess it was his charisma that was starting to catch hold at that time, and people were beginning to think that here was a fellow who had a strange ability to move people, and move them in the right direction. It was just beginning to catch on then, strongly. Of course I was not pro-Nixon, in any sense.

Fry: No. That leads me to another question instantly. I pick up should I say vibrations here and there that there was a nice camaraderie between your father and Pat Brown after your father went to Washington.

Warren: And before, too.

Fry: And before?

Warren: Oh, yes.

Fry: Could you tell about that?

Warren: Well, Brown was a fine attorney general, and very supportive of my father's objectives. And it was nice to have him in that office, because we'd had an unfortunate circumstance just prior to that--very unfortunate--in that office, and a lot of work needed to be done. And Brown did it, and did it well. He was always very supportive, and there was never any friction that I know of between him and my father--ever.

They were always friendly, and then after Brown became governor he quite avowedly continued my father's policies to the best of his ability. There was a splendid rapport. In later years, particularly in the second term, he quite frequently informally consulted my father. Not in regard to an advisory capacity, I'm sure, just a desire to make sure that he wasn't going astray from my father's objectives.

Fry: I remember at least once that they went duck-hunting or deer-hunting together.

Warren: Oh, yes. Yes, he used to--



- Fry: In fact, one knowledgeable observer told me that the feeling was at one time--it was when--It was during the campaign between Nixon and Brown, and your father came out and went deer-hunting with Brown. And they said, as Supreme Court Justice, he couldn't come out for one candidate or the other, but that they felt this friendly gesture with Brown just at that time could have served that purpose.
- Warren: I forget whether or not they actually went hunting at that time, but I know there was a public meeting between the two that had the same effect.
- Fry: And was it designed for that effect?
- Warren: Well, I guess you'd have to ask the two old politicians that!  
[Laughter]
- Fry: All right.
- Warren: I feel certain that each of them had that in mind--not necessarily that that would be the effect, but knowing that that would be the interpretation. [Laughter]
- Fry: Yes. Oh! I'm sure they must have known! [Laughter] Right.
- Warren: Yes. You can't avoid that. Neither man was politically naïve enough not to recognize that that interpretation would be put on it.
- Fry: What does your father think about Goody Knight?
- Warren: Well, I suppose those views--
- Fry: You'd just said, as the tape changed, that Goody Knight did oppose some of Warren's programs. Was it his programs when he was lieutenant governor? Or his election?
- Warren: Well, he personally worked against my father while he was lieutenant governor, which created considerable stress. There was a time I recall when Dad went out of the state leaving, of course, Goody in charge. And Goody immediately, as I recall, paroled two people that my father had adamantly refused to parole, thus causing political embarrassment. He was also constantly trying to align the official Republican party against my father. And prior to the election in 1950 had succeeded in lining up a number of the major Central Republican Committees, including Sacramento's and Los Angeles' as I recall, and had announced that he was going for the governorship, regardless of whether Dad ran or not. Then, at the last moment, he announced that he would not--that he would stay where he was.

Warren: These things went on and on, and he was courting the ultra-conservative elements of the Republican party all the time, and playing footsie with the Tom Werdel people, and things of that sort. So there was no great camaraderie between the two men. Of course after my father left, Goody had enough political savvy not to rock the ship too much, and so the programs that had been initiated in my father's era largely continued on. Which was good--that the opposite did not occur.

Fry: Yes. Knight seemed to sort of turn into a natural liberal, or else he always was one, but was trying to court favors from the Werdel forces, or something. Do you know why he withdrew his hat from the ring?

Warren: Sure. He was just smart enough to realize he was going to get tromped.

Fry: He just changed his mind, then?

Warren: Yes. The cards weren't there. He didn't hold enough. My father at that time simply had too strong a control of the situation. Even, I suppose, if Goody had managed to garner the Republican nomination, my father still had an excellent chance of grabbing the Democratic nomination and beating him anyway. Cross-filing was still in effect. So all these things were definite possibilities and Goody was smart enough to see them.

Fry: I guess he had wanted to run for governor for a long, long time.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: And then finally your father went to Washington. [Laughter]

Who would be a good person to talk to about Goody Knight? If you had to choose someone who was the closest to him, who would it be?

Warren: I don't know, but I would think Pop Small could help you a lot on that. Perhaps Jim Oakley. Have you talked to him yet?

Fry: I will this afternoon.

Warren: I don't know how freely he talks, on these things. Pretty discreet man, and he might not want to talk about things like this. But Pop Small's been pretty outspoken on most things, recently.

Fry: Yes, he's been putting a lot of articles in the Bee, hasn't he? I had dinner with the Smalls last night. Pop has been interviewed; we have several tapes which are just being processed. He's mentioned a few things about Goody, and about all it amounts to is

Fry: that I think it was difficult for the office staff to take Goody Knight seriously after working with your father. [Laughter]  
I mean it was difficult, I think, for them to accept him.

You mentioned yesterday that your dad usually had to raise his own money, because he couldn't count on it from the formal Republican organization.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: I was just flipping through my cards at lunch today, and I noticed a note in there from somewhere else that said--Oh, it was from Pop Small--that Warren usually just had a friend in each county to take charge of his campaign, and he just ran it as a lone thing, without any particular connection to formal Republican structure.

Warren: I think that's true, yes. I think that's generally true.

Fry: Which dovetails with what you were saying. And I'm trying to get some line on how he would raise funds for the campaign like this, and over and over again I have picked up some names. I'd like for you to see if this meshes with what you remember: that in Northern California some of his major fund-raisers were Feigenbaum, Mr. Steinhart, Mailliard--who's now Congressman--Walter Haas; and in L.A., Preston Hotchkis?

Warren: Well, all those people were involved to some extent. How heavily, I don't know. Jesse Steinhart, I know, was. Pres Hotchkis was, I guess--at least in the later years. I don't know about the early years.

Fry: In the later campaigns.

Warren: Yes. You see the real critical ones, of course, were the early years. And I wouldn't be surprised if some of those people have never been heard of again. [Laughter] You know, that's the type of a-- These were just nice, sound people who probably just picked up nickels and dimes where they could find them.

Fry: Yes. I think they were described to me as community-chest types.

Warren: Yes. Nice people. Good solid citizens.

Fry: And they were in the circle of friends who could afford to donate money to political campaigns, and so they did so.

Warren: Yes. I suspect that's true.

Fry: Are there any other names that you might add to that?

Warren: No. In the financial world I'm just not too sure. I never did pay too much attention to that.

Fry: Were you ever involved in helping in a campaign?

Warren: In his campaigns? No. The boys studiously avoided--deliberately avoided--any involvement in the campaigning.

Fry: [Laughter] In 1948 you would have been 18, and I thought maybe you were there then. But you weren't. You were busy with agriculture at Davis.

Warren: Jim was too old. I mean he was off on his own, basically, most all the time. And so he didn't have to get involved. And I simply didn't want to get involved, and kind of said no, and Dad never forced us on any of these things. I'm sure there were plenty of overtures, but I always demurred, and my brother Bob was of much the same bent, so he just rode along with me, and we stayed out. The girls being better sports or [laughter] having a better social consciousness at that age, did go along and were quite effective, I think.

Fry: Our office just got the most gorgeous pictures of any females I have ever seen, of your sisters. They are big glosses that were made for the presidential campaign in 1948. I can't see how anyone would fail to vote for your father with those girls standing there! [Laughter] All the virile young men in the nation would tear to the polls and cast their vote.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND EARL WARREN

Fry: Someone put this article on my desk; it came out on July 1, 1970, on something you and I were talking about here just before I turned on the tape recorder--the invasion of privacy that seems to be more and more socially acceptable, the computerized data banks on private citizens that are being suggested in all the government agencies.

Let me just show you this article now. At the end of the article it gives the Warren Report as the basis for supporting this sort of thing. If this is the way this turn of events is going to be traced in history, I think it needs some sort of discussion and explanation.

Warren: [Reads article] I don't think that that's what was intended by the report. I'm sure there are individual members of that commission who would ascribe to this very wholeheartedly, but that is not my father's philosophy. I'm sure that he, probably more than any other citizen, knows the dangers of invading privacy here in the United States. Because if we do very much of this we have no America as we've known it in the past.

Fry: Didn't your father come out in a public speech this year against a bill which was to keep tabs on people who might be potential rioters or something like this?

Warren: He could have, although I don't know about it.

However, he did speak out on what they call Title II. This was a portion of the McCarran Act which provided for internment of people in times of national emergency, and which smacked of the internment of the Japanese during World War II. The Japanese-American citizens of the United States have been spear-heading the fight to remove this from the McCarran Act, even though it does not necessarily involve them. In fact it's quite remote that it would ever involve them again. But on principle they want to see this go, and they feel it also adds to the tensions of the Black

Warren: population, because it suggested this could be used for Blacks. In truth, it could be used for any type of political prisoner; it is a very obnoxious thing. And Dad sent a letter to the president of the Japanese-American Citizens League--

Fry: Masaoka?

Warren: in which he said that he totally opposed this provision of the law, and that it was a terrible thing. Basically, he said that the internment of the Japanese had been an unfortunate circumstance, and that this type of thing should not have an opportunity to happen again. This letter was used in testimony by the Japanese-American Citizens League before the committee that was hearing the bill.

Fry: I see. I think that's what I was thinking of.

Warren: It's the only time that I know of that he's spoken out against special legislation, although I think he's taken a few raps at the current no-knock law proposals. I don't know whether he's specified them, but I think he's suggested that they are not right.

Fry: Is that also the first time that he's publicly come out and said that the Japanese internment was a mistake?

Warren: I'm sure that he feels that the internment was a mistake. Yes, there's no question about that; in retrospect it was an unnecessary act and it was a cruel act. It should not have happened. Of course he couldn't have prevented it, because it was a federal mandate, but he went along with it, as did everybody else. And at that time the information that was being given was that it was necessary--the federal government and the military, they were giving us information. And there were some other signs that tended to corroborate that evidence, and that's why practically everybody did do this, did support--

Fry: It was widely accepted--

Warren: It was just a unanimous feeling.

People were in shock, for we hadn't realized that we were at all vulnerable, particularly from a country such as Japan. Suddenly our fleet had been largely destroyed, and destroyed in American waters. So he went along. But he was the first American of any prominence to try to undo the effects of that. He did all sorts of things. Not just to put these people back where they were before, but to actually advance them beyond what they were. He appointed judges who were Japanese and brought other Japanese into government, even in a time when this was considered still

Warren: almost treasonous by some people. And he even went beyond that, for as soon as the war was over, he immediately started developing pride in the Japanese race in general by developing ties with Japan, with exchange programs of all sorts, bringing their people over here and sending ours over there, and a wide number of things to really put that situation back where it should have been.

Fry: Pop Small has an article coming out on the exchange of the Japanese farmers that took place at that time. I think that's going to be his next one.

Warren: I don't know whether that program's still going on, but when I was a farm adviser I used to receive those groups all the time in Alameda County. They certainly know who started the program.

Fry: That it started under your dad?

Warren: Yes.

Fry: I was talking to Carey McWilliams, and he has, of course, seen what he considers to be a big change in your father. And it's kind of interesting to see that McWilliams' own attitude toward your father has changed.

Warren: I think the only people who have seen changes in my father are people who have changed themselves. I don't think my father has ever changed.

Fry: I think Carey McWilliams' view are still the same, but it may be that he didn't see the liberal indications in your father in 1938 and '39, and in the early '40s, which is when McWilliams was here in California. See, he never knew your father personally, I think. So I think at that time he was judging your father from his public acts, and your father didn't have much chance to show any sort of social concern when he was district attorney or attorney general, like he did later when he was governor.

Warren: Right. But that's it. He is judged by the roles that he was playing at the particular time, and some of his ideas had, as you suggest, very limited running room. He was known as a tough prosecutor, during his early years--really tough. The toughest the state had, and probably the toughest the nation had ever had, and the most effective. And then, later on, as attorney general, he was much the same, but then his horizons were broadened somewhat, and he began to get into other programs which indicated a more liberal philosophy. When he became governor, of course, he had a wide spectrum to deal with, and when he became Chief Justice, again he had a different spectrum. There really wasn't any change at all in the man. If you go back even to the district attorney days, you realize that he wasn't reversed in any of his cases, which

Warren: means simply that he wasn't using oppressive tactics in order to get his convictions. And if he wasn't using oppressive tactics in those days when they weren't thinking in terms of civil rights, you know the man hasn't changed very much.

Fry: Right.

Warren: So he was tough and effective, but apparently in those days would have to be considered--even in today's terminology--quite liberal--from a civil libertarian standpoint. So I think when people view him as having changed, it is they who have changed, not him.

Fry: I've talked to other law enforcement people from that period, and it's hard for us to realize now what the professionally acceptable methods of collecting evidence were.

There was widespread bugging which was used as courtroom evidence, and it was nothing unusual to question a suspect for 24 hours, with teams coming in. [Laughter]

Warren: Yes.

Fry: I don't know whether your father ever did anything like that or not, but I knew it was widespread practice, and it was accepted practice at that time.

Warren: Of course not. It's my understanding that he ordered the prime suspect in the murder of his father released simply because he felt he had been unfairly questioned.

Fry: Oh, that's a story that Oscar Jahnsen tells, too. And the police chief tells me that he wasn't really a prime suspect, but it could have happened. There were so many law officers from different communities who came in that this could have happened in Bakersfield, a suspect could have been questioned for a long time.

Warren: Well, this one particular man was questioned for an awfully long time. It wasn't a brutal thing, at all, but it wasn't within what my father thought was fair--although it was perfectly fair within the general context of that day.

Fry: And then later there was a man in San Quentin, I think, who was also a suspect, and they wanted to bug his cell, and your father said no, and he wouldn't let them.

Warren: One of the suspects--the one they held the longest--I think they held him two weeks--came in to see me the other day.

Fry: Who was that? Was that the man named Reagan?



Warren: No. I would remember if it was that. I've got his name down here someplace. Awfully nice fellow. He actually had no involvement, he wasn't a criminal; he was just a drifter of sorts. He came in and told all about how the investigation worked, and so forth. He had heard that he was being looked for and he had hopped a train and got down there to Bakersfield and turned himself in. They held him for a couple of weeks, and finally found out that he unjustly had the finger pointed at him and turned him loose. He's been a great friend of policemen ever since. It's really a very quaint story.

Fry: Yes. Well, I wonder which one he was? Because I was told, and I don't know whether this is true or not, that the prime suspect that they had down there is now dead. I mean that the local police department had.

And then I got into this business (laughter)--after I'd gone to interview people in Bakersfield and came back, I saw a newspaper article in the Examiner that said that some of the prime suspects had been black, and that it was rumored among the Negro community in the state that Warren as governor had a prejudice against black people because he thought one had killed his father. And I realized I had not asked if any of them were black.

Warren: I never heard that. I've never heard it mentioned.

Fry: No. Well, we wouldn't have. I think it was rattling around just in the Negro community, and the Negro reporter who told me herself that she knew this was untrue at the time, but nevertheless they had this feeling that it was the reason he wasn't moving fast enough on FEPC, or giving enough pressure on FEPC.

Warren: Well, I'd be surprised, really, if they had any black suspects and didn't say so, because you have to realize that that part of the state was, and still is, basically a little hunk of the South. And that blacks are blacks to most of those people down there. And they don't mind saying so.

Fry: It turned out they had had a couple of black suspects.

Warren: But I don't think they were of any particular significance. Because the police didn't realize at that time what they were dealing with. They didn't know whether they had a murderer who was just a casual intruder, so to speak, or whether they had somebody who was incredibly cagey, the signs were all mixed--enough to point to the possibility of a crude robbery--a very blundering type robbery--enough to indicate involvement of somebody who was mentally very unalert; but weird enough to suggest that maybe somebody had been just smart enough to cover the trail that much. It was a very confusing crime.

Fry: There are still people in Bakersfield--and these are your right-wingers--who tell me that Earl Warren had this covered up.

Warren: Oh, I'm sure they say that. There are plenty of right-wingers down there, too, I'll tell you that.

Fry: Yes, there are.

It was interesting in Bakersfield. I went to the library and pulled out all of the city directories during the period when your dad lived there, and part of the time after he left, too, because I was interested in your grandfather. The city directories give the person's name and his occupation and his home address. Then in some of them there's also a reverse directory where you look it up by the street number, and it tells you who lives there, and his occupation (or hers, "housewife," or something). And the blacks were listed right along with the whites; there was no notation of the difference in skin color. I looked up some of the Negroes that were working there in the library whose parents had lived there then, and they were listed just like the whites. But for a house where an Oriental was living, all it said was "Oriental." Period.

Warren: Really? This is where?

Fry: In Bakersfield, between 1906 and about 1920.

Warren: My goodness!

Fry: So that Orientals simply didn't count. The city would not even list their names. And these were mostly the Chinese, who came to work on the railroad when it came in, and stayed and became cooks and gardeners.

Warren: As I understand it, I think it was the town of Arvin, which is just outside of Hanford, which at one time was the largest Chinese settlement outside the Orient--in fact the largest Oriental settlement outside the Orient. It almost completely disappeared, but now it's coming back as just a regular subdivision of Hanford. Apparently there was an immense settlement there, so it may be partly the fact of the number of Orientals that caused this problem.

Fry: Yes. I sort of got the idea that maybe your father had grown up in a town where blacks seemed to be more accepted just like whites. They also had middle-class type jobs. And they lived in all parts of the town. There was no one section of blacks, and they could move around.

Warren: No, but that's still pretty much--

Fry: You don't think that's true?

Warren: No, I think they were definitely something below second-class citizens, in the minds of the community.

Fry: Really?

Warren: Yes.

Fry: Why?

Warren: Oh, I'm sure they still are! Black men have little status in that area.

Fry: Yes. I think that's true now.

Warren: It's always been.

Fry: I think that's especially true since the '30s migration of whites from the South to Bakersfield, but I wasn't sure that it was true in 1908. They probably were second-class citizens, but I mean there were only a few of them and they were relatively well-integrated in this community. They weren't barred from restaurants, or anything like this, according to the second-generation black people who live there now.

Warren: Well, at one time there were so very few that they posed no threat at all, but as the numbers became greater, you know, it--

Fry: Then they became a threat?

Warren: A real threat. Do you know that The Grapes of Wrath still is banned in, I think, Tulare County, in the schools?

Fry: I wouldn't be surprised!

Warren: Yes, as I understand it it was a few years ago. That's quite an indicator, you know, of what the make-up is.

Fry: Yes. Well, it's terribly hard to get at the social context of a community, and we'll be doing more interviews around just to pick up a social picture of Bakersfield as best we can, at that era.

Warren: You're going to have a hard time doing it.

Fry: Yes. We're having difficulty in finding enough people who can reliably report on what it was like.

Warren: I don't think there are hardly any, to tell you the truth. Because other people have tried to do this and run into insurmountable difficulties.

Fry: After going to Bakersfield I found one person in Berkeley who lived pretty close to where the Warrens lived and whose father worked with your grandfather, and by the way, they're Negroes.

We have four interviews with classmates who are more able to tell what the school was like than what Earl Warren was like, but it's still important to know what the school was like. It was a pretty strict affair by today's standards. It was an amazing class he was in.

Warren: Yes. You mean as to the people it produced?

Fry: The fact that they all went to the University--I mean all the boys did.

Warren: I didn't realize that.

Fry: And nearly all of them have been relatively successful.

I must let you go. It's two o'clock and your court is waiting, I guess.

Warren: Okay. Do you have other things you wanted to ask me?

Fry: Oh, yes, I do.

Warren: I don't know how long my calendar will take. I should be done by four if you want to wait that long. We can take whatever time you need.

Fry: Maybe I could call you. I'm going to be down at Judge Oakley's. Maybe I could come back at four.

Warren: Four, four-thirty, five--makes no difference to me.

(Interview 3 - July 9, 1970)

Fry: When this is transcribed, we will send a copy to you to look over. We try to take out the ambiguities that creep in and I usually sharpen up my questions a bit! [Laughter] Then it's retyped in a nice clean copy and indexed and put in Bancroft Library under whatever guarantees you want. You have to sign a legal agreement with the Board of Regents to make it available to scholars.

Warren: Oh, boy! I'm not sure they're a competent body to sign anything with!

Fry: I know. This may all be invalidated when comes the revolution! [Laughter]

Warren: [Laughter] There were six of us, judges and lawyers, that sat down with a newspaper reporter a couple of months ago and talked on constitutional aspects. This was to celebrate Law Week. It was taped. Usually these things are just horrible. Any group of people over three is miserable, and usually two is the maximum you can swing at any one time, just like a panel discussion--they're usually lousy, you know.

But this one was really good. Everybody was so articulate, and so precise, and stated himself so well on the various sides of the issues, that I was thinking to myself as I went away--why in the dickens couldn't something like this have been televised, instead of the kind of stuff that you usually have? Well they made up a big full page on this in the newspaper, and everybody was quoted exactly--and everybody sounded like a blithering idiot.

Fry: Yes.

Warren: Because they had not taken out those things that--

Fry: The false starts and the phrases that are out of place--

Warren: Right. And there's no way of punctuating.

## PRESIDENTIAL RACES

1948 Race

- Fry: I have a few political questions that you might be able to shed some light on. The question has come up about your dad's reaction to the defeat in 1948 when he ran with Dewey on the presidential ticket.
- Warren: I think he felt that it was in the wind before the election transpired. I can remember him talking to Dewey many times for an hour or so on the phone, and although I couldn't hear what was being said on the other side, I can remember Dad saying, "But Tom, you've got to go out and talk to the people." "Tom, you've got to tell them something." "Tom, you've got to talk about the issues." "I know, Tom, but you've got to talk to the people." I remember hearing these conversations for about six months, and then I remember election night down in San Francisco--we had all gone down there. A big victory had been proclaimed, but Dad seemed rather reticent to get too excited about anything! [Laughter] And when the results started coming in, Truman was ahead, but everybody was saying, "Well, that's exactly what you'd expect at this stage." It must have been only about 7:30 at night, when Dad called me over. By this time everybody was whooping it up and having a big time proclaiming this great victory, because once the Republican districts started coming in, a Republican landslide would be there. He said to me, "Earl, it's all over. Truman has licked us pretty good." And I remember saying, "I thought that these returns that were coming in were only very sporadic." And he said, "No, I know these districts, and the pattern is very, very firm. We've lost this one. It's all over. I know you children have school tomorrow, so there's no use your waiting." He said, "Would you take the children home? You don't have to say anything about it, if you don't want to, but it's all over." So, while everybody was celebrating, he knew. Dad always knew his people. He always knew them. And he could predict with just the slightest little sampling from an area that he knew as to which way something was going to go. He didn't need a whole series of reports.

Fry: Or like the Kennedys used the computer.

Warren: Yes. He was a great political analyst, and strategist.

Fry: Afterwards did he seem to regret having lost?

Warren: No. In fact I'm not so sure that maybe in a way he wasn't pleased with the fact that the American people demanded to have somebody speak on the issues, and demanded to have everything right out in the open. I've always sensed this. He's always felt a very strong kinship to Truman, and not just because Truman and he got along nicely together, I think that he felt here was a very sincere, dedicated man who liked people and who had the pulse of people somehow, and had some answers for them.

I'm not sure that he really felt badly about that race at all. And, of course, as it turned out it was a great blessing.

Fry: Yes, right. [Laughter] He became the Chief Justice.

Irving Stone told me that he didn't think that Earl Warren wanted to run for vice-president then. That before he went to New York and to the governors' meeting in New Hampshire, just before the Republican convention, he had told Irving Stone that he just was not going to run for vice-president, that he would consider the first slot on the ticket, but not vice-president, and that it was that or just nothing. And then, when he got East, he changed his mind for reasons that Irving Stone gave me: that he was a little alarmed over the talk on Wall Street of wanting to slow down the economy so that the labor unions couldn't have as much control.

Warren: I don't think so. Irving was never very close to my father, as a political adviser, at all. It's true, that when Dewey ran the first time in 1944, my father felt for one thing it was a lost cause, and second thing, he just didn't feel that the timing was right. He's a master at timing--political timing. He could have had the vice-presidential nomination at that time, but he knew Bricker was available and ready to go. So he turned it down then. But in '48 he certainly knew that he would have to run if asked. And he expected to be asked.

Fry: Okay. So you don't see this, then, as any change in his outlook after he got back East?

Warren: No. Because he wasn't going for the top spot then seriously. He was going for the top spot about the same as Kennedy was going for the top spot the time before he ran. Really he was looking for the prominence, either to be the vice-president or to be the maid-in-waiting, so to speak.

Fry: And then he wasn't even given the opportunity during the campaign to show what he could do.

Warren: Yes. I don't think he was very keen on third terms, anyway. I don't think he really expected to go for a third term for the governorship. But he wouldn't feel too badly to be able to complete his term as governor, either, because there were a lot of things he wanted to do. So: One, he definitely was not harboring any real, real thoughts of grabbing that top spot, because Dewey had that all sewed up.

Fry: Right. He did by then.

Warren: Long ago--years before. [Laughter] You know, the party hadn't changed, he was their boy. Now, of course, the next time around was an entirely different situation.

#### 1952 Race

Fry: The next time around, in 1952, Taft was a leading contender before the convention. I was kind of comparing in my mind Taft's outlook with Warren's outlook. One of the stories I've picked up was that Taft did want Bill Knowland to be his running mate, if he got it. And I wondered how Taft would look upon Warren.

Warren: They got along very well--

Fry: This is a relationship that not many people have really talked about.

Warren: Well, I think that they would have been very satisfactory. Dad had committed himself that time that he very definitely would not be a vice-presidential candidate. And he meant it then; that was different from 1948. No, he made a solemn pledge that he was only running for the presidency and that he would not accept the vice-presidency. And he meant it. So, although Taft would have been delighted to have him, Taft knew that when Dad said something he meant it. So there wasn't any speculation, although I think he would have been delighted to have had Dad, because that would be by far the strongest ticket. And they had great respect for each other, even though their philosophies may have differed to a substantial degree. Taft was a very honorable man, and a fairly humanitarian man. His policies may have seemed a little outdated--to Dad, but Dad liked him very much. And he got along very well with the Taft people, just as he did with the Eisenhower people.

Fry: I kind of thought maybe he would have.



Warren: And as a matter of fact, you know--not much was known about Eisenhower at that time. In fact, it's very hard to say that Taft was the more conservative of the two.

Fry: Oh, yes. It is hard, especially in retrospect.

Warren: At that time, see, nobody else really knew either. Nor did Dad know exactly where Eisenhower stood. It wasn't even known for a long time whether he was going to be a Democrat or a Republican. He was being courted by both parties.

Fry: I know. No one had any idea. And Taft at the time was best known by the Taft-Hartley Act, while a lot of other more progressive legislation he had pushed was relatively unknown to the general public.

Warren: Right. He'd really been a fine legislator.

THE REPUBLICAN RIGHT WING

Fry: I picked up some Tom Werdel stories and things down in Bakersfield. There are still Werdel supporters down there.

Warren: I've always felt that the Werdel thing had grown a little bit out of proportion. The only significance to it is that it did indicate that the Republican party in California still had tremendous roots in far right conservatism--that's about the only significance. Werdel himself is of no significance.

Fry: Are you saying that he served as just a coalescing agent?

Warren: He was just a person; I'm sure that they could have done something far better with a reputable conservative, and I don't think that he was. In fact, quite the contrary.

Fry: Did you mean to say that they weren't any particular threat to Warren at the time?

Warren: Oh, I don't think they were.

Fry: Did Bill Knowland come to his aid against the Werdel forces during the 1950 primary, when they were trying to gun down your dad?

Warren: Oh, Bill Knowland was-- (laughter) You know, they may be worlds apart right now in philosophy, and they may have been quite a bit apart at other points, but he was impeccably loyal to Dad, all the time. Just impeccably. Even to the point of the Nixon campaign dealings--campaign train dealings in 1952. At any stage of the proceedings there, Knowland probably could have taken--oh, just a half cop-out, so to speak, and grabbed all the glory back to himself, with the Eisenhower forces. But he wouldn't do it. And I think he knew it, too. I think he knew that he might be in trouble, but he didn't do it. No, he was a very upright and loyal man in that respect.

Fry: I can't get a picture of how bothersome this right-wing Werdel group was, at the time. But if they never really were a threat, then it

Fry: wouldn't have been necessary, I guess, for Knowland to come out on Warren's behalf against Werdel. Is it your impression that it wasn't?

Warren: Well, of course Oakland is Dad's home territory, and times have changed. Now we have news immediately. It's thrown into everybody's front room every moment of the day from any place. Anytime anything happens in any town of any significance, it's across the country and in everybody else's home almost immediately. But in those days, that wasn't true, and there were a lot of bellwethers. If you weren't strong in your own territory, other people would view you as being weak. And Alameda County being considered my father's home territory, if he didn't have good support from the newspapers there at that time, especially the strong one, Knowland's Tribune, people would say, "Well, maybe he's in trouble." So the support was important.

The Werdel move was kind of like one branch of the military trying to out-coup another branch of the military that's also trying to effect a coup. It was a striving for power of a group that was on the outs, and Werdel was representing a lot of vested interests and some pretty bad interests. He was representing some of the more radical of the elements of the Republican party and he was representing those Republicans who probably thought they ought to have a bigger say in the administration--felt they had been passed by. But Dad often said, "You can always get a third of the vote against any incumbent, no matter how good he is. You can always pick up a third of the vote against him. That's automatic." And that's exactly what it turned out to be. They got a third of the vote. [Laughter] I remember that pretty well, because he was never particularly worried about it--I think he only considered it bothersome because it meant an intraparty fight.

Fry: But your dad had been in office for such a long time at that point, eight years, you'd expect him to have developed quite a lot of political enemies.

Warren: Yes. He was beginning to be a little concerned that maybe anybody who's around too long will begin to pick up some other votes against him, just on that basis alone.

Fry: One of the things that kind of changed in their support for your dad, I gather, were the oil interests. At first they were glad because he was a Republican, and they kind of automatically came to his aid in '42, but then later on, of course, when the freeway tax came on--

Warren: They hadn't come to his aid in '42. This is when he used his own finance people--and this is why he made a mortal enemy of people

Warren: like Keck. He never, never had to get beholden, and oil, of course, was one of the biggest power groups. He never had to become beholden to these people. If any money was raised from the oil interests, it was raised independently so that he had no attachment with it whatsoever.

Fry: It may have been just one oil man, Harold Morton, maybe, who supported him. At any rate, I thought maybe he did have pretty good general Republican support, simply as the Republican candidate in 1942, and that later when he wanted to tax oil companies to put in new freeways, and so forth--

Warren: Oh, I think all Republicans voted for him practically all the time in the elections. I don't think there was much of a switch-over of Republican votes. Who else could they really vote for? They certainly weren't going to go for Olson, whom they considered almost a Red. In 1946, Bob Kenny, who was probably the finest man who ever ran against Dad--truly a splendid guy--but Dad was so strong Kenny couldn't do anything then. And then in 1952 Jimmy Roosevelt was considered pretty far out by Republicans.

Fry: So they didn't have any other place to go, really.

Do you have any information on the rather prolonged fight that he had to get through the program for highways in California? It started I think around 1947, and continued through '49-- '50.

Warren: Well, except that it took an awful lot of homework--a lot of back-scene maneuvering, and a lot of right out in the forefront fighting, too. It was an educational process, basically.

Fry: For your Dad?

Warren: No. Educating people to think in terms of a state--a big state and its needs.

EARL WARREN AND OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS

Robert Kenny

Fry: You mentioned Kenny. The relationship of Earl Warren and Kenny was another big question mark--and if any of Kenny's liberalism might have helped educate your dad further as he was progressing in that direction.

Warren: Well, it didn't hurt. Of course I don't think their philosophies ever differed in any major respect that I know of. I think they both thought the other guy was great.

Fry: How did your dad feel when Kenny ran as a Democrat for governor against your dad in the primary in '46?

Warren: I'm sure he was delighted to be opposed by such an honorable man!  
[Laughter]

And I think he was probably equally delighted to have somebody as genteel as Bob Kenny was. He's a sweet fellow. What was that great statement he made after he was beaten?

They said, "How come you lost," and he said, "He got more votes than I did!"

Fry: Oh, yes! [Laughter]

Warren: And there was something about a lame duck--a statement he made about a lame duck, and of course he has a bad arm. It was kind of a double joke on himself--I forget what it was. But he's just a real fine guy.

Fry: Those Kenny-isms are so priceless. I wish I could remember them. Every time I talk to him without the tape recorder and they come pouring out, I sit there and gnash my teeth!

Warren: Yes. [Laughter]

- Fry: Janet Stevenson, in Oregon, who's writing his biography, wrote me and said, "Do you have any of these on tape?" [Laughter] He went to Nuremburg during the primary campaign--he just sort of left the country for awhile. Much to the distress of the Democrats.
- Warren: I don't think he really wanted to run. I know he didn't think he could win, and yet he just felt that he had to try. I mean it was forced on him. He was the only possible guy in the picture. He was the only candidate of any real stature at that time.
- Fry: And someone said that there was a very strong pressure for the Democrats to put up somebody worthy at that time against Governor Warren.
- Warren: Oh, they just had to, in order to keep the party alive, and to support the other candidates that were running. You've got to have at least a semblance of a strong ticket on top or you get nothing down below. And this, of course, was more true then than it is now. Much truer. So that's why he ran.
- Fry: Well, how close were he and Kenny? Was Kenny over at the house much, or was it primarily a good working relationship?
- Warren: Just a good working relationship. Very good. Kenny was a splendid attorney general.
- Fry: He seemed to have continued the organization that your father had set up.
- Warren: Yes, he did. And he built upon it.

Fred F. Houser

- Fry: Do you know anything about the Lieutenant Governor in your father's first term, Fred F. Houser, and the relationship there?
- Warren: Yes. It was cordial, but strained.
- Fry: Why was it strained? Was that because of the difference in personalities of the two men?
- Warren: Perhaps partly, but I don't think Dad felt Houser was carrying anywhere near his share of the obligations.
- Fry: Was there any problem with Houser's official actions when Warren went out of the state?

Warren: No, not that I know of. I don't know if Houser entertained any thoughts of going higher, or not. I don't recall any talk of that, at all. In fact, these were the days when everything was moving so terribly fast--new programs and new people, and so forth. I just sensed that that was the main feeling--that he wasn't part of the team, let's put it that way.

Fry: Well, my impression is that he was kind of a cold and stand-offish man.

Warren: I think he was.

Harry Truman

Fry: Another name I have down here to ask you about is Truman. In 1948, I think, Truman came out to California for what today would be called a non-political appearance. [Laughter]

Warren: Right.

Fry: It wasn't called that then, but anyway he came out and your dad apparently was advised not to see him, in the middle of the campaign.

Warren: He was told not to! [Laughter]

Fry: Oh, by whom? [Laughter]

Warren: Oh, by the party regulars. I remember him saying, "They're not going to like this, but I'm going--I'm governor of this state, and he's coming in as our guest, and the host is going to be there!"

Fry: And so he met him.

Warren: Of course, Truman was delighted, and said some very nice things then, and he went down to the Bay Area or to Los Angeles and said some other nice things. It didn't hurt Dad a bit! [Laughter]

Fry: Sure. It probably didn't hurt Truman either!

Warren: No, it didn't hurt Truman either! [Laughter] They jointly picked up some votes.

Fry: Were they corresponding pals--pen pals between California and Washington?

Warren: Not really, I think, until Truman was out of the presidency, and then of course they became much closer. They eventually came together on certain projects.

Fry: Oh, did they?

Warren: Things like the Truman library, and Truman selected him to do certain things.

Fry: Oh, he did? What did he ask your dad to do?

Warren: Well, to head various--

Fry: Was he raising funds out here for the Truman library? No, he couldn't do that.

Warren: I'm rusty exactly as to what Dad did. He did so much during that time. But they're very close friends.

Tom Kuchel

Fry: We're about to interview Tom Kuchel, and the impression I get there is that this was another good working team, with Kuchel as controller, then as U.S. Senator.

Warren: Yes. He was part of the team.

Fry: Were they also friends, outside of the office, or was this primarily a working relationship?

Warren: I would really classify it mostly as a professional relationship. They had some mutual friends, but Tom's close personal friends were not necessarily the same as Dad's close personal friends. I think that's true of practically all the political associations he's had.

Fry: Later on in Washington, when your father was Chief Justice, they were very close in social, family-type things? Is that true?

Warren: No closer, I think, than they were before.

Fry: Some lobbyist told me that.

Warren: Well, of course they saw each other very frequently, because Dad, as the Chief Justice, had to fulfill all the protocol requirements of the court. He had to go to all the embassy dinners and all the White House functions, and Kuchel would be present at a lot of those, so they saw each other very frequently.



Fry: Yes. But he appointed Kuchel over three or four other very able men for senator. Do you have any idea why he chose Kuchel at that time?

Warren: You mean as contrasted with the others? No, I don't. In fact, I'm not exactly sure all of whom were under consideration.

Fry: Yes, I'm not either. And I didn't really mean to make it a comparative comment. I just wondered what he felt about Kuchel.

Warren: He felt he had a lot of potential, and felt he had proved himself well in the controller's office.

THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Fry: I'd like to ask you some about the people who worked in Warren's office, but we can hold that, if you want to, and start there next time.

Warren: It's okay with me, whatever your schedule is.

Fry: My schedule is open-ended tonight. All I have to do is get back to Berkeley.

Warren: Oh, sure! Well why don't you go ahead, then.

Fry: All right. I'll just keep going. You don't look pale or like you're about to faint, yet. [Laughter]

Warren: Oh, no.

Fry: Would you like to tell anything about Mr. William Sweigert, who is now Judge Sweigert, who was apparently with your dad right from the beginning of his taking office as governor.

Warren: They're close friends. I think that you're going to get more valid information about relationships between people like Jim Oakley and Dad, and Pop Small and Bill Sweigert and those people from the old-timers like them. In other words ask Pop about Bill and Bill about Pop and Jim about both of them, this type of thing, because there was a certain rapport there that I'm not sure an outsider can adequately put his finger on.

Fry: Here are some names that I jotted down, thinking that one of them might trigger a comment.

Warren: Well, of course the ultimate authority was always Helen MacGregor.

Fry: Oh, was she?

Warren: She was the A-No. 1 Troubleshooter, and if anything really had to get done, she was sort of the second-in-command. She never exercised

- Warren: command, but she was always able to steer the problems to the proper place for solution. All these people that you have listed here that I know--Sweigert, Wollenberg, Small, Oakley, Scoggins--these people all had their own areas of operation. I never heard any of them arguing about anything. It was always, "We've got a problem," "Okay, I'll take care of it," boom--gone. No bickering--"Why don't you do it?" or "How about shooting it off to Bill? I'm busy now," or something like that. Never any of that. It was always a tight ship. Very tight. And yet it was always tight from the standpoint of people wanting to do it. It really looked like the essence of volunteerism, so to speak. [Laughter] Dedicated volunteerism.
- Fry: Yes. Each person we've interviewed so far on his office comments at length on the esprit de corps and the lack of back-biting. At first I thought, "Well okay, go ahead and get all this said," but I remained skeptical. I don't see how you can have an office for that many years without some friction developing, some relationships wearing thin. But now I'm beginning to think that maybe they did, because there's nothing that I've picked up anywhere.
- Warren: Yes. Well it is true. Dad wouldn't tolerate this. If he heard that there was something going on, right away he'd go into it. And if he found that it was something that could not be readily solved, he'd ask one or both or everybody to go. He'd say, "I can't operate under these conditions."
- Fry: But nobody left under a cloud--I mean of these top secretaries?
- Warren: None of these. No, he was very careful about these people. They worked out exceptionally well.
- Fry: So whatever happened must have been on the second or third or fourth echelons.
- Warren: Right, or in departments. But he kept close tabs, and so did these people.
- Fry: Oh, yes. The departments had their problems.
- Warren: Yes. And these people in his office knew what was going on in the departments. A far different cry from what happens now. They really knew whether a department was going well, poorly, or not at all. There were no questions. A man was told what he would have to do to rectify a situation, and if he could not reform or would not reform, that was it! And they didn't mean just halfway--They demanded excellence in the office, and they got it.
- Fry: He really did have an incredible number of department heads that are still looked upon as men who were real leaders in their fields.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: What can you tell us about the way he made appointments? How did he manage to bring this off?

Warren: He had various advisers, and you never knew who they were. In a particular area of expertise he knew people that he could trust for good advice. Then he would scout around and decide on who he wanted. This would generally--practically always--be completely unknown to the person who was involved. Dad would find out who he wanted and call that person in and say, "I want you to do something for me. I want you to take this job." And he got some people to take jobs with this approach that he could never have gotten by conventional methods. He'd say, "I've checked it all out, and you're the man I want." And they would say, "I don't even know you." And he'd say, "Yes, but I know you!" [Laughter]

Fry: Or, "I didn't work for you in the campaign."

Warren: He'd say, "Yes. I know. But you're the best man. They told me you're the best man in the field, and I want you." A prime example is the man he pulled in to take over the public health department, Dr. Wilton Halverson.

Fry: That is, yes.

Warren: It's almost a classic illustration of his method of choosing a department head.

Fry: We're interviewing him now.

Warren: He did this with a tremendous number of organizations. And Dick McGee. He came in, and Dad basically said, "Look, we've got to look this over. We have a bad prison system. We've got a bad parole system. We've got a bad penal system. I want you to do something about it." McGee said, "What can I do?" And, as I understand it, Dad said, "You do anything that's right and honorable."

Fry: Now in that case I thought maybe your dad would have had some specific ideas--

Warren: Oh, he had plenty of ideas--

Fry: --that he gave to McGee, do you know?

Warren: Yes, but you can bet that by the time he checked the man out, he knew darn well that that was the man's own philosophy.

Warren: He then worked very closely with these people. Yes, there was none of this business of not seeing the top guy. You could always see him!

Fry: Like with you kids, he always had time?

Warren: Right. He did, and that's why he got this performance.

## GOVERNOR WARREN AND THE UNIVERSITY

### Use of Expertise

Fry: Another thing that is interesting to me now, since the practice has currently fallen by the wayside, is his use of the University as a kind of fact-finding medium for him when he needed to know something, such as appointing professors on commissions. He set up the Institute of Industrial Relations at the University, as something that not so much would serve the University but could serve the general public in this area of labor relations.

Warren: Yes. Of course he did that for two reasons. One, he wanted the benefit of the brains of those people who were deeply schooled in certain areas, and also, I think, he wanted to be sure that the professors themselves would remain politically aware--not just stay in narrow fields, but understand the application of what they knew. He had a deep belief in the University--a terribly profound and dedicated belief in the rightness of all higher education, but particularly in the University of California--the public school system--that he wanted to see it prosper as rapidly as possible. And I'm sure that he intended for the University always to be 'way ahead of the rest of society.

Fry: And he saw that there was nothing wrong with it if it were.

Warren: No, that's right. [Laughter] He deliberately wanted them to be in the forefront. I don't know that it was an innovation, but he certainly made much heavier use of those people than had been made before.

### The Loyalty Oath

Fry: What do you know about the loyalty oath fight? Were you in the University at Davis then?

Warren: I remember a lot about the loyalty oath fight. That was a great tug-o-war.

Fry: And this was the time when your dad really did go to bat for the University, as a member of the Board of Regents. I don't think he'd ever met with the Regents until this came up, for some reason. But when this came up he was at every meeting and he was the one who carried the ball.

Warren: Well, I think it was a close issue, initially. I really do. A close issue for him. You know we had competing forces going. First we had this tremendous wartime spirit, so to speak. Anyone who suggested that we might not be the greatest nation was--

Fry: Just disloyal?

Warren: Yes. Anybody who wouldn't willingly stand up and swear allegiance to anything--God, mother and country--was not worth having, and so forget about them. And then, of course, we had the McCarthyism thing going, too, nationally. When Dad was District Attorney of Alameda County the staff there was keeping very close watch on Communist activity, very close! [Laughter] How close will not be known until he decides to write on it. But it was true, and they were watching those labor unions that were largely controlled by the ultra-Left, and even known Communists, and they were watching other known Communists, and then came the suggestions of Japanese subversion. Then these various recurring things happened--they saw the rise of Nazism in this country, where they had to keep tabs on people suspect of being Fascist and Nazis, and so forth. So by the time he came to the loyalty oath question, I feel that for him it was a tug-o-war between these other feelings, plus, of course, party pressure which was there, and his own experience, which I think now had built up to a point where he was able to say, "Look, we've had Communists all the time, and we've had a percentage of Fascists and Nazis, and we've had Japanese who have been sympathetic to Japan as well as to the United States, or at least were divided in their loyalties, and you know, we haven't really been harmed by it. As a matter of fact, maybe all these things being put into the pot have made better people out of us." I think he realized a lot of mistakes had been made, putting labels on people automatically, and I think that he decided that this just wasn't the American way to proceed.

#### Max Radin's Appointment

Fry: Yes. I just thought of another thing in this connection, that Max Radin affair a decade earlier. Wasn't that relevant? He voted against the law professor Max Radin for the State Supreme Court because Max Radin was pink?

Fry: Is that true?

Warren: No, not for that reason only. That's a deeper issue, and personal to him. He did exercise a sort of a veto as Attorney General in the appointment of Supreme Court Justices, as a member of the Judicial Qualifications Commission. That was a very old and sort of a bitter thing. And there are seeds of that still--it's puzzling to a great many people as to why he did it. It didn't seem to fit in with the rest of what he's done. And I'm not clear on it myself, frankly. I'm just not. I don't know all the factors that were involved--whether he simply didn't feel that Max Radin was suited for this position, or what.

Fry: But you think that there might have been something more than just the simple ultra-liberal, or pro-Communist issue?

Warren: I'm not sure that Dad considered him that liberal.

Fry: Oh.

Warren: This is why I say I just don't know the whole story on that. I've had a lot of people ask me about it, including members of Max's family.

Fry: Really?

Warren: Discreetly, nicely, graciously, but--they ask.



THE NIXON-DOUGLAS SENATORIAL RACE, 1950

Fry: I think I'll stop. Is there anything else that you can think of that you'd like to add?

Warren: Let's see. I'll just say a few things about the Douglas-Nixon senatorial race in 1950.

Fry: Someone inferred that maybe Warren really wasn't for Nixon, and he might have even been pro-Douglas in that-- [Laughter]

Warren: No. That's not true. He definitely was not pro-Douglas, and I'm sure that his personal support in the race was initially for Nixon. In fact I know that. But he declared that in this race that he was going to run an individual campaign--

Fry: Who?

Warren: Dad did. And this was for several reasons, and perhaps for more complex reasons than I'll state here, but he felt that being a third-term he shouldn't hang this label on the secondary candidates-- that he shouldn't force them to throw their lot in with him, but that they should be free to make their own stars shine, and in case he ran into trouble they wouldn't go down the tubes.

And secondly I think he felt that, not knowing what the problems were in going for a third term, he ought to be freer to swing with whatever came up than before. We had experienced by this time a tremendous influx of people into the state who hadn't had much chance to know Earl Warren. And of course the problem of new people coming into the various races at this time created potential fiscal problems too, as far as financing the campaigns were concerned. So his people decided that they would run an independent campaign, and when they said independent--(laughter) it would be across the board, so that nobody could say, "Well, you gave a speech for Congressman So-and-So, but you won't give one for me." That type of thing. So he decided, "When I run an independent campaign, I will run an independent campaign." Of course, he would praise somebody if he was in their

Warren: district and generally support the ticket, but he was not going to run any coordinated campaign, as they had before.

Well, the Nixon people came to him and demanded that they throw in together, and he said, "I can't do it." And they repeated the demand, "You must do it!" and he said, "I'm sorry, I won't." This was the first start of a schism between the two.

No--I can tell you he definitely was not a supporter of Helen Gahagan Douglas, at that time. But I think he subsequently became very disenchanted by the way Nixon conducted himself in that campaign.

Fry: Are you talking about the shadowy phone calls--

Warren: And all that type of business, yes.

Fry: --accusing her of being a Communist?

Warren: Yes. That and the other dealings that were involved there.

Fry: Murray Chotiner told Katcher, for his book, that they planted the head of the Young Republicans in the audience at all of Mrs. Douglas' meetings, to ask who she would support for governor. They figured that if she came out for Roosevelt, that would force Warren to come out for Nixon.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: Did you hear anything about this at the time?

Warren: Oh, yes, there was a lot of--That who was trying to force her?

Fry: Well, it was Chotiner, Nixon's chief aide.

Warren: I've never heard that.

Fry: [Laughter] This is what was going on in the Douglas camp in the meantime.

Warren: Yes. Well, I know there was a lot of pressure on Dad to combine with Nixon. The Nixon people were very arrogant in that campaign. They came and said, "This is what we're going to do." And Dad said, "You can't. I've got my independent campaign." But they demanded that they go as a team. And he said, "No. It's not fair to the rest."

Fry: What about Roosevelt? What did your dad think about him? James, I mean, and the kind of campaign he waged.

Warren: Well, the thing that's usually cited is the one of two times, I think, Dad is said to have really cut loose in public. I forget what the first one was, but the other one was at something Jimmy said relating to somebody in the family. I think it was Honeybear's polio, and Dad blew and really chopped into him. I think it's in John Weaver's book.

There was no affection between the two. They hardly knew each other. I don't think there was any great animosity either. But afterwards, they became quite cordial.

Fry: That was the time when your family were having all these things happen to them. Honeybear got polio. And didn't another sister get in a car wreck?

Warren: Oh, I don't know why they play that accident up. That was nothing.

Fry: It didn't really throw everybody into a tizzy?

Warren: Well, in retrospect, Honeybear's illness was more distressing to my folks than I realized at the time. Apparently it did bother Dad a great deal.

Fry: It was such a dreadful--

Warren: But the car wreck--there's nothing in that car wreck. I hardly remember what it was. I think Dottie got some little bump or something--it was nothing.

Fry: I think Pop Small was telling me she just broke a rib or something like that; it wasn't a head injury or anything.

Warren: Oh, it was nothing! Gee whiz, I used to skin my knee worse than that every week! [Laughter] I don't think Dottie even remembers it. Some of these little things are blown out of proportion quite frequently.

You didn't get a chance to talk to Johnny Mullins before he died, did you?

Fry: Yes, I did, and got his story about how he switched his vote on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, to make Warren District Attorney.

Warren: Oh, did you? Good.

Fry: I went out about 1964, I think, and recorded him, after I'd talked to another old guy who'd been in the Kelly machine for a long, long time. I'm so glad that I did.

Warren: Yes. A nice old guy.

Fry: That's the only interview we had on the whole project for five years; we couldn't get any money to support the project, so I'm awfully glad we chose that one. I'm sorry that we missed Jesse Steinhart; he died before we got started again.

Warren: Yes. I don't know if many people could fill that in. I don't think so.

Fry: Do you think Joe Feigenbaum might?

Warren: I know so little about him that I'm not sure how he even comes into the picture.

Fry: How close is Ben Swig?

Warren: Ben's close, but I don't think from the standpoint of knowing that segment of political history. I get the impression--

Fry: He came late, didn't he?

Warren: Yes, Ben really wasn't in the political picture that heavy then. He became a heavy much later. He really got rolling in the 50s. Incidentally, there's a fascinating little book about him--his life--that his family printed for him for his birthday.

Fry: Oh, there is?

Warren: Yes. You must read it. A delightful thing. You know he went bankrupt and worked his way back up selling flowers. It's really fascinating.

I've heard Harold Morton's name, but never in the context of anything very personal. And the same is true of Feigenbaum. He may know something about certain types of things, but I'm sure he wasn't a close confidant. Now Walter Jones knows a lot.

Fry: Yes. John Weaver and I were trying to figure out who would be the highest priority people to interview, and Walter Jones was No. 1, with Warren Olney.

Warren: Yes. He's a pretty conservative guy now, and he's a very nice man. A very nice man. And like Knowland--very loyal. He always did his job three times better than anybody expected. That kind of guy.

Fry: I rely a lot on Helen MacGregor for advice.

Warren: Helen knows more than anybody. She is the number one resource.

Fry: Yes, and she's very cautious. When we tape-record, we tape-record on just one rather carefully researched topic. And then we may not

Fry: do anything more for a couple of months, and then we'll get together again. She's very helpful.

I understand your dad is writing his autobiography.

Warren: Dad's doing writing, but he's not doing--I'm sure--any kind of autobiography. It isn't his style. He will write on various areas, but he's not going to write about himself much, because he thinks that that's best left to other people. But he will continue to express ideas just like he's doing now, and he'll write on other subjects, for instance I think he's been asked to do something on basic principles of Americanism for grammar school children. Things like that.

Fry: I heard he's doing something on his role as the executive in state government or something like that?

Warren: I don't know about that. That will depend, I suppose--

Fry: It's getting late. Thank you for making time in your busy schedule to interview.

Warren: I'm glad to do it.

Transcriber: Helen Kratins

Final Typist: Beverly Heinrichs

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SOUND ROLL 16 PICTURE ROLL 16 TAKE SEVENTEEN

.....

Earl WARREN, Jr.

My father basically is retiring as he said for reasons of age. His health is wonderful, both physically and mentally but he feels I think as a matter of principle that men should not stay in public positions too long, at least past a point when there might be some question as to whether or not they're operating at maximum efficiency and even though he has many years left, I think he felt at the age of 78, he shouldn't remain on any longer. I am also quite sure that he feels that this is basically the end of an era, the major decisions for the court probably now have been before the court and have been made. Things like reapportionment, desegregation, cases of that sort, and from now on I think it's going to take men on the court to interpret within those decisions. In other words, the umbrellas have been set up and there is going to have to be interpretation within the scope of those umbrellas, they're going to have to decide how prescribed they will be or how broad they'll be, and I think he feels very strongly that younger men ought to make those decisions. The day by day, step by step decisions under the broad framework that has been established.

INT.

I'd like to reflect a little bit about the days perhaps

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when your father was attorney general and later governor. We've heard a great deal about the Warren family, his notion of privacy for the family, and we've also heard a story that maybe you can tell us, verify about Earl Warren's phone number being in the phone book when he was governor in Sacramento. Can you reflect on what those days were like? Being a Warren child in those years?

ANS.

Yes. It was rather interesting here in Sacramento particularly. We led a very public life, and it, we never actually hid anything whatsoever. It was a very open house, you know an old Victorian place that many said was crumbling, and some even said it had crumbled years before, but it was interesting, from the standpoint of it was new to us too. The family had always been a big family, a rather typical family I think in most respects, even though my father was in a position of prominence, but of course coming up here and being known as the governor's family did create some special problems, but we pretty much continued just as a big ordinary family even though we were forced to live in somewhat strange circumstances and I we enjoyed it, frankly we did. Sacramento's a wonderful place, we really made it our home, and I think practically everybody in the family considers this as their home.

INT.

What were the problems of living, for you personally at

15-17/9

the age you were living in ... twelve years in the governor's mansion here?

ANS.

Oh, you feel you have too many eyes on you. I am sure this is true of anybody who lives in a position of prominence, and I think that perhaps of course maybe particularly with boys, they dislike being known for anything but themselves. Maybe the male ego is a peculiar enough animal that it demands that and you'd like to be, like to think that you're being known for yourself rather than for your family's prominence.

The gals seem to survive this a little bit better, and this may explain why my sisters have always been more in the limelight than the boys. We ducked out with various excuses as often as possible, and the girls then became quite well known and the boys generally we were pretty obscure if not completely non-existent in the public eye, and that was just fine with us.

INT.

What were the various political campaigns like for you? Did you take part -- ~~was~~ was there much family campaigning in those years?

ANS.

The girls were good sports. They went along, but as I say the boys pretty much stayed away from them. Of course we had tremendous exposure, we couldn't avoid that and we learned a great deal but as far as actually



15-17/10

taking part that was pretty much the role of my sisters.

INT.

Could you begin by telling me how old you were and how you learned that your father learned that he was going to be Chief Justice of the United States, the circumstances of your learning that?

ANS.

Well I'm really not at liberty to disclose exactly how that occurred from a personal standpoint.

INT.

I thought there might be an anecdote that we might share. I've heard that your father believes very very much that the family comes first and to keep it separate that he would like to spend time with the children on Sunday and that work should never be brought home, that the family was very very important. Do you have any notions of that from his own youth as he grew up why he had this rather lovely picture of the family which he shared with his clerks in later years and that you lived through. Is there ....

ANS.

In his early life are you referring to?

INT.

Yes, I mean is ... or what notions do you have about your father yourself that can explain this marvelous family life that he maintained for so long?

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ANS.

I can't see any correlation between ~~x~~ what he did as a father, and what his childhood was. He was one of two children. He had a sister, an older sister, and then there was himself, and that was it. Very fine, hard-working parents, but nothing that would relate I think to the large, very fast moving family life that we had, and I think the only thing I can say is that in so many things that he's done, he's simply really exceptional man.

INT.

In terms of understanding this exceptional man and the things he's done and the things he's written, could you look back a little bit to the early years when he was brought up, Alameda County, the circumstances of what life was like then, in terms of understanding his concern for the criminal? The rights of the accused? The ~~big~~ little man. What can we learn about his early years that can help explain how he might have felt about some of the decisions in which he participated.

ANS.

Well he was raised in a very wholesome atmosphere and a fairly rigid one from the standpoint of morality and ethics. His father and mother were not the type that would ever bend in that direction. Not authoritarian by any means, but certainly people of great principle. I'm sure this rubbed off on him, and also these were

15-17/12

people who believed in working hard. They believed in the dignity of other people, and this was always deeply engrained in my father. I think that he's simply one of those people that has an abiding faith in humanity in general and he honestly likes people, he really does, and I think when a person likes people in the way that he likes them, and really has tremendous respect for them regardless of what they might be, good or bad, that you're going to have the type of decision that he makes every day.

INT.

A lot of people might say your father changed radically when he went to the Court, that we saw a whole side of his thinking and philosophy that was not exemplified through the years here, that he hadn't a political philosophy before. Do you think your father changed radically on the Bench?

ANS.

I don't think he changed one single bit. His record, if you look at it as a politician has consistently been one of concern for the very same people that he's showing concern for in the Court, and that is practically everyone who has a good motive. He's done that. He was the greatest libertarian from the standpoint of being a governor in California, as being Attorney General in California, as being District Attorney and those people he prosecuted, and those he didn't. He consistently

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championed the cause of those who were handicapped, helpless, he consistently fought against any inroads of big government, any oppression by those in superior positions. I don't see one bit of change, and I've never seen frankly anything that's been written or said that really has any validity to the contrary.

INT.

In looking at your father's story, the story of all the years in public service, the one thing that just might be argued that is something that might be unpleasant to him at this moment is the story of the interment of the Japanese during the war years here in California when he was Attorney General. Do you have any thoughts about -- has he shared any thoughts with you about how he views this today?

ANS.

Oh, certainly. Everyxkx body x recognizes now, at least I hope they do that that was a tragic mistake, it was a tragic error, but it's something that all of us share and we all regardless of our ages, all had exactly the same feelings. We responded to probably the panic of other people as well as to our own, and it was wrong, and I'm sure he recognized it was wrong, I think he recognized it then as wrong, but sometimes when you're in a martial situation, many things are wrong, and you have to abide by them anyway. I think it's quite unfair, though, to suggest that this was his doing. It

15-17/14

wasn't in any way. He was merely an acquiescing voice to a certain degree, and had he bucked, I'm sure it wouldn't have made a particle of difference, it would have happened anyway.

.....

EIGHTEEN

INT.

I've read some statements you've made about your father's reaction to his involvement on the whole process of being involved in the Warren Commission. Could you share a few of those thoughts with us that he voiced to you about that experience and the effect it had on him?

ANS.

Well I think I'd have to say more the effect I observed rather than directly what he said, and it was pretty obvious it was a highly traumatic experience for him. I don't think in all the years that I've known my father I've ever seen him go through a period that I felt was draining on him as this. Of course at the time he was carrying basically three loads. He was ax carrying a tremendously heavy workload with the Court itself. On the decision end of it. They had many crucial decisions at that time. SEcondly, he had tremendous administrative chores with the court. He's always been

15-17/15

a strong man in the administration of the court and I think will go down in history as being as great an achiever in that arena as he will with his decisions. And at the same time he was spending every conceivable moment outside working on this ... on this investigation and the report, and he's the type of man who doesn't have to sleep eight hours at a time, and I'm sure he's never done so, and probably at least the last fifty years. He can sleep for a few moments and then wake up and work at a hundred percent efficiency and then perhaps an hour or two later doze off again for a few moments and then resume his work and this he did constantly, too much so I think, and the full story of what went on in the commission of course has never come out, but I suspect that it was not an easy chore from the standpoint of the personalities involved. I imagine it was exceptionally difficult even to get the parties to agree on what form the investigation would take, and it was very noticeable to me that this was taxing him extremely heavily and I know that he personally had to relive constantly that assassination, and with his tremendous regard for the dead President, I just think that in itself was more than a man should be asked to do.

INT.

I believe that I read that when asked to head the commisison in several books I read, when asked to head the investigation, your father said no, that he wasn't

15-17/16

eager to, but that the president urged him very strongly to do it, that it was something that he felt that the court should not be involved in. You know this business of keeping the court separate from other affairs. Have you any views on that?

ANS.

Well that seems to be a matter of public record, and I'm sure it is true that my father had some serious doubts as to whether this is something he should do, and I think it's equally clear that the President felt that he was the only man who could head such a commission and have it above any question of ....

(BEEP)

...leaning, bias and so forth.

INT.

Well a man in political life, the more we talk to people, the more we find that everyone who seems to have touched him in his life, there's a feeling of devotion and loyalty and affection that is quite rare among political and among any men of our time, and the only criticism that we really hear is from the right wing and from the John Birch Society that we've heard about. What was his reaction to the Impeach Earl Warren time and the criticism of that period?

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ANS.

Nothing different ~~a~~ than he had ever experienced. You know he fought that element of politics, be it in the Republican Party or the right wing element of the Democratic party all his political life, and he's never had to be beholden in any way to those people, partly through fortuitous circumstances, because they never would support him and so he never had any strings on him whatsoever with these people and as a matter of fact they opposed him constantly throughout his tenure as attorney general, throughout his tenure as three-term governor, and it was no different. We have always had a very substantial extreme radical right wing in California, and these people have always been against him.

INT.

Did it hurt him? Did he feel it impugned the dignity of the Court? Did he have any kind of (INAUDIBLE) to this type of criticism? We never read any of it publicly any reactions that ~~w~~ he had, although we could see Impeach Earl Warren signs on the highways or in the newsreel.

ANS.

No, I don't think so. I really ~~if~~ don't think that that bothered him a bit, and I would say only that perhaps apathy maybe on the part of people who should have been speaking up in the court's defense and in his defense also, that perhaps might have hurt a little bit, because



15-17/18

there were some periods where the voices were fairly still, which should have been raised, and eventually they were, and that was fine, but as far as what the radical right was doing itself, I don't think that bothered him a bit.

INT.

Your father ran successful campaigns and won the Democratic and Republican endorsement for governor and for attorney general. How has the complexion of California changed in that a man like Earl Warren could be governor? Was he in the wrong party, or would he be today as opposed to ~~not~~ as Chief Justice.

ANS.

Within the context of California politics, you can't say that a man like that is ever in the wrong party because we, we like to elect men of that type. The problem is getting them in in the first place, and that's sometimes tough. Once they're in we hold them for a long time and they tend to perpetuate themselves, but it is sometimes tough to buck the party organizations. Now I very seriously doubt that he ~~x~~ could get a toe hold in the Republican party today as it's, because the more conservative elements are so strongly in control in this state that I don't think as a young man he could get started. From that standpoint, he definitely would be in the wrong party. Of course, if this happened before, he managed to get in a position of superiority

15-17/19

and could, I'm sure he could as easily control those radical elements of the party now as he did then. Simply by force of his personality and his knowledge and the people that he would surround himself with.

INT.

We learned from some of the clerks that they felt they were a substitute family when in Washington when he was Chief Justice, because he missed his own family so very much and that on Saturdays he would grab them and take them to ball games and take long walks with them, and they felt very very much that this is what he missed being with his own children, and enjoyed them. When you were a young boy and growing up and as busy as he was, what kinds of pleasure, what did you do together as father and son?

ANS.

He'd do anything that we wanted to do, and all we had to do is express a bona fide interest and it was not an improper thing to do, he'd do it with us.

INT.

What did he enjoy most, was it sports or reading or movies, what did he enjoy most, if he had a moment and he would grab you and you would go off somewhere, what did he like to do most?

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ANS.

Oh I think he's basically an outdoorsman, he likes all sports, both spectator sports, and I think he likes to participate from the standpoint of fishing and hunting and so forth, although I have to concede that when he goes hunting, he's more likely to be watching the clouds and mountains and things of that sort than actually stalking game.

INT.

Could you tell us a little bit about your own family and the ages of your children, and do any of your children know quite who their grandfather is in terms of his role in American society?

ANS.

Yes, I think they do. I think my children perhaps know more his role than perhaps even we did in the early years, and I think this is because of the great prominence the court has come into. When he .....

WARREN COURT - 17-18

INT.

... your children, and do any of your children know quite who their grandfather is in terms of his role in American society?

ANS.

Yes, I think they do. I think my children perhaps know more his role than perhaps even we did in the early years, and I think this is because of the great prominence the court has come into. When he was first selected as Chief Justice, I was well aware of the position and understood its magnitude, not as much as I do now, though, and I'm sure the rest of the family didn't either. I'm sure nobody in the United States did at that time either. The position since he's been on the court has become one of great prominence. In fact, the judiciary now has taken the spotlight I think away from both the legislative and executive branches, and this is probably not entirely desirable. In fact I think it indicates not so much an aggressiveness on the part of the courts but perhaps a leaving of gaps by the legislature and by the executive governments, and I know this is this has caused some of the tensions of our times, but it has, it has put the spotlight on the courts, and perhaps and taken some of the shine away from the other branches of governments.

17-18/2

INT.

(TOO LOW)

ANS.

No, if the need, if the need is there, and the other two branches are not willing or capable of fulfilling their functions, then I think it's absolutely necessary for the other branch to come in, and I would say the same thing would be true if the judiciary was falling down in its job, I think it would be up to Congress and to the executive branch to rectify that situation.

.....

SOUND ROLL EIGHTEEN PICTURE ROLL EIGHTEEN TAKE NINETEEN

.....

INT.

What are your recollections of the 1948 campaign when your father ran for Vice President?

ANS.

Two things stand out particularly.

INT.

Could you just begin that again .....

.....

17-18/3

## PICTURE ROLL NINETEEN TAKE TWENTY

.....

INT.

Could you talk a little bit about your recollections of the '48 campaign. What went on that year, your father's reaction to the campaign.

ANS.

Two things that I remember most about the '48 campaign when my father ran on the Republican ticket with Tom Dewey against Harry Truman was that he was constantly trying to persuade the powers within the party that the message ought to be taken to the people much as Truman was doing. In other words, I guess in today's parlance you'd say that Truman was telling it like it is and my father always felt that that was the way to campaign, and in fact more than that I think he felt it was an obligation of a candidate to get out and talk to the people and talk about the issues they wanted to talk about and to talk about the things that ought to be discussed. Hard issues. He was always a hard issue man and a man who went right to the source of today's problems and offered solutions for them. Secondly, I think the most notable event of the campaign was when Harry Truman came to California and at that time he came on ... basically on one of these campaign swings I don't even think in those days they called them non-campaign trips like they do now, but

17-18/4

it was blatantly a campaign trip and naturally my father was expected to boycott this, but he let it be known that he was going to meet the President at the President's first stop and this caused great dismay within the party. My father said no, he's the President of the United States, and I'm the governor of this state, and any time the President comes to a state it's the governor's obligation to meet him, and he did and Harry Truman was delighted and they were very close friends thereafter. As a matter of fact, Truman went on throughout that campaign swing to say some exceptionally complimentary things about my father and always did thereafter at every opportunity.

INT.

When your father went to the '52 convention and when he came back, was he how disappointed was he, how deeply do you think he wanted the presidential nomination in '52 when Eisenhower won?

ANS.

It's very hard to say. He's not a man who ever stayed on the floor. If he ever was knocked down it was an extremely momentary thing and he was back on his feet going as I recall, he submitted major legislative programs almost on the exact day of his return to California and that was almost immediately after the convention. He was just off and running as he always had been taking care of the business of California, and I could not discern any disappointment whatsoever.

17-18/5

He felt that was one of the things that happens in political life and he's always been a political realist.

INT.

We've talked to so many people about your father and the family and we've never had a chance to really had the opportunity to talk about Mrs. Warren, and what life has been like for her during these very hectic years in Washington and Sacramento. Are the stories true about your mother ironing the shirts ... the myths or the legends. How did she deal with his very public life? Did she enjoy it?

ANS.

Well she was like my father. She took what was in good spirits always and she was a compulsive worker, there's no question about it. She can go on a work binge like you've never seen before, and this business of ironing shirts and making as many as fifteen cakes at one time for various charities and so forth was not at all unusual in her life. She's just one of those types of people, she comes from a Scandinavian background that must have scratched a very hard living out of the soil for many centuries, because that's exactly the way she treats every waking moment of her life. She goes a mile a minute.



17-18/6

INT.

Being Earl Warren's son and a lawyer, you must have had a chance talking about various decisions that the court had made in the last fifteen years. Have there been any that you and your father have had a chance to go round about on and differ on?

ANS.

Well if there have been any that I have differed on initially I have always adopted his viewpoint in the long run because I think his reasoning has been correct. Naturally I have had doubts about some of these things, but he's right, and I've been wrong.

INT.

Has he told you his plans for the next years, whether he's going to write or travel or what he has in mind? I understand the clerks gave him a desk at the dinner last week that will go into the apartment in Washington in the hotel, and I think everybody was betting that he'd move back to California.

ANS.

I don't know what he'll do for sure, except that I do know that he does have this abiding interest in the administration of the courts, and he does have various duties and will be called upon to do other things as well and I think he will keep very active in that area. He also has a very fierce interest in the principle of world law, and I would expect him to keep

17-18/7

active in that area, because he's recognized throughout the world as the chief judicial leader of the world, and I wouldn't be surprised to see him do some teaching. He's always felt close to the universities of this country, he feels that they are the probably ultimately the real source of progress for our country and I wouldn't at all be surprised if he were to go into some sort of association with some of the universities, one or more of them, and actually do teaching in a sense.

INT.

We were talking a few minutes ago about your father's scrupulousness and we talked about how he must feel about some of the things that have happened, but can you go back to when he was being, the congressional .... when congress .... when your father was up for senate confirmation when he was appointed as Chief Justice, some kind things happened at that time in which critics .... I am tired.... could you tell us about the time when the Senate was to confirm your father's nomination to the court?

ANS.

Yes, my father has always conducted himself so meticulously that even his worst detractors have never been able to do any more than attack him on the basis of his decisions, his personal life and his honesty, his ethics have just been above reproach in every respect, even to the point where when he was being confirmed by the Senate, as

17-18/8

chief justice and a particular senator wanted to embarrass the President, this senator had been <sup>very</sup> friendly to my father incidentally but did apparently want to for his personal reasons want to embarrass the President to some degree and hold up the confirmation for a while, tried to find something to latch on to and finally in desperation just had to come up with a completely ~~fixx~~ fictional story -- I can't even recall what it was, but it was absolutely a fairy tale and it was eventually shown to be exactly that, but that's the best that anybody's ever been able to do. He's simply untouchable when it comes to the standpoint of attacking his integrity.

INT.

As a last question, could you reflect for me a little bit about one could say that Earl Warren voted against reapportionment in California as governor when he went to Washington to the supreme court, he had a different view. What happened?

ANS.

Well I think maybe there's a difference between advocating something as a politician, particularly when you think it's only a political issue and not an issue that is real, so to speak. Reapportionment never really was a political issue in California, except from the standpoint of talking and so it was the only thing to do in California was to argue against reapportionment because that was the popular thing to do and if you wanted to

17-18/9

keep your political skin intact and not spend too much time on the issue, you naturally opposed it, but there never was really any serious suggestion of reapportionment. - ?  
 Now, however, when a man goes to the supreme court and he interprets it from a constitutional point of view, and looks not just at California, which may be an entirely different situation than say Georgia, or Louisiana or some of the other states, then he must of course take the much broader view and in fact he must take the constitutional view, not the politician's view, but the constitutional view. Not really very inconsistent.

INT.

Have there been any decisions your father has made on the court that have surprised you, not so much that you differed with, but that surprised you that he ~~came~~ took the position that he did on an issue?

ANS.

No I don't think so. I ~~am~~ don't think there are any that really did surprise me. The one decision that I seem to stand practically alone on in having some surprise, in fact thinking it's a very significant decision or set of decisions were those that had to do with Sunday blue laws ~~and~~ in I believe it was Maryland, and in those particularly ....

.....

17-18/10

INT.

You can keep going ....

ANS.

In those particular situations, the court upheld the right to have these blue laws which prevented many people from having the shops open on Sunday even though they might be Jews or some other group that didn't ~~and~~ observe Sunday as the Sabbath and this seemed rather unfair, but it's probably in many respects, the most far-reaching of many of these decisions, inasmuch as it did establish the ~~right~~ right of local government particularly to set a you might say a course of social conduct for the people in the community inasmuch as it practically forced most people to spend some time with their families.

INT.

(TOO LOW)

ANS.

No, the obscenity area is a quagmire that we've only ventured into a few feet. We have a long way to go until that's solved. In fact I rather doubt that that can ever be solved by court decisions, I don't think so. I'm not even sure that we could ever get a formula out of the courts that would be ~~a~~ even half way adequate. That's a social problem.

.....

ROOM TONE.

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Earl Warren Oral History Project

Nina Warren Brien

GROWING UP IN THE WARREN FAMILY

An Interview Conducted by  
Miriam Feingold Stein  
in 1977

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

Nina ("Honeybear") Warren Brien was interviewed by the Regional Oral History Office's Earl Warren Oral History Project in order to document her recollections of the Warren family and her reflections on Earl Warren as a father.

A single interview was held at her home in Beverly Hills, California, on July 25, 1977, conducted by Miriam Stein. Mrs. Brien had prepared for the interview by reviewing a brief outline prepared by the interviewer. An energetic and soft-spoken woman, she recounted her warm recollections of the Warren family, her bout with polio, and her participation in her father's political career.

The transcription of the tape-recorded interview was lightly edited for clarity by the interviewer, and was then carefully reviewed by Mrs. Brien and her family.

Miriam Stein  
Interviewer-Editor

7 January 1979  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley

EARLY YEARS IN THE FAMILY

[Date of Interview: 25 July 1977]  
[begin tape 1, side 1]

School Days

Stein: Why don't we start with when and where you were born?

Brien: Oakland, California.

Stein: And what was the date? I know it was 1933.

Brien: October 13, 1933.

Stein: So you were born when Earl Warren was still district attorney, then, because he became attorney general in 1938.

Brien: Yes.

Stein: Then you went to grammar schools in Oakland? Lakeview.

Brien: Yes, I went to Lakeview grammar school in Oakland. Then I think I was nine when Daddy became governor, and we moved to Sacramento. I went to Crocker grammar school and California Junior High School. I went to C.K. McClatchy High School. After graduating from high school, I stayed out of school for a year. I lived in Washington for about six months and in Hawaii for about the same length of time and in Arrowhead Springs for two months. Then I came back and went to UCLA.

Stein: I hadn't known that you'd lived in all those different places between high school and college.

Brien: There were rather unusual circumstances, because I had contracted polio when I was fifteen. I was a senior at C.K. McClatchy High School. I graduated with my class, but that last year I was

Brien: bedridden, so I had to do all my studying at home at the mansion. I was fortunate to make it to the graduation.

Afterwards, when I was learning to walk and having physical therapy, I got to a point where I was able to move around on crutches. Then Mother and Daddy took me to Hawaii. Daddy stayed with us for a few days, and then Mother and I stayed on for some time.

When I returned from Hawaii I went to Washington, D.C., and lived there for a while. It was too late to enroll in college. I had just missed enrollment; school had been in session a week, and they're quite strict in the East about enrolling on time. So I stayed out that year, which was probably the best thing I could have done.

Then I decided to come out to Los Angeles and go to UCLA. My sister Dottie was here at UCLA at the time. I love Southern California, and I was really into surfing at the time because of spending some time in Hawaii. That's all I did over there.

Stein: So you had made enough of a recovery to be able to handle surfing.

Brien: Right. It was a great period for me as far as recuperation and getting my strength back. It was really fabulous. So that brings us up to my college career.

Stein: Let me back up just a minute to your high school days. Do you remember either of your parents being at all involved in your school activities or in PTA or anything like that?

Brien: No, I don't think they were active at all in school affairs. In the first place, in those days it wasn't what it is today where all the parents are participating all the time and are very much involved with the schools and the programs. In those days, I know that they weren't involved, and I don't think that many parents were. I don't recall any of my friends' parents being involved in PTA, so I don't know how active it was in Sacramento. And Oakland I can't remember at all. I was really too young. But I don't think they participated in any PTA endeavors.

Stein: Would they help you with homework and things like that?

Brien: My mother never did; my father would help if we asked him. But if we were to sit down and ask him questions, he would get so involved in the homework that it was really easier to do it on our own. [Laughter] He'd really get so interested and ask so many questions and be involved to the point where it was really much easier just to do it myself. What I wanted were just some quick answers, and he wasn't going to do that for me. He was going to see that I learned the correct way. So after a few sessions like that, I never asked again.

Stein: You learned that lesson fast.

Brien: Yes, very quickly.

Music

Stein: Were there any subjects in school you particularly enjoyed?

Brien: In high school?

Stein: Yes.

Brien: I loved sports. That was my favorite, P.E. [physical education]. And I loved music. I participated a great deal in music projects. I played the violin, the viola, the cello, and the bass viol.

Stein: You were an entire string section all by yourself!

Brien: I didn't play any of them well, but I played them all, and I loved it. It was fun. I loved music, and the choir. I sang in the choir. Those were really my main interests in high school and grammar school too.

Stein: Did you play in the school orchestra?

Brien: Oh, yes. The school orchestra, the *a cappella* choir, and many musical events. In our school they stressed music, and there was always music at all of our programs and PTA meetings, so it took up a great deal of my time. It was pretty much of a full-time job participating in those events.

Stein: I can imagine. Did you own every one of those instruments: a violin and a viola and a cello and a bass?

Brien: No. The high school furnished the instrument if you took lessons for so many months and showed a certain amount of improvement and demonstrated that you were interested and responsible. But I never bought an instrument.

Stein: That meant that the governor's mansion would resound with the sound of violin practice?

Brien: It was terrible. The violin wasn't so bad and the viola wasn't so bad, but when I took up the cello that was the worst. The entire family intimated that they couldn't stand my practicing. [Laughter]



Brien: The cello is the most beautiful instrument in the world, if played well. But when played poorly, it's the worst. [Laughter] And the bass viol I didn't bring home. That was just a bit big for the car with five kids in it.

Stein: To say nothing of you! It must have been as big as you were at the time.

Brien: It was much bigger than I was. A cello is a fairly big instrument, and when I was in high school it was quite an ordeal to lug that cello back and forth every day. We lived quite a distance from our school. The driver was one of the guards at the mansion.

Stein: Was that Pat Patterson?

Brien: Edgar "Pat" Patterson, Archie Sparks, Elwood, Jimmy Waters--there were a number of them. They worked in shifts. One would come on from eight in the morning to four in the afternoon; one would then come on from four in the afternoon to twelve at night; he'd be relieved by another guard from twelve to four, and so forth. They were always shifting around.

But because we lived such a tremendous distance from school--you know, the mansion is in downtown Sacramento--we had to depend on private transportation, and the guards would drive us to and from school. When we first moved to Sacramento and Daddy was governor they would drive us in a big black limousine, and my sisters and brothers and I were so embarrassed! We came home and we said, "Oh Daddy, we can't ride in that big limousine! We see all of our friends and it's so embarrassing and we hide on the floor of the car. It's terrible!"

So Daddy arranged to have a Chevrolet transport us around so we wouldn't be ostentatious. And even then it was a big thing. We were so embarrassed that we would have the guard drop us off a block away from school and we'd walk to school. And here I was with my big cello, walking a block to school every morning. And, of course, all of our friends must have known the reason, but they never said anything.

Stein: That was one thing I wondered about, whether your friends and the teachers at school treated you any differently because you were the governor's children.

Brien: No, no, they didn't. Children don't think in terms of who someone is or who someone's parents are, and actually it wasn't we children who were anything; it was my father. People don't stop to think. Children certainly don't. Maybe adults do, but children don't stop and remind themselves that someone has an important father. You like people for what they are.

Stein: What about the teachers?

Brien: The teachers were the same with us as they were with anyone, I'm sure. I mean, I never saw any sign of favoritism or non-favoritism.

### Sports

Stein: You also mentioned you were involved in sports. What sports were they?

Brien: I used to ride horses a great deal. Actually, when we moved to Sacramento I was very, very lonesome because I had left all of my friends in Oakland, California, and it was a difficult adjustment for me. I guess I was between eight and nine. It was very lonely for me for a while in Sacramento at the governor's mansion, and because the mansion was so removed from the school, we weren't around any of our playmates or the children we went to school with.

My father, I think realizing this, thought it would be a good idea to get me interested in horses. A friend of his had suggested that he get me a horse, which he did. That horse was a pinto pony, one of the lead horses at Santa Anita that bring the race horses out on the track. His name was Peanuts. This man who was a friend of Daddy's, Oliver D. Hamlin, Jr., gave me this horse. We took him to Barbara Worth Stables, which was the riding stable in Sacramento at the time.

The minute I'd finish school I'd come back to the mansion, change my clothes, and off I'd go to the riding stable. I rode every single day of my life until I had polio, except for the winter months when I skied. In those days I used to ski every Saturday and Sunday. We were so close to the mountains. But my little Peanuts was the most adorable horse in the world, and I spent most of my time riding him.

After a while I started riding hunters and jumpers for Barbara Worth. I used to ride a lot of her horses for her. Then I started traveling around with her and showing her horses in California horse shows.

Stein: That must have been very exciting to travel and participate in shows.

Brien: Yes, it was because I loved it. I loved riding with a passion. Then Daddy bought me a horse, a thoroughbred that I could train to jump myself, and that was very exciting too.

Stein: What was that horse named?

Brien: Nozama.

Stein: That was Nozama. He or she appears on the Christmas cards.

Brien: Yes. Beautiful black thoroughbred.

Stein: And you trained, was it her or him?

Brien: Her.

Stein: You trained her, then?

Brien: Yes. Her mother was Amazon Maid. That's how they happened to name her Nozama. It's amazon backwards, isn't it!

Stein: It certainly is.

Brien: Amazon Maid was the West Coast hunter champion in this area. She was a beautiful horse. When we spent our summers at the Uplifter's Ranch in Santa Monica, I met the woman who owned Nozama's half-sister, Peggy Platt. We used to ride together at the Uplifter's Ranch in the summertime. Horseback riding was really my great love. And skiing was too. I truly loved skiing. I still say to this day that skiing is probably one of the best sports in the world. You have total and complete freedom. You can do anything you want on a pair of skis. It's a great sport.

There was only one drawback with skiing. When Daddy was district attorney and attorney general he had had so many cases of things that had happened up in the ski country that he was always opposed to my staying overnight. He never allowed me to stay overnight up there, never.

Stein: What was he afraid of?

Brien: Well, I don't know, but in those days they had had a lot of petty crime and problems up in ski resorts. I don't know whether it was a risqué group or what it was, but I do know that I was never allowed to stay up there overnight. So I got up at three-thirty on Saturday morning to get down to the bus. There were always charter buses leaving Sacramento because it was so close to the mountains, and you could get on a charter very easily. I'd get down there; I'd be so tired, and I'd get on that ski bus.

We'd get up to the mountains and ski all day long and get back about nine o'clock. My mother would see me coming in, and she'd turn on the hot bath and bring me dinner in bed. I'd be so exhausted. Then on Sunday morning I'd do the same thing. I'd get up at three-thirty in the morning and start all over again.

Stein: That's just amazing.

Brien: I loved the sport, I really did.

Stein: Where did you ski? What resort?

Brien: It would be a different place every time depending on where the bus went. Sugar Bowl, Donner Pass, you know, in that area. Then, I was one of the first persons down Squaw Valley mountain. It was really a coincidence. It was just a quirkish thing that happened.

We'd gone up for the opening of Squaw Valley. There was a group of high school kids that had gone up for the opening of it, and when we arrived there was a terrible snow storm. It was one of the worst I've ever seen. And because I'd skied so much in the area, I knew all of the ski patrol and the ski instructors because when Squaw Valley opened, they drew from Sugar Bowl and Donner Pass and all the other places. So I knew them all. We were all sitting around looking out over this terrible snow, and the patrol decided they wanted to go down that hill. So they said, "Come on, Honeybear, we'll take you with us." And so I went up with the ski patrol. I wasn't the first person down the hill, the patrol was. But I was the first amateur down the hill!

Stein: You were the first civilian.

Brien: Civilian. [Laughter] We were skiing in powder up to our knees. It was really quite frightening, not knowing the slope at all; never having been down it, and then to go down a new slope not knowing what's underneath all that powder.

Stein: I'll say.

Brien: But it was fun and exciting.

Stein: Did you know how to ski in powder at that point? Had you had much experience?

Brien: Well, not in that kind of powder, no. I don't think I'd ever do it again. It was really spooky. [Laughter]

Stein: At least you can say you did it once.

Brien: Yes, once. Once is enough. There are a lot of disadvantages in skiing in powder. I shouldn't think you'd have the control that you would otherwise.

Stein: Right. I think that it's almost a different technique.

Brien: It must be.

Stein: What did your mother think about all these activities? Did she worry about you hurting yourself?

Brien: I'm not sure. I think my mother used to worry about me riding horse-back, because she never once came to a horse show, and on Tuesday and Thursday night at Barbara Worth Stables we had mini horse shows. All the family and friends of the participant would come and sit in the stands and they would auction the horse. You'd parade up and down in front of the stands, and the owner of the stable would sell you and your horse.

Of course, the people that bought you were always your family, you know. [Laughter] The betting would start, "Who would like Honeybear and Nozama?" And somebody would say, "Oh, I'll give 50¢." "Oh, I'll give 75¢."

So we had those little jumping competitions on Tuesday and Thursday nights, but my mother would never come. And I'm sure it was because she was afraid to see me jump.

My father, whenever he was in town, would always be there to buy me, for fear someone else wouldn't. [Laughter] This was especially true when I trained my pinto pony, Peanuts, to jump. Nobody was too excited about buying me because they knew they wouldn't get any money back; there was no way I was going to win. But a couple of times I fooled them, and fortunately those were the times when my father bought me. He was so pleased. He would just beam. It was such fun for him. He'd win a kitty of maybe \$5 or \$10 for first prize.

Whenever my father was in town, he would always come to every horse show that I was in, and he would come to every swimming event if I was racing or swimming.

Stein: So you swam also?

Brien: Yes. He would always be there if it was a big event. But snow skiing, that's one sport I don't think he ever saw me do because, of course, we had to go quite a distance to ski, and he was too busy to go up there and watch.

Stein: Did anyone else in the family ski with you, or would you be going on these excursions by yourself?

Brien: Bobby, my youngest brother, skied. And my brother Earl skied. My sister Dorothy did, but not Virginia. Jim, my oldest brother, did not.

Stein: About Peanuts: I thought I read somewhere that Bobby had a stake in him also.

Brien: No. Bobby also used to ride with me, but his horse was Porky. Roland Rich Woolley gave Porky to Bobby. Bobby started riding and enjoyed it.

Stein: Is Porky in any of these pictures? [Looks at Warren family Christmas card picturing family members and pets\*] Yes, Porky is one of the lead horses here.

Brien: Yes. He was a black Morgan pony, a beautiful little pony. And Bobby taught him how to jump.

Stein: Did he also race and enter horse shows?

Brien: Bobby did, yes.

Stein: Did you often win?

Brien: Yes. [Laughter]

Stein: That's good.

Brien: And a lot of times I didn't win. A lot of times I lost. But there's always second prize and third and fourth and fifth, and in big classes even seventh and eighth.

Stein: Would you be competing against other children about your age? Is that how they worked it?

Brien: No. Mainly I was always competing against adults.

Stein: My goodness! So that really was quite a victory, then, when you won.

Brien: Well, I was riding very good horses. As I say, I was riding Barbara Worth's best. So I can't take credit for that.

Stein: Well, maybe for part of it you can't take credit, but I'm sure it's a two-way street. I know actually nothing about horseback riding, so if my questions sound idiotic about that, that's why.

Brien: My mother was so cute--when I was growing up she decorated my room with the ribbons I had won in horse shows and with pictures that had been taken of me jumping hurdles. Mother was very artistic that way. She had all the pictures framed and had all of my ribbons beautifully hung, covering the walls of my room. That she took pride in doing.

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\*See James Warren, "Recollections of the Eldest Warren Son," Appendix A.

Brien: But I don't think she really cared to see me actually jump. I'm sure that she was very nervous about it. And I can understand why; even though I rode so much, and I loved it, I really worry frantically when my children get on a horse because I know the pitfalls, and I know how easy it is to get hurt. There are accidents that happen all the time, and they did at Barbara Worth's as well. In fact, one of my closest friends at the time, Adrienne Hale, was jumping a hurdle in one of our horse shows--she fell off and was unconscious. She has never fully recovered.

Stein: How awful.

Brien: So things did happen. It was frightening for the parent but not for the child participating.

Stein: That's right. And anticipating the worst and sitting home with images of what's happening out there.

Brien: But I think we were really involved in practically every sport. The only two sports that I can recall not playing as a youngster were tennis and golf. I made up for the tennis in the last two years.

Stein: You've just taken up tennis?

Brien: Yes. I just took it up two years ago, actually, right after Daddy died. I had been playing golf before, and I didn't find it to be too stimulating. Then, after Daddy died I really didn't have much incentive to do anything. So then I sort of pulled myself together. I had talked to Daddy about my taking up tennis.

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Stein: You said that golf was a little slow moving.

Brien: Yes, it was for me. At the time it wasn't the type of activity I needed. I really needed something more strenuous and more physical.

Once I took up tennis, I simply fell in love with it. Now I play all the time. It's good therapy, it's healthy; it's fun, and it's social. When you take up a game at my age, you can't expect to go to Wimbledon. But you can enjoy it.

Stein: But you have such a base in active sports that I'm sure you're doing quite well.

Brien: Well, it's very easy for me. I don't find it difficult, but I could never be a brilliant player. There's no way. Unless one takes tennis up when one is eight years old or so, there's no way one can be a superior player. But I play for enjoyment, and it is a lovely social game. And it's very vigorous, and one can work as hard as one likes at it and work to your own physical capacity.

Stein: And I'll bet down here in Southern California you can play year round.

Brien: Year round. There's hardly a day that one can't play. Maybe just a few days around Christmastime, that's all. Otherwise, even if it rains in the morning here you might have an hour and a half or two hours in the afternoon where one can sneak out real fast and get some tennis in.

Stein: Somewhere in my notes it also said that you were a cheerleader in high school. Is that true?

Brien: Yes. A cheerleader for C.K. McClatchy.

Stein: How many years were you a cheerleader?

Brien: I was a cheerleader for two years.

Stein: Did your family come out to the games to see you cheer?

Brien: Oh no, no. [Laughter] My father, of course, always came to see my brothers play football when he was in town. Oh, he never missed seeing them play. But, you know, it wasn't such a big deal to be a cheerleader. I mean, it was for the girl, for the person who was participating. But really, you were doing it for the team. Maybe today it might be a little bit different. It was just a fun activity at the time. You were part of the team spirit.

Stein: [Referring to Warren family Christmas card] Who was Little Nosey? Was that another horse?

Brien: Little Nosey was Nozama's colt.

Stein: Oh, Nozama had a colt.

Brien: Yes.

Stein: How exciting!

Brien: It really was. I never did much with her. We gave Nozama, Peanuts, and Porky away, and I think we sold the colt.

Stein: You must have been heartbroken.

Brien: No, I wasn't heartbroken. I think it was very inconsiderate of me not to have thought of it before that. But what happened was that when I got sick, I stopped riding, of course. My father put the horses out to pasture. It's quite expensive to keep horses, you know. Naturally, I hadn't thought about that. It was only in retrospect that I thought about it.



Brien: My father would never sell the horses because he thought maybe I would ride again, or because they were mine so he didn't want to do that. He was very sentimental and very dear in those ways. I think it was terrible of me not to have thought of the expense that he had, because it was expensive to keep horses, even in pasture.

I'm trying to remember when exactly it was. I think it was after I was sick and up and moving around. I knew that I wasn't going to go back to horseback riding, because it was a stage of my life that was over. And in the meantime I was working so hard trying to catch up with my class so I could graduate from high school.

Finally my mother mentioned something to me about the horses were all in pasture and wasn't it a shame that they didn't really have a home. So it was at that time that we decided to give them to someone who would really appreciate them. My mother just sent me a letter about a month ago from the boy we gave Peanuts to. It was the most touching letter you've ever read. Really darling. He wrote and told how Peanuts was such a good horse and he was taking such good care of him.

That's something my father was very careful to do, was to place him in a good home and to be sure that all the horses had good homes. I don't know about Little Nosey. I think maybe Barbara Worth might have bought him, or if not, she probably sold him to someone. I had no real attachment to the little colt. We gave Nozama to someone else. And Porky we gave to someone. All good homes. They weren't given to any stables where the public would ride them. So that's what happened to my little horses.

Stein: That's an interesting insight into your father--that he would even be concerned with the placement of the animals.

Brien: Oh yes, he was very, very careful about that. He went into quite a bit of research. He made certain that they went to a good home, that they had good surroundings and they wouldn't be cooped up and they wouldn't be mistreated.

Stein: That's interesting. So he almost asked for references.

Brien: Oh yes, very definitely. Daddy loved animals.

Stein: I wasn't aware of that.

Brien: Yes. When he was young he had a burro in Bakersfield called Jack that he was very attached to. He used to ride him bareback without a bridle, and all he'd have to do was just put his hand on either side of his neck if he wanted him to turn right or left, or squeeze his flanks, and the little burro would know exactly where to go.

Stein: Amazing.

Brien: Oh, and Jack loved my father just as much. The little burro was like a human being. I remember my father telling me so many stories about him when I was little, and I used to sit and cry. He had to get rid of him, I think when he was about eighteen, before he went to college. He gave him to a man who promised he would take good care of him. He was going to have Jack for use on a conveyance to advertise Packard shoes. All he was going to do was to walk him up and down the streets advertising this product.

Apparently, when Jack would get near my father's house he'd start to whinny and bray and bray. Then sometimes the burro would get loose from the corral of the new owner and he'd just make a beeline over to my father's house. He would whinny and bray in front of my grandmother's house until she came out and fed him. Then he'd continue to bray until my father would come home. So cute. I remember all the stories. They were so sad. I just sobbed.

#### Family Pets

Stein: I can imagine. You must have had other household pets, then, if he was such a great fan of animals.

Brien: Yes. Well, my brother Earl was really the one in charge of the dogs. I mean, they were his love, really. He was the one that gave them time and attention.

In Oakland we had one dog called Brownie, a Springer Spaniel. Brownie lived longer than all the other dogs. I think Brownie died when she was eighteen or nineteen. She had gone blind. She had arthritis in her legs. She hobbled around on three legs. And we used to get complaints at the governor's mansion that we were cruel to animals because we had this dog in our home.

We couldn't part with the dog. We couldn't give her up. We kept having her checked by the vet to see if she was in pain. The vet said that she was not in pain. She was crippled in one leg from arthritis. She was blind, which was not painful. And she would just sort of hobble around. But we all gave her so much love and affection, she wouldn't have wanted to have been put to sleep. Finally we did have to put her to sleep.

At the governor's mansion we always had at least three dogs at one time. My brother Earl was the one who really took care of the dogs. I can't take any credit for that.

Stein: So he was the one who would walk them?

Brien: And feed them and train them. He was wonderful with dogs. Wonderful. He would take them hunting with him. When my father and the boys would go hunting, they would take the dogs. He did a beautiful job with them, he really did. Earl also had canaries, lovebirds, parakeets, goldfish, and turtles. Just like my children. They've had everything in our household.

Stein: And he took care of all of them?

Brien: Yes. I'm trying to think of some of the other dogs he had. There were Bow, Spade, Rocky, Chris, Jerry, Brownie, and Sheriff. My brother Earl was fantastic with animals.

He had a green thumb and could make anything grow. It was amazing. During the war we were living in the mansion, and there was an empty lot next door to us. He took a plot of land about the size of this room, and he planted vegetables. He was so meticulous in the way that he made that plot of land look. He grew beefsteak tomatoes that were six inches across. They did win a prize in a show. He had turnips that were four inches across. I'm not exaggerating. He had carrots that were two inches across. They were so big you couldn't even eat them; you'd have to chop them up. He can make anything grow, and they grow so beautifully. Earl later went on to studying agriculture.

Stein: Is that why he went into agriculture?

Brien: Yes, he always loved it. Then he switched to law. Because farmers were having some real problems at the time, he thought he'd see if he could do anything about it. I guess the only way he could would be to get into law and try to fight for the farmers and build up some helpful programs for them. I'm sure he has all that in his notes.

Stein: I think that he does talk about that in his interview. So that would have been like a victory garden?

Brien: It was a victory garden. He won several prizes at the auditorium for his vegetables.

Stein: During the war?

Brien: Yes.

Stein: There are a couple of stories about your father and some of the pets. There was a Dalmatian named Jerry. Do you remember him?

Brien: Yes, I do. He was a magnificent animal and well trained by my brother Earl. But he became very attached to my brother, and it became somewhat of a problem because if anyone came up the driveway at the governor's mansion he would nip them. [Laughter] It was so funny, because he would always grab them under the arm [indicating above the elbow] and rip out the sleeve of their coat. I think it happened to a couple of Daddy's secretaries. I do remember that he nipped a couple of Daddy's secretaries when they came to the mansion to drop things off. He nipped the mailman. And one night my sister Virginia was going to a formal affair and he ripped the sleeve of the tuxedo her date was wearing. And my mother had to sew it up.

But no one was ever hurt physically. This was his way of protecting the household. I could use him now. [Laughter]

Stein: So what finally happened to poor Jerry?

Brien: We had to give Jerry away. He wasn't too popular around the old homestead.

Stein: You wondered why you weren't getting any visitors.

Brien: Yes. There was nothing we could do, and we gave him back to the original owner. The grounds at the mansion weren't all that big. A dog could run around, but they did have to be confined to a fenced-in area. They just couldn't run loose. So probably a ranch is the best place for Jerry. We hated to part with him. He was the governor's favorite dog.

Stein: How about cats? Did you ever have any cats?

Brien: We never had cats because my mother despises them.

Stein: Why was that?

Brien: Well, when my mother was young, she had a pet cat. I don't know how old she was at the time, but she was quite young. She had suffered painful burns on her face, hands, and arms which necessitated bandages--only her eyes and mouth were exposed. She was in bed, and her pet cat climbed up on the bed and lunged at her face, and she was helpless to defend herself.

Stein: How terrifying!

Brien: So ever since that experience she has been terrified of cats. We were never allowed to have a cat in the house, or outside the house or anywhere around. Consequently, none of us are too attached to cats, although I will say, which is really interesting, my brother Jim has cats, my brother Earl has a cat (I think--he used to), and my brother Bobby has a cat.

Stein: That's interesting. But none of the girls has cats.

Brien: None of the girls has cats. I'm not crazy about cats. In fact, I despise them. My children love cats. They let the cats kiss them all over their face and play and scratch at them, and I keep saying, "Put that cat down. Get that cat away from me." It's funny. They claim that parents instill fear this way, but it certainly didn't affect my three children, as I'm sure that they'll all three have cats when they marry and have their own homes.

Stein: I think kids are drawn to anything that's warm and furry.

Brien: Yes, that's true.

Stein: Was that ever a social hazard? I was wondering that if your mother was that terrified of cats, if that was a problem, if you ever went to visit anyone who had cats.

Brien: No, it wasn't a problem because we just asked them to remove the cat, and people were very gracious and understanding. The thing I marvel at is how my mother could travel, having this fear. But she was very, very stoic. She is much more stoic than I am. She could, I'm sure, endure the pain of fear rather than inconvenience or embarrass the owner or in any way make them feel uncomfortable.

Mother and Daddy traveled all over the world, and in some countries it is a little embarrassing to say you don't like cats because they practically worship them in some places. In Greece, I don't know how my mother ever stood it, because in Greece those islands are loaded with cats. I mean, there are thousands of cats. Mykanos is a small island which is totally covered with cats. If you go into a restaurant, they're walking in and out, and they come by and they brush your legs. They crawl up on the potted plants behind you in the restaurants. They're every place. I guess they have to have cats on these islands because of the rats.

But I've always marveled at how my mother could endure that. And yet she never complained about having a bad incident. But I know she must have lived in fear, because I certainly do when I go to some places. I wouldn't say that any of the members of our family have terrible phobias about it. It's just that we dislike them and it is uncomfortable to be around them; but if we had to force ourselves to do so, I guess we could.

Stein: That means that when they'd be up at Jim's ranch that Jim would shut the cats up somewhere?

Brien: Always, yes. All three of my brothers either take them to their in-laws' house or lock them in the basement.

Brien: People were always very nice about it, though. I don't think people take those things personally once they know the story, because anyone can have a bad experience with any kind of an animal, leaving them with a lasting impression, especially when it happens at a young age.

Mrs. Warren and the Governor's Mansion

Stein: Let me just ask you a little bit more about the governor's mansion. There was a magazine story that I brought with me, one of the many that was written about your family. [Shows article to Mrs. Brien] This particular one has a picture of you taking a shower.\* Do you remember that?

Brien: No.

Stein: It said that you managed to get the governor's bedroom. Is there any truth to that story?

Brien: Yes, it's true. [Looking at photo] Oh, isn't that funny? Yes, I had the governor's room. It was the nicest of all the rooms in the mansion because it had a huge marble bathroom, in addition to the big and spacious bedroom. It had a big marble shower and it had a big old-fashioned tub that stood on legs. It was a tremendous bathroom.

The reason I got that room is because the room faces H Street, Sixteenth and H Street, and that's a very busy corner on account of the traffic. When my mother was looking over the mansion she decided it would be too noisy for Daddy. So she gave me that room. As I say, it had the big bathroom, and it also had a big solarium. So I really had the nicest room in the entire mansion. It was lovely.

My sister Virginia had the governor's wife's room. That was facing, I believe, Sixteenth Street and noisy, too. My sister Dotty had another room which was on the other side of the house. They were all nice rooms. My father's room was directly across from my room, facing the yard. Are you familiar with the mansion?

Stein: No. I've never been to see it.

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\*Robert Coughlan, "California's Warren and Family," Life, April 24, 1944, pp. 100ff. Shower photo is on p. 105.

Brien: Well, his room was facing the yard, and that was the quietest room of all. My mother took a room that was in the rear and made it into a study so that she could stay up late at night taking care of her correspondence. She did not have a secretary, and her schedule was really very heavy. So she had privacy there. One brother, Earl, had a room by the back stairway. My youngest brother, Bob, had a room over the breakfast room.

Stein: Was there another bedroom another floor up?

Brien: Yes. The huge ballroom was on the third floor. This was partitioned and made into a big library for my father, and another bedroom. There was also another large bedroom on this floor, a bathroom, and a big attic.

Stein: I understand your mother did quite a job redecorating the mansion.

Brien: When Daddy became governor, the governor's mansion was in a dilapidated condition. You can't imagine how terrible it was. The third floor was boarded off in 1943 and occupied by bats. The entire mansion had to be completely renovated. And I think that my mother spent several months refurnishing the mansion while the construction work went on. She did such an outstanding job.

She is such a perfectionist. Each room had a huge mirror in it, like here above the fireplace [looking at Coughlan article, p. 105]. She created the most gorgeous flower arrangements. She always did them herself. The Capitol Park gardener willingly furnished all the flowers she needed for the mansion for any occasion. The five marble mantels above the fireplaces called for huge fan-shaped arrangements. These took a lot of time, and only for teas, dinners, and special occasions were these elaborate floral arrangements made. Here's part of one [looking at photograph in Coughlan article, p. 105].

Stein: That's beautiful.

Brien: The arrangements she made were really extraordinary. They were so beautiful. People used to come in, and they couldn't believe that she had made them. Although she is not an artist as far as painting and sculpturing goes, I really think she's a fantastically artistic woman.

Stein: The thing that I've read about Mrs. Warren doing the governor's mansion is how incredible it was with the budget that she was given to work with. There are stories of her and Oscar Jahnsen poring through stores and antique stores and getting Oriental rugs.

Brien: I don't know how they did it. The shopping in many stores was endless. The beautiful new Oriental rugs were purchased from W & J Sloane's in San Francisco, selected by Oscar Jahnsen and my mother at a very reasonable price.

Stein: That says a lot.

Brien: I think Virginia Knight changed the bedrooms upstairs. I think she did more decorating in the pastel shades. Mother had decorated more in tradition with the era of the mansion. But downstairs she kept the original dark red velvet and purple draperies. I don't think it could be improved upon.

Stein: It doesn't look it. It looks like real Victorian splendor.

Brien: I hope they're able to preserve it.

Stein: I think it's a museum now.

Brien: Yes. I took my children through a few years ago when it first turned into a museum, which was sort of fun.

Stein: That must have been fun to say to your kids, "Well, here we are. This is my childhood home."

Brien: Oh, they loved it. It is a charming home.

Stein: Do you remember much about the Vernon Street house?

Brien: I remember the physical appearance of it. That was a magnificent home, too, big and spacious. It was sold and used for a club at one time--and sold again. It was a charming, lovely home. Really very pretty. But Oakland has changed an awful lot. It's so crowded now. Vernon Street isn't the way it used to be. It's quite built up now.

Stein: Somewhere I read that one of the traditions at Vernon Street was having a whole bunch of Christmas trees in the basement. Jim described it as a big rumpus room, and each child had a Christmas tree of his or her own.

Brien: Yes. We all had our own Christmas tree according to our size.

Stein: You mean the tree would be as big as you?

Brien: Yes. And we decorated our own tree. We always celebrated Christmas on Christmas Eve. We had our presents on Christmas Eve, not Christmas morning. My father would take the children out to dinner while my mother arranged the presents. It was very traditional.

Stein: Would your mother put your presents under your tree?

Brien: Yes, each child had their own presents under their own tree.

Stein: And then you'd come back and open them up?



Brien: Yes. We'd sit in front of our own little tree and open them up.

Stein: That must have been pandemonium.

Brien: Oh, it was. Everybody running around, thanking everybody, kissing everybody. It was fun. It was a very big occasion. Then during the holidays the Shriners Band would come over one night, and they would come in and serenade us and entertain our family and friends. It was a fun time. We would invite children, neighbors, and friends to share this event.

Stein: Jim remembers your mother doing marathon cooking productions for the Shriners, turning out umpteen cakes and sandwiches.

Brien: Yes. I don't know how she ever did it, but she did. As I say, those days I'm not too clear on. Jim would remember them better than I would. I remember individual occasions like Christmas and birthdays, but not too much more.

Stein: If you moved away from there when you were eight or nine, you were fairly young.

There is a picture, right next to the one of you in the shower, of Mrs. Warren canning.\* Was that something she did frequently?

Brien: Yes, I think so. She really is famous for her cakes.

Stein: So I understand.

Brien: She makes the best cakes in the world. And penuche.

Stein: What's that?

Brien: Penuche is similar to fudge candy, except it's made with brown sugar and walnuts, and it's so rich and so creamy and it's so good. And it's so fattening. [Laughter] Really, it's marvelous. But she used to do all these things. Mother's an excellent cook. She used to do a great deal of canning at the mansion. When people would give us a crate of fruit or something, she would never want to waste anything, so she would can it and put it away. Make applesauce or whatever.

Stein: You mentioned earlier about the cook and the housekeeper. I had wondered how your mother ever managed to keep up a house like that, of that size.

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\*See Coughlan article, p. 105.

Brien: Mother had a very good Swedish cook, Louise Broberg, and we had a wonderful housekeeper who was very efficient, Noreen O'Sullivan. Then we had a janitor who came in daily who did not live on the premises. He was hired by the state to do the heavy cleaning. And we had a laundress who came daily to do the laundry.

Stein: That must have been a full-time job in and of itself.

Brien: It really was, because that house is tremendous and there were a lot of people living in it. With entertaining and everything else, it was quite an ordeal. Even with help, Mother had an awful lot of responsibility.

[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Brien: People don't realize the paper work Mother had. That was a full-time job in itself. People would write and they wanted her to send them mementos from the mansion; they wanted autographed pictures; they wanted a letter; they wanted something for their charity. They always wanted Mother to make cakes or penuche and things like that which they could raffle off at their charities. It was endless for her. I don't know how she did it. And on top of the children. And she was always with us and doing everything for us. Daddy and the children were her first concern. But she had all the other responsibilities as well. She's really a super being.

Stein: Your brother Jim described that even to this day she insists on squeezing her own orange juice. He said once when he was back in Washington visiting, he came in after a meeting, really late at night. He found her riding on an exercycle while watching the late news on TV.

Brien: Yes. Oh, my mother is probably one of the most remarkable women you'll ever meet, and in every way. She always has time and energy to do anything for anybody. Nothing is ever too much, for her children and for Daddy and for outsiders, for anyone. Everything she does, she does to perfection. She does it absolutely perfectly. Yet she does it so simply and so easily that it's remarkable. And she loves doing it.

Her father was a minister. She came to America from Sweden when she was three months old. They were a very religious family, and the Bible was read every morning as she was growing up, first in Swedish and then in English. They were always taught, all three of the girls, to be helpful. I mean, that was a way of life for them. It wasn't as though they were taught; it was just a way of life. They gave everything and never asked for anything or expected anything.

Brien: So that's the way Mother is. She's always been that way. I've never heard her complain about being too tired or not wanting to go out to an affair or not wanting to travel someplace. It's really remarkable when you think over the years how many times we complain about having to do just some very small thing.

### Discipline

Stein: How would she handle a problem of disciplining when she was raising you children?

Brien: I've often thought about that. I guess the most important times were our earliest years, those first few years. Mother and Daddy must have laid down some kind of foundation that I'm not aware of, because I can't recall back that early and yet I know that I always knew when I was growing up what was right and what was wrong. I always knew what they would approve of and what they wouldn't approve of. And I think my sisters and brothers did the same thing. I'm sure they knew. We certainly knew exactly what was approved of and what wasn't, and we tried to please our parents.

We certainly weren't perfect, by any means. But I cannot recall my mother and father having to sit down and ever say anything to us. I think it was because we always tried to be on our good behavior--in front of them. [Laughter] It's true. I think they demanded a certain amount of respect, so much that we wouldn't have dreamt of doing anything other than what they expected of us.

I've often thought back trying to figure it out myself, because I would have liked to have known that secret in raising my children. But that's why I say that I think it must have happened in the early years, long before I can remember.

I was never spanked as a child. Never once. Corrected, yes. But never spanked or hit or yelled at, never put down or belittled, and never made fun of. Those are things my father and mother would never have permitted. We were never permitted to make fun of anyone or put anyone down, including each other. I mean, we had to act decently when we were in the house, even though we were brothers and sisters. We just wouldn't dream of scrapping, shouting, fighting, and carrying on like people do today. But I can't really tell you what their secret was. If I only knew! [Laughter]

Stein: How did your father fit into that discipline picture?

Brien: Daddy was, I would say, exactly the same. I don't ever recall him reprimanding me. I don't know if he did reprimand my brothers and sisters. Knowing my mother and father, they probably wouldn't do it in front of me. So I don't know.

Brien: I personally think that they were very easy going. Somehow they established at a very young age what they expected of us, and I don't think they really needed to use an iron-clad hand other than that. They gave us restrictions and they expected us to respect them.

I mean, we had certain hours that we had to be in by. But, on the other hand, if we were late my mother and father would say, "Well, if you cannot be home by your deadline, then at least pick up the phone and call and tell us so we don't worry about you." Neither one of them are rigid people. So, if we were a half an hour late, it didn't really concern them, and if it did it was only because maybe they thought something had happened to us. But I don't think they would ever let us know that they worried. And they would certainly never ever throw it up to us. I don't think anybody in the family ever had a spanking that I can recall.

The only thing I can think of that I used to worry about, and I think that my brothers and sisters might have too, was showing my father our report cards. [Laughter] He handled this matter in a very nice way, but he always would say, if we got a B, "Well now, darling, why didn't you get an A? You're as smart as anybody else in that class." The only thing that I don't think he would have stood for, and I think he would have been terribly disappointed, if we did not get all A's in citizenship. That, we always knew, was expected. But they weren't the kind of parents that were always asking, "What did you get on your math test?" or "What did you get on your trigonometry test today?" or "What happened in your physics class?"

They rather thought, I think, as I look back--and I'm just comparing it to my own children--I think they felt that it was our responsibility to handle our schooling and to make the proper grade. I don't think they would have stood for poor marks in citizenship. Daddy probably would have discussed it with us--not Mother.

Then also, when we got A's there wasn't a big celebration, and when we got a B there wasn't a big downer. It was, "Was there some reason why you couldn't get an A?" Or if we got a C they would say that B's were better. Just a very nice way of making us realize that his expectations of us were higher. But they never made us feel as though we were inadequate because we didn't make straight A's all the time.

PARENTS, SIBLINGS, AND THE BRIEN FAMILY

Earl Warren at Home

Stein: Did you have any sort of religious training as you were growing up?

Brien: Yes. We all went to the Baptist church every Sunday. My mother saw that we went regularly.

Stein: Was that to Sunday school or to services?

Brien: Sunday school, yes. I don't think I ever missed a Sunday when I lived in Oakland. Then when we moved to Sacramento, we still went, but I don't recall it being such a ritual. Of course, by that time, I was eight or nine. I guess I was getting older, time to change and slow down a little bit. It is different, too, when you start a new church. You're not into it like you were in the old one. Probably, if we'd stayed in Oakland, I'd still be going to that same church every Sunday.

Stein: Speaking of Sundays, do you remember the Sunday family outings? They've been described in some of the books, that your father would take all the children to the zoo or to Aunt Ethel Plank's house to give your mother a day of rest on Sunday.

Brien: Yes. I remember that, as you say, Daddy would take us to the zoo or to Aunt Ethel's. The big treat for me, I remember, was Chinatown. I think I can remember every time Daddy took me to Chinatown. That was always such fun because I could look at all the beautiful things. He'd always wander around with me, and we'd look at everything. There were some things that were so lovely. I'll never forget, there was a fan that I adored. I loved this fan so much. It was unbelievable. It was this big [indicates size].

Stein: A big ceremonial fan.

Brien: Yes. And I remember my father giving it to me one year for Christmas. I had admired it and loved it for ages, maybe a couple of years.

Stein: My goodness! And it hadn't sold? It had just stayed in that store?

Brien: I guess so. It was the prettiest thing you've ever seen. An amazing incident happened to me on my last birthday. My daughter bought me a fan that was a miniature of it. I have it upstairs. I'll have to show it to you before you leave.

Stein: I'd love to see it. Had she known about the big fan?

Brien: No, she knew nothing.

Stein: That's amazing! This is Oakland's Chinatown, I take it?

Brien: No, San Francisco.

Stein: Oh, San Francisco. He'd bring you across the bay.

Brien: If we didn't go to the zoo, we would generally go to Chinatown in San Francisco. We would eat at the same restaurant every Sunday.

Stein: Which one was that?

Brien: Four Seas.

Stein: I think it's still there.

Brien: It's still there. It's very fancy now, but in those days it was very plain. They had a downstairs and an upstairs. We sat upstairs. It had little curtains on the booths.

Stein: You must have loved that.

Brien: Oh! Loved it. [Laughter] It was such fun.

Stein: Nothing can be more romantic than those little booths with the curtains.

Brien: We'd have a big dinner there and come home and would usually find Mother in the kitchen eating her toast and jam and cheese. Then we'd all sit down and want to eat some more--of her dinner. [Laughter]

Stein: Let me just ask you a couple of other questions. You may not remember from Oakland or even at the governor's mansion if he ever brought work home. Were you ever aware of problems at work or anything that he was doing?

Brien: No, Daddy never brought work home when he was governor. I don't ever recall him bringing work home. He was very careful in that he never wanted his work to interfere with his family, and he never discussed any of the problems that he was working on when he would

Brien: come home. We'd always have dinner together, the whole family. He would talk to us about what happened in our day, what we had done that day, rather than what he had done. And don't forget, there were six of us at the table, counting my mother. So there were five kids--Jim wasn't there, he was married at the time--so there was quite a bit of rhetoric going on at our dinner table.

Stein: He couldn't get a word in edgewise.

Brien: Right. [Laughter] I know, too, that never once that I can ever remember--even when he became Chief Justice and all the children were away--he never got up from the dinner table to talk on the phone. Nothing was ever that important that it couldn't wait until he was through with dinner with the family. That was something I think he felt very strongly about. We didn't get that many calls at the mansion about business. Our phone number was always in the telephone book, but no one bothered to look it up because they thought the governor would not have his phone number listed in the directory. But here it was, Earl Warren, 1526 H Street, and the telephone number. It was really amusing.

Stein: That's really interesting. Did he used to read a lot at home?

Brien: Yes. When he became Chief Justice his "homework" was endless--always a briefcase full of work every night--but not when governor.

Stein: What sort of things would he read?

Brien: Oh, he read all sorts of things. I can't tell you exactly what they were, but I know sometimes he would have three or four books going at one time.

Stein: Would these be mostly nonfiction or fiction? Did you have any idea?

Brien: I think they'd be nonfiction. He loved history. He loved reading about history. And he loved reading about people. Actually, he was interested in everything. But I don't think I would say that he was into fiction. Mother would know more about that than I would. He read so much. Wonderful source of relaxation for him.

Stein: Was that something that he encouraged the rest of the family to do also?

Brien: I don't know. I don't think so. I don't think he pushed reading on any of us. We're a pretty active family. I don't think we would have had that much time for our activities, our studies, and a large amount of reading. My sister Virginia has always been a big reader. I don't know about the boys.

Stein: I know Jim said that he wasn't too much of a reader.

Brien: No, he's not.

Stein: He always did so much of it in school.

Brien: I'm always razzing him. His wife, Maggie, loves to read, and I'm always reading and telling her all the great books that I have read, and we exchange notes. Every time I see her, I say, "Well, Maggie, what did you read this month?" So we're always telling each other about good books. But last time we were in Washington I had bought a book that I was really interested in. It's The Inner Game of Tennis.\*

Stein: That's a wonderful book. She'd be fascinated by that, wouldn't she? She used to be a tennis star.

Brien: Yes. Jim said, "What's this book that you're reading?" I said, "This is The Inner Game of Tennis, and it's the third time I'm reading it. It's a great book." He said, "Oh, you and Maggie! She's read this book, too. You have read it three times, Honeybear?" I said, "Yes, it's fabulous. I underlined it the second time and now I'm going back and I'm going to review the whole thing." And he said, "I've got to read this." During our stay there, he did. He read that entire book. I was absolutely amazed because he doesn't read at all. I wish I had more time to read. When we go on vacation that's when I can really catch up with it all.

#### Political Campaigns

Stein: I'd like to get your recollections of the political campaigns. I remember reading that the three girls often went campaigning with the governor.

Brien: I think probably the most fun trips we had were when we went to the conventions. They were really the most fun times. It was like one big party. There was something doing every second of the day, and the evenings were full of parties. Every headquarters would have their own little parties going on. People would splinter off and have small parties. It was all very exciting, and everybody was in an upbeat mood--before the candidates were selected. It was lots of fun.

As far as the campaigns, it was always fun going with Daddy and meeting people and being with people. People were always so nice. I cannot remember ever having one bad incident happen. People were

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\*by Tim Galloway.



Brien: so sweet and lovely, probably because they all loved Daddy so much. He was governor for so many years, and I think that the people of California thought of him as part of their family. They didn't really feel as though he was a political figure. They weren't afraid to come up and talk to him and say whatever they had on their minds. Daddy just loved everybody. He just loved people. They must have felt as though they knew him just as well as anyone else because he was so warm and genuine. He really did care. He wasn't campaigning and running around so much looking for votes as doing something that he really loved to do. He just loved being with people. I think people sense that. They feel it when you're that way.

[end tape 2, side 1; begin tape 2, side 2]

Stein: I think it was during the 1948 campaign when he rode on a campaign train through the West, and Helen MacGregor helped organize a wedding anniversary for him and brought all the children up to meet the train in Oregon somewhere. Do you remember that?

Brien: Yes, it was a wonderful party. I remember being on the train. That was in 1948.

Stein: And there was another train in 1952. Maybe you were already on the train in 1948, so you wouldn't have remembered Miss MacGregor's plan.

Brien: I was not on the train in 1952. Virginia was. Every year we went to the governors' conference in the summertime. It would be in a different state every year. We went by train to that conference. Then, from there Daddy took the three girls and Mother to New York, and there we would go to shows and spend a couple of weeks doing our shopping for the year.

Stein: How exciting!

Brien: It was really fun. So that was a pattern that we did every single summer. In those days I think the governors' conferences were held in June, the last part of June. They've switched the dates now. Now they're later, I think.

Stein: I don't know. But I know then that they were shortly before the political conventions.

Brien: Then there was the train when Daddy was running for president. That went straight from Sacramento to Chicago.

Stein: That was in 1952.

A great deal has been written about what an asset the family was to the governor. People said you could beat him but you could never beat his family, and there were all those beautiful pictures of him with all of the children next to him.

Brien: We were there for the fun of it. Of course, I'm sure Daddy and Mother wanted the family together. So we were all there. But we were actually just an extension of Daddy. We weren't there to do anything. We didn't have any duties or obligations. We just went and had fun and met the people with Daddy and went when we were invited to places.

Stein: There was one convention, in 1948 I think, when Warren had been nominated for vice-president. The whole family went up onto the platform. Do you remember that?

Brien: Yes. That was a fun time. But all the conventions were fun. I guess that one in particular was, because we were all older. We had made friends with people over the years: all the governors and their families, Senators and congressmen and people like that. It was sort of like old home week every year where everyone sat together and had a good time.

I'll never forget one sad incident that happened. The day after Dewey was nominated, Mother and I went with Daddy and Dorothy to [Robert] Taft's apartment across the street at the Blackstone Hotel.\* It was a sad occasion, but my father wanted to go over and say good-bye to Taft. He was such a defeated man. It was like his last chance, and his wife was so ill. Just to see the Taft stickers on the floor and the remnants of the night before was really heartbreaking. But other than that, I think all of the occasions were really fun.

#### The Polio Attack

Stein: I wondered if there was anything more that we need to say about your getting polio. It's been written about. [John] Weaver describes when you first got sick.\*\* I don't know if you remember that. It was election day.

Brien: Yes.

Stein: The governor and Mrs. Warren rushed to the hospital. The governor was really upset, and you said to your mother, "Please take him home and make him rest."

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\*Taft had been defeated for Republican presidential nominee.

\*\*John Weaver, Warren: The Man, The Court, The Era (Boston, 1967), pp. 162-164.

Brien: Actually, I don't think it happened quite that way.

Stein: That's why I'm asking you these questions. These stories get romanticized in books, and you never know what the real story is.

Brien: I had been sick for several days, and the doctor kept saying that I had a virus, the flu, and not to worry. Then, as time went on it became more and more difficult for me to get up and move around.

The last few nights before the election, my mother moved into my room with me because I was so sick. My mother was worried. She couldn't understand what was happening. Neither could I. Here I was walking around in the middle of the night unable to sleep. She stayed in my room with me.

The night before the election, my mother went to meet my father in Oakland to vote, because that's where they were registered. She left, as the doctor told her that I was better.

The next morning my brother Earl came in and asked me how I was feeling and I said I was okay or was sick or something. Then he said, "I want to look at your legs." So he looked at my legs, on which I had used a heating pad, and the heat had burned my legs and I hadn't even felt it. So when he saw my legs were burned, he was worried and said, "I'm going out for a second," and he went out and called the doctor.

The doctor came over. A few specialists had seen me previously, but no one knew what was wrong. After my brother's call, several doctors came. They gave me a spinal tap and immediately notified my mother and father in Oakland. They came home as quickly as they could. By the time they got home, the entire upstairs hallway, which is really pretty big, was filled with doctors. I remember they said they had to take me to the hospital, and I can recall seeing my father in the hall. He was really broken up. It was the first time that I'd ever seen my father so sad. So I think it was probably at that time that I told my mother to take care of Daddy.

They had to put me in isolation and closed off an entire wing of the hospital for me. County [hospital] was totally full. They really weren't sure what I had at that point, but I guess they had decided it was polio or spinal meningitis.

Stein: So then what happened?

Brien: Then I went to the hospital. I was in isolation for quite some time; I've forgotten exactly how long. I stayed in the hospital for seven weeks, and then I came home to the mansion and recuperated there. My poor mother worked so hard with me. I would sleep during the day and be awake all night. It was terrible. But she would stay up all night with me preparing hot packs, etc.

Stein: Then she'd be up all day?

Brien: She'd be up all day, and maybe she would sleep for about an hour a day or something like that. But there were so many things to do and she was kept busy all the time, bringing me food and trying to get me to eat and doing all sorts of lovely things for me. She's really a remarkable person.

Stein: That's incredible. Somebody described when you were first brought home from the hospital that they hung all of your get-well cards up all over the room.

Brien: Oh yes. That was my mother's idea. They strung them on Scotch tape and hung them all over the room. Oh, there were thousands of them, thousands of them! It was unbelievable. People were so wonderful to me.

Stein: This, I guess, made national news at the time, or at least California news.

Brien: Oh yes. It was national. Well, it was all over the world. The literature and the information and the cards and the get-well notes from Europe--in fact, from every place in the world. It was unbelievable to see how thoughtful people were and how wonderful they were to take the time to think of me. And they didn't stop then. The correspondence kept coming in for months. Some people just kept writing regularly for a couple of years.

Stein: That's amazing.

Brien: It really was.

Stein: Did you, or did anybody, answer any of them?

Brien: Every letter that was written received a thank you note. I couldn't do it personally because I wasn't in any shape for a long time. Daddy's secretaries did it and Mother worked with them. It was a big job.

Stein: And then did you have physical therapists who would come to the house and work with you?

Brien: Yes. I had a physical therapist who would come twice a day. He'd come in the morning and again in the afternoon. I had a hospital bed, and they had all of the exercising apparatus built up around the bed.

Stein: That was a really heroic struggle.

Brien: Well, I was very fortunate that I overcame this terrible disease. It's so sad now when you see the few cases of polio that have been contracted recently by people who have overlooked getting their shot or their vaccine. It's such a dreadful disease.

Marriage and Family

Stein: We left you, education- and career-wise, going to UCLA after you'd been in Hawaii and Washington. Then what happened? Did you finish up at UCLA?

Brien: No. I went to UCLA for two years, and then I met my husband and we got married.

Stein: Was he also a student at UCLA?

Brien: No. He was a practicing doctor in Beverly Hills. He's an obstetrician and gynecologist. That was the end of my education. My formal education, let's put it that way.

Stein: Schooling.

Brien: Schooling.

Stein: Is there any great romantic story attached to your meeting Dr. Brien that should go on the record?

Brien: Oh, I don't think so. What happened was I was going to UCLA and it was summertime and I wanted to get a job. A friend of mine got me a job as a receptionist with a doctor, Dr. Brien. And that is how I met him.

Stein: And, as they say, one thing led to another.

Brien: One thing led to another. [Laughter]

Stein: That's a nice story. Had you gotten to the point of majoring in anything at UCLA?

Brien: I was majoring in psychology--for lack of anything else.

Stein: So you didn't have any idea in mind of something that you wanted to do?

Brien: No, I had no idea.

Stein: Were you living in the dorms?

Brien: No, I was living in a sorority house, the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority house.

Stein: You had a family at some point; I saw their pictures.

Brien: Yes. Two years later we had our first son, Willie, who is now nineteen. The following year we had Heather, who is now eighteen. And the following year we had Earl, who is now seventeen.

Stein: Let me see if I can find them in this photo.\* Is this Willie?

Brien: That's Willie.

Stein: And that's Heather.

Brien: And that's Earl. They're all very busy people at the moment.

Stein: Are they all in school?

Brien: Willie will start his third year of pre-med at USC [University of Southern California] this September. This summer he's working at Cedar Sinai [Hospital] cardiology laboratory, and he really loves it. He's having a ball over there. And Heather will be going to Immaculate Heart College in September here in Hollywood. She's been working in my husband's office as his receptionist, carrying on in my footsteps. [Laughter] And Earl is a senior at the high school. He's not certain where he's going to go to college. He'd like to go to Brown or Yale, or UC in Berkeley.

Stein: The only other thing I was wondering: Dr. Brien is Jewish, right?

Brien: Yes.

Stein: I wondered if there was any family discussion about an inter-faith marriage.

Brien: No, none at all.

Stein: They're really sweet-looking children.

Brien: Oh, that's a horrible picture of them.

Stein: In the whole huge family, every one is cuter and prettier than the last.

Brien: We always have wonderful Christmases together with the family

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\*See James Warren interview (this volume), photo insert.

Stein: I've read clippings, and Jim told me a little bit, about the Chief Justice playing Santa Claus at these great Christmas gatherings.

Brien: Oh yes. They always did center around Daddy.

### Nicknames

Stein: The only other question that I need to ask--which I should have asked at the beginning, of course--is the story of how you got your nickname.

Brien: Before I was born, my father took my two brothers and my two sisters to the zoo every Sunday, and their favorite animal was the honey bear. When I was born and they brought me home from the hospital the children said, "Oh, doesn't she look just like our little honey bear in the zoo." That's the story I heard. [Laughter] And that's how it came about, and I've never lost the name. The family has always called me Honeybear, and everybody else does too. At my age! [Laughter] I'll probably never lose it.

Stein: Children usually take a little while to develop a nickname. But you had one the minute you arrived.

Brien: We all had nicknames. We were a very big family on nicknames.

Stein: What were the other ones' nicknames?

Brien: Jim, I guess we called him Jimbo. Virginia was Ginny and Virg and Iya and a couple of others I can't think of. We always called Earl Ju Ju.

Stein: From "junior"?

Brien: Yes. Virginia named him that. She couldn't say Junior. I still call him Ju Ju. Everybody else calls him Earl, and I'm trying to break myself of the habit. I am trying, Mimi, so hard not to call him Ju Ju, but it's hard.

Stein: Of course.

Brien: Dotty was Polka Dot, Put Put, and Punk. She had a lot of nicknames too. Myself, I just had Honeybear. Bobby was Bobby until he was a senior in high school, and then we were told to call him Bob. I am still the only one that calls him Bobby, and I always will. And he has to get used to that fact. [Laughter]

Stein: A sister's prerogative.

Brien: That's my prerogative, right. Whether he likes it or not, he's going to be Bobby. He's my baby brother. I have to show some power over him.

Stein: That's right. [Laughter] You're the next one up the ladder.

Brien: Yes.

Stein: Well, that's about all the questions I have. You've been very kind to give up your afternoon for this. This will be a valuable addition to our volume on the Warren family.

Transcriber: Marilyn Ham  
Final Typist: Lee Steinback



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Earl Warren Oral History Project

Robert Warren

PLAYING, HUNTING, TALKING

An Interview Conducted by  
Amelia Fry  
in 1971

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

DATE OF INTERVIEW: Thursday morning, January 28, 1971.

PLACE OF INTERVIEW: The living room of the Robert Warrens' in Davis, California.

THOSE PRESENT: Robert Warren and interviewers Amelia R. Fry and Professor Mortimer D. Schwartz.

When Robert Warren was born in Oakland, California, in 1935, his father, the district attorney of Alameda County, was already recognized as an up and coming leader of both the state law enforcement community and the Republican party. Robert's position in the family (next to youngest of the six children) enables him to talk about home life after Earl Warren was well established as a very busy and very public figure. I had been told that of all the Warren offspring, Robert was "the most political," presumably outranking Earl, Jr., (who had headed Republicans for "Pat" Brown statewide in 1960) because the latter had long been neutralized by an appointment as a municipal judge in Sacramento. At the time of the interview Robert was serving on the local land planning commission, a significant position in a city where rapid growth was mushrooming the housing market.

In this interview he describes the Warren family in Oakland at 88 Vernon Street and in the Governor's Mansion in Sacramento with glimpses of school, family outings, sports, and a few of the political tides of which Robert the boy and the youth was aware. Today the tall, brown-haired man has a natural friendliness and frankness that leads one quickly to use the name "Bob." (Long-time friends and family refer to him as "Bobby" in other interviews.) He rose to the challenge of a lopsided condition: two interviewers--myself and University of California-Davis law professor and librarian, Mort Schwartz, who was using this interview as a sort of dry run for his own upcoming (and unfamiliar) role as oral historian with former corrections chief Richard McGee.

However, anyone put in the position of answering the question of one interviewer while the other listens in does not enjoy the added comfort and simplified rapport of a one-to-one informal conversation. That may have been the reason, when Bob reviewed the first section of the rough-edited transcript, he telephoned our office to say that he wanted a chance to make his answers reflect more accurately what he was thinking. "Some [responses] don't seem to be answering the questions at all," he said. We agreed to a plan whereby he would write what more specifically reflected what he meant. This he did, in spite of very busy days with his real estate business, and he had the transcript ready to hand to this interviewer in two weeks. The result is a much richer, expanded version in the final copy.

Amelia R. Fry

Graduated from the University of Oklahoma, B.A. in psychology and English, M.A. in educational psychology and English, University of Illinois; additional work, University of Chicago, California State University at Hayward.

Instructor, freshman English at University of Illinois and at Hiram College. Reporter, suburban daily newspaper, 1966-67.

Interviewer, Regional Oral History Office, 1959--; conducted interview series on University history, woman suffrage, the history of conservation and forestry, public administration and politics. Director, Earl Warren Era Oral History Project, documenting governmental/political history of California 1925-1953; director, Goodwin Knight-Edmund G. Brown Era Project.

Author of articles in professional and popular journals; instructor, summer Oral History Institute, University of Vermont, 1975, 1976, and oral history workshops for Oral History Association and historical agencies; consultant to other oral history projects; oral history editor, Journal of Library History, 1969-1974; secretary, the Oral History Association, 1970-1973.

Miriam Feingold Stein

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M.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1966, in American history; research assistant - Civil War and Reconstruction.

Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976, in American history, with minor field in criminology. Dissertation, based in part on oral history material, entitled "The King-Ramsay-Conner Case: Labor, Radicalism, and the Law in California, 1936-1941."

Field services and oral history for the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1966-1967.

Instructor: American history, women's history, and oral history at Bay Area colleges, 1970 to present.

Leader: workshops on oral history, using oral history as teaching tool, 1973 to present.

Interviewer-editor for Regional Oral History Office, 1969 to present, specializing in law enforcement and corrections, labor history, and local political history.

This was the second copy of the transcript that he worked on. Unknown to either of us, the first one, mailed October 1, 1974, from our office, had gone astray in the mails in the seventy miles between Berkeley and Davis. A new copy was dispatched to him October 8, 1976, complete with another legal release and another set of the half-dozen questions that the editors (Gabrielle Morris and myself) had added.

Nor have Bob's contributions to the Earl Warren Oral History Project stopped with his work on the transcript. He, brother Earl, Jr., and Merrell F. "Pop" Small (Warren's former departmental secretary), and I met one chilly February morning in 1978 in an unheated Bekin's warehouse where the late Chief Justice had stored approximately 150 square feet of books, boxed gavels, certificates of gratuitous membership to what seemed to be every organization in California, awards, and other assorted personal possessions which lay outside the state archives' mandate to handle. By this time Bob was well along in developing his hobby of family and political history and memorabilia, and Earl, Jr. for some time had assumed guardianship of a few precious items from his father's days as district attorney (such as an incompleated manuscript on law enforcement of uncertain authorship, office furniture and the like). The result of our pow-wow in the warehouse was that most items remained a family problem as to storage and disposition, with only a few pictures and significant award certificates forwarded either to the state archives or to The Bancroft Library.

A little later Bob visited the Regional Oral History Office so that we could see each other's modest collections of Earl Warren artifacts and trade any duplicates that would fill out the other's memorabilia, particularly campaign buttons. Perhaps some day a suitable museum exhibit on "Earl Warren of California" can make use of our respective collections.

Amelia R. Fry  
Interviewer-Editor

30 December 1979  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley

## I CHILDHOOD IN OAKLAND

### The Family Home

Fry: Well, let's see. We want to start with where you were born, and when.

Warren: Okay. I was born in Oakland on January 19, 1935. Our last residence in Oakland, prior to moving to Sacramento, was 88 Vernon Street. I was the last of six children.

Fry: You just had seven years in Oakland.

Warren: That's correct.

Fry: So you had some preschool years in Oakland?

Warren: I believe it was to the second grade.

Fry: Why don't you describe your house in Oakland? No one has ever told us what it was like. Do you remember anything about it?

Warren: Yes, I remember a great deal about the house. I have a beautiful picture of it on the wall over here.

Fry: It was in Piedmont?

Warren: It was in Oakland.

Fry: Oh, it wasn't in Piedmont?

Warren: No. We had a home in Piedmont, but we moved before I was born. The family moved to 88 Vernon Street, which is right on the other side of the hill overlooking Lake Merritt. It was up just a few blocks from Lake Merritt.

Fry: Yes. I know the area you mean. The high side of Lake Merritt?



Warren: The high side, yes. I was down there the other day, and they've constructed a large high-rise that now blocks the view of the lake. It was a very nice home and must have been on two or more acres of land in all. I think my parents bought it during the Depression, and they must have bought it for a very reasonable price at that time.

Fry: Yes. A "normal human" being couldn't touch land like that now.

Warren: Yes. Right now it must be zoned high-density land. I believe a Catholic organization or some other religious organization [bought it], and they converted it to a school for a short time, and then it was sold to the Jewish Fellowship, and since then, it's been sold to an organization sponsoring a home for unwed mothers.

Fry: So it's become an institution?

Warren: It's become an institution since we moved. Well, not quite since we left, because my oldest brother lived in it for a number of years. When we came to Sacramento, Jim wasn't quite out of the service, because the war was still on, but as soon as the war was over he came back and lived in it for a short while.

Fry: Oh yes. You didn't have to sell that home to buy one in Sacramento, because you already had the governor's mansion to live in.

Warren: Yes. So it was occupied for most of the time that we were gone.

Fry: To be a school later, it must have been quite a big house.

Warren: It had a third floor, with a library and two bedrooms and a bathroom. And then on the second floor we had four bedrooms. On the first floor there was a kitchen, breakfast room, a dining area, a living room, and a solarium (which you don't hear of much any more).

Fry: On one end of the house, with glass all around?

Warren: Yes, and a kitchen and a breakfast room, and a formal dining room. And then it had a beautiful basement. It was so large that each child had room for his or her own Christmas tree. There were six Christmas trees when we had Christmas. And each was the size of the child.

Fry: You mean in each room, or all together?

Warren: No, in the basement. It had a hardwood floor, and it was just like a very large recreation room.

Christmas, Outings, and Sports

Fry: A big recreation room?

Warren: Right. And everybody had their own tree the same size as they were.

Fry: And each one of you decorated your own tree?

Warren: Yes, we each decorated our tree, and all watched Santa Claus go down the stairs.

Fry: Did you all go together to pick out the trees?

Warren: I don't recall how we got the trees. I don't recall going out and cutting the trees or anything like that.

Fry: I'm thinking of six kids--it would be quite a trip!

Schwartz: Who played Santa Claus? Was that your father?

Warren: No. The two of them always got the presents down there, but one of the family always knew when they were going downstairs, so somebody always was the spy. [Laughter]

Fry: Did you know what you were going to get for Christmas?

Warren: No, we never knew what we were going to get. We always had Christmas Eve for the family, and when Christmas morning came, we went down and had the stockings in front of the chimney.

Fry: Oh, I see. But you opened the gifts under the tree on Christmas Eve.

Warren: Yes. But in addition to Christmas Eve, there was Santa Claus leaving gifts for Christmas morning.

Fry: Was your Aunt Ethel at the Christmas celebrations? Or your grandmother?

Warren: No, I don't recall any of my grandparents, other than my grandmother on my mother's side. But I don't recall any of the grandparents coming to Christmas. I recall the day my father's mother passed away; I guess I was probably four or five. My recollection is that it had something to do with an anesthetic given during some dental work. I was pretty young then and unable to really understand what was going on.

We didn't have any grandparents when we were growing up; at least I didn't, since I was the youngest in the family. And of

Warren: course my mom always felt that was a disadvantage for youngsters not to have grandparents.

Fry: Where were your mother's parents?

Warren: Well, her father passed away before I was born, and her mother lived in Oakland. She lived somewhere in downtown Oakland, which I now guess is the older part of Oakland and undoubtedly is under redevelopment. I recall going down there and seeing her, but that's really fuzzy in my memory. That part of my memory has to stretch back to the late 1930s.

Fry: It sounds as if she might have been pretty old.

Warren: Yes, she was quite old.

Fry: And not able to get out much?

Warren: She didn't get around. I don't ever recall her coming over to the house. My father's mother also lived in Oakland and, as you undoubtedly know, my father's father was murdered in Bakersfield.

Fry: Did he come up here very often?

Warren: No, I can only recall seeing him once.

Schwartz: Did you keep any animals out there, in that big back yard?

Warren: No. It was surrounded by homes. It was in a residential area, except for across the street where there was a large vacant field--and, I might add, it's still vacant. It has never been developed in all those years. It was a beautiful piece of property, but we didn't have animals. My mother is deathly afraid of cats, and some of this fear carries over into other animals. She just can't even stand to be near a fur coat, for fear that it might be a cat. So we didn't have any cats, and I don't recall we ever had any dogs in Oakland. However, we had kennels in Sacramento, and both Earl and I had dogs while we lived in Sacramento.

The Oakland house was just really a beautiful home and a great place for children to be raised in--large, fruit bearing trees, plenty of places to build forts in.

Schwartz: Did neighborhood kids come in, or where did playmates come from?

Warren: On, they came from all over the neighborhood and from school. School was about, oh, a mile and a half, I guess, from home. We walked to school every day. The schools were close together. The junior high and elementary were close together, but the high school

Warren: was in a different direction. However, most of us were young when we lived in Oakland, and I believe only Virginia was at high school age.

Fry: Did you have kindergarten?

Warren: Yes. I believe I had a kindergarten and first grade in Oakland and then moved to Sacramento for the second grade.

Fry: Your father at that time was at a very busy part of his career as district attorney. Was he able to be with the kids very much at home? I have read that he was a hard worker as a district attorney and expected his staff to do night work because he did night work. Everyone then, all over the United States, was expected to work on Saturdays. This was before the five-day work week.

Warren: We saw quite a bit of him for dinner. [Telephone interruption]

Fry: Let's see, where were we?

Warren: Oh, about Dad's relationship with the family. He used to be there at dinner almost every night. I can recall his being--

Fry: That must have taken a lot of planning and reserving a place on his calendar--

Warren: He used to be there when he was district attorney and attorney general. It changed somewhat when he became governor. But he used to be there in the evenings for dinner. We used to all eat as a family together. Sunday was always the day when everybody went out to dinner, and my mom never had to face being the cook on Sunday. That was the day when she was treated to dinner, so we normally went out to the Athens Club in Oakland.

Fry: John Weaver and some other people I've talked to said that Earl Warren always took his kids out on Sunday to the park or to the beach or somewhere and played. Was that true when you were growing up?

Warren: Yes. Usually what took place was we went to church (Sunday school). Then while we were at Sunday school, Mom was cooking, and when we got back, the kids would all go with Dad some place, and the balance of the day was set aside for Mom to do what she wanted to do. Then that night we'd all come back and go to dinner as a family. My mother didn't go on the Sunday outings. She kind of had one day where she didn't have to put up with us kids.

Fry: What kind of places did you go?

Warren: Oh, we'd go down to Lake Merritt, or over to Fleishhacker Zoo, or to the beach, or to a museum.

Schwartz: How did you decide where you wanted to go?

Fry: Getting six kids to decide on one place must have--

Warren: Yes, I can't recall any real problems in that respect, but it seems like there was always some interesting place to go. There were a lot of things down at Lake Merritt to do, such as feeding the ducks and geese, or boating or fishing. However, remember I was somewhere in the age range of zero to seven while all this was going on.

Fry: You were at the goose-feeding stage.

Warren: That's right. And I'd just tag along.

Fry: I'll bet you would have had to be a veritable superman to have gotten a word in in making a decision on where to go, with everybody older than you.

Warren: There were only five at the time; Jim was already away at school. I think he was at Harvard Business College at that time.

Fry: Jim is where now?

Warren: St. Helena.

Fry: Is he in real estate there?

Warren: Yes, he's a realtor.

Fry: Okay. I want to talk to him, too.

Schwartz: Did you have household help in Oakland?

Warren: Not really. We had a woman who came in as a babysitter. She was an older woman, but not a typical babysitter like today's teenager. She was an older woman who came in, and when the folks were gone she did the cooking and cared for the kids.

Fry: You mean your mother normally kept that house clean by herself, with six kids running around in it?!

Warren: Oh, yes. She'd do it today if she lived in it. She's a very active woman. She's still extremely active.

Fry: She didn't have all the conveniences that we have now, either. I mean, no dishwasher.

Warren: No, and she had a lot of stairs. It was up and down and up and down all day long, with six kids, or five kids living there in the house, as it was.

Fry: Did you kids do any of it?

Warren: Oh, we had our chores of keeping the rooms clean, and cleaning up around the house and doing the yard work. Well, I was too young to do the yard work and cleaning.

I guess it was mostly Earl, Jr., who did the yard work, because he was the only boy old enough to do that kind of work at the time.

Schwartz: Did your father do any of the yard work?

Warren: Not that I recall. I really can't recall him ever doing much in the way of yard work.

Fry: Your father is such a football fan and still is--did you ever play football on those two acres you had?

Warren: Yes, we used to play a lot of football in the front yard. It really wasn't designed for that use as it had several very sharp drop-offs on the grass area, so you couldn't run for a very long distance. But we did play something that resembled football in the front yard.

Fry: And he was playing with you?

Warren: Yes, occasionally. I might add that my father was a pretty good baseball player at one time.

Fry: Yes. I think I've been told he played baseball at Cal.

Warren: Yes. He was quite small when he entered, but I understand he came out weighing considerably more.

Fry: He was the shortest one in his graduating class at Bakersfield as a senior. And then he apparently continued to grow.

Warren: I've never seen a picture of him in high school. But my father told me on several occasions that he entered Cal at 130 pounds as a freshman, and when he graduated he was over 200 pounds.

Fry: I guess he has maintained his big interest in football. I was wondering if he was able to coach you kids. You played football later, didn't you, in school?

Warren: Yes. I played later. Jim played and Earl also. His interest in football has probably grown in the last few years, with the growth

Warren: of professional football. He watches everything on TV and goes to as many games as he possibly can in Washington.

Fry: Well, what kind of schools did you kids go to in Oakland? How would you characterize them?

Warren: Well, let's see. Typical public schools. There wasn't very much in the way of schools in Oakland then. I think we went to Lake Merritt Elementary School, which I believe still retains the same name today.

Fry: How close could your parents be to your teachers and school activities at that time?

Warren: I think it was pretty distant, but I can't really recall. I don't think it compares to anything like today's system, at least not like the Davis system, where they have parent-teacher conferences all the time. It was pretty much the report card system. Bring home the report card and find out what the kids were doing.

Fry: It was between you and your teacher.

Warren: Yes. Of course, I think I probably had only one year's report card while in Oakland.

#### Earl Warren as a Father

Schwartz: At that point, did you have any feeling that you might be looked at differently because your father was the D.A.?

Warren: No, I can't ever recall any comment made while I lived in the city of Oakland.

Schwartz: Did he ever say anything to any of the kids about his place in public life, and any philosophy or anything about how you should manage your lives?

Warren: No. Never. You sensed an expectation, and that's how most people behave, based on expectations of other people. I'm sure he expected us to behave like any other kids would; if we performed that way, then there wouldn't be any real problem.

Fry: There wasn't any formal request or pep talk?

Warren: No, I don't think any more than any other kids would have, when you go out. There's always a little "toning up" to do when going out with a large family. Oh, I can recall my mom on several occasions making some kind of innuendo that it would be rough on Dad's career

Warren: if something happened. But it was never pinpointed to anybody in the family. It was in reference to something happening to some other political figure. It was always like, "Wouldn't it be terrible if something like that happened to our family!" in reference to something that happened to another political figure.

Schwartz: Did your father ever talk about the work he did?

Warren: No, he really didn't. He never talked much about work when he got home unless somebody asked him a specific question about what was going on. He is more of a listener than he is a talker, and I recall that almost every question you asked him was answered with a question back to you. That's the way he operates, particularly if it's a philosophical question in nature. If it's a fact, and he knows it, he'll tell you that fact, but he always encouraged us to do our own thinking and to come up with our own answers. He never really argues or tries to convince a person that they should think the way he does. He just presents his side of it, and if you don't agree with it, he accepts that.

Schwartz: Did he ever make you feel like you were on the witness stand, or otherwise that he was functioning like a lawyer in his relationship with you?

Warren: No. He was a trial lawyer most of those years, but I can't ever recall that approach.

Fry: Did he ever have to handle the discipline, or was he just not around enough to do that?

Warren: He never had to, really. There was never any physical punishment whatsoever. There were the usual things that take their course during the day where, you know, "Go to your room and stay there until I come and talk to you!" That kind of thing. There were never any spankings--not that we were angels, but we knew what he expected, and we knew how far to step across the line before getting into trouble.

Schwartz: Were you afraid of him?

Warren: No, I don't think so. However, I think everybody certainly knew their position in the family.

Fry: Are you saying it wasn't as buddy-buddy and as much of a peer relationship between the parents and the kids as American families tend to be today?

Warren: Yes. The family appears to be much looser now than then. There was no way that we would ever call him "Earl." And you do see that



Warren: quite frequently now in families where the son calls the father by his first name. At that time in our lives, I don't think there was ever a consideration of that approach.

Fry: You called him "Dad"?

Schwartz: How did your mother refer to him when she talked to him?

Warren: I always referred to him as Dad, and my mother also used the term Dad in referring to him. Our relationship was certainly not one you would call a buddy-buddy relationship. It was a relationship in which we all had a considerable amount of respect for each other, and everyone seemed to know his role in the family.

Schwartz: Did you feel that you could always speak out without fear of being ridiculed or criticized?

Warren: That's always a difficult question for me to answer because the audience was usually a large one whenever our family was together. But if you're asking specifically regarding my dad, I never felt uncomfortable speaking out on how I felt about an issue. However, there were my sisters and brothers who, like normal sisters and brothers, would sometimes make it uncomfortable to speak out on something. Nothing malicious--just the normal giggling and horsing around.

## II BOYHOOD IN SACRAMENTO

Life in the Governor's Mansion

Fry: Let's go on to Sacramento. I was wondering if there was much change in his availability to the family once he became governor.

Warren: Yes. There's no question but that when he became governor he was on the move all the time. There was still a real attempt to get home for dinner together, but there was very little contact in the morning except a quick greeting in passing. So, he was gone all day, and unless we saw him in the morning, if he didn't come home that night, then it would be the whole cycle without seeing him for another day. So very quickly you could lose two or three days if he was out of town. Or if the timing just wasn't correct, with all of the various activities that we had as children, we might miss him at dinnertime. I might mention that dinner used to be somewhat of an educational process when he was home. I don't know if you recall the history questions that used to be in the Chronicle or Examiner every evening.

Fry: On current events?

Warren: On current events, yes, or world history, or sports, or it could be anything. Each night it was different. So we used to do that almost every night when he was home. I don't recall how it got started, but I think one of the kids brought it in and said, "Let's do this tonight," and it then became almost a tradition with our meals. Somebody would always serve as moderator and ask the question, and then each person at the table would have an opportunity to answer the question.

Fry: And were you ever moderator, as the youngest?

Warren: I think we just rotated around, but I was able to be moderator occasionally.

Fry: I see. I think what you're telling me may be the story that someone told me to be sure and get from you: a story of an "Information, Please" game that you played, and you were the moderator.

Warren: Yes, that was the game. That was the one in the newspapers.

Fry: Well, that's the story, then. It sounded like a sneaky way to keep you kids educated.

Schwartz: Did you keep score?

Warren: Yes, we kept score who got the questions right, just to see who was the "smartest." And then, I recall at the end we'd see if we knew all the answers within our group. And then that usually sparked some research if someone challenged the answer. They might go look it up and try to find it in order to prove the newspaper wrong.

Schwartz: Was this just for the children, or did you include your father?

Warren: Oh, it was very much for the entire family. If he wasn't there, we didn't usually do it.

Fry: Did your mother take part in it, too?

Warren: Sometimes she did. But she usually assumed the role of a listener, and unless she knew the answer very quickly, she didn't throw in a comment. She also was very busy with dinner usually.

Fry: Yes, I have the impression that your mother was always coming and going to the kitchen.

Warren: Yes, she never sat down and ate with us for any long period of time. She might sit down for a minute, but then she was up and around.

Schwartz: She'd do the cooking at the mansion?

Warren: Not in the mansion. Well, it seemed to me at the first that she did some cooking. After that, she did breakfast and lunch and somebody did the cooking for dinner. Most of the time while I was in school, she was making lunches. We were all brown bag carriers at lunch. She gradually got out of cooking, due to the many other things she had to do. But even when she wasn't cooking, she was always running around helping and doing things.

Fry: Is it true that she was a big cake-baker?

Warren: Yes. She made many, many cakes and pounds of candy. In reality, she probably did more cooking than if she was cooking three meals a day. There was always some charity or some activity which she was cooking cakes and candy for.

Fry: Was this for clubs and church activities?

Warren: Yes. She belonged to a group called the Tuesday Club (I think it's still active in Sacramento), and they used to have cake sales and different things, and so she was doing a great deal of cooking for that organization.

Religious Exposure

Fry: That reminds me: when you were talking about Sunday school, did I ask you which Sunday school you went to?

Warren: No, we didn't discuss that, but we did go to the First Baptist.

Fry: Did you continue this in Sacramento?

Warren: Only intermittently. It seems to me that we all went to the same church in Oakland, but when we got to Sacramento we never really did zero in on any one church. For a period of time it was the First Baptist Church on L Street in Sacramento, and also my sisters went to the Methodist church in the same general vicinity. There was a Baptist church right next to the mansion, and on occasions we'd attend that, but normally it was the other church further out on L Street.

Fry: But you did go to church each Sunday?

Warren: No.

Fry: Even though the church changed?

Warren: Well, we went through most of the Sunday school process but didn't really continue on to church services after that period.

Schwartz: Was the church in Oakland a Southern Baptist or Northern Baptist?

Warren: Northern Baptist.

Schwartz: Did this represent a problem in your church-hunting in Sacramento? Was that why you didn't settle on any?

Warren: I'm not sure what it was. I'm really not sure why it was that we didn't settle on one church in the Sacramento area.

Fry: Did you ever have the impression that your family was particularly loyal to any one denomination?

- Warren: No. There was never any exposure to anything other than a generally broad religious perspective.
- Fry: Was there any family consternation about this being a "mixed marriage"? [Referring to the marriage of Robert's brother Jim to Margaret, a Catholic.]
- Warren: No. I think there was some preliminary discussion between Margaret and Jim as to how the children would be raised, but that was never a big question in our family.
- Fry: Yes. One other question on the churches: Was there any interest in the synagogues at that time?
- Warren: No.

### Play and Sports

- Fry: I went through the governor's mansion last time I was in Sacramento and took the tourist tour through it.
- Warren: We did, too, last year. We took the kids over and went through it.
- Fry: What did you think about the way they have it fixed up now? Does it still look like it did when you lived in it?
- Warren: It looks a lot like it did then. They gave us such an abbreviated tour of the mansion that it's just not the same thing as being able to go through on your own. But it's a great deal like it was then. They haven't changed it very much.
- Fry: There's a lot of space downstairs. Was any of that used for the family, or did the family live primarily on the second and third floors?
- Warren: We used the entire house when we were there. There were five kids living there.
- Fry: Where was the study?
- Warren: The study was on the third floor.
- Fry: Oh, it was?
- Warren: Yes. We didn't use that as much as my dad did. He used that quite a bit. Then the very upper part was of no value at all. The attic went all the way up to the very top of the home.

Fry: Is that one teeny little--

Warren: Little room. It was a sun room.

Fry: That sounds like a nice place, in a big family, if a kid wanted to go away from the rest of them.

Warren: Yes. It was possible to get up there and kind of hide out a little bit. The total area of the room was about five by five at the very top, with four large windows from which you could look in any direction around the city.

Fry: It was sort of a view place.

Warren: That was all it was. And there was only enough room for one person to go up the stairs at a time. I'm sure that's why they don't let anybody up that high on the present tours.

Fry: When you were in the governor's mansion, where did you kids play? When I went through it, I couldn't really see much space around it. I think even at that time it was in the middle of a business district.

Warren: It hasn't changed a great deal. We played in the yard where the swimming pool is now. [Governor Edmund G.] Brown put the swimming pool in; before that it was a big open area--or open grassy area. We played there, and then the basement. You may not have made it into the basement, but the basement's very big and there were a lot of areas down there. But we didn't do an awful lot of playing right there on the grounds, because we had horseback riding to do every day, and we were always kind of scattered around the community.

Fry: And you had someone to provide transportation to other places. Did you go to parks and places like that? Was there a club that the family belonged to?

Warren: Yes--the Del Paso Country Club.

Fry: Yes. Did you go there too?

Warren: We went there mostly in the summertime when we were in Sacramento, or in the springtime when it warmed up. I believe the governor received an honorary membership to the club.

Fry: Were you swimming or were you golfing?

Warren: We were swimming. We didn't golf very much, just horse around.

Fry: Your dad was mostly a swimmer, right?

Warren: He swam mostly, yes. I think his clubs are still there at that country club. I don't think he ever played.

Schwartz: Did he ever go horseback riding?

Warren: He never rode that I know of. He went to many, many horse shows that we used to have, particularly those close to Sacramento.

Schwartz: Was he a tennis player? How'd you get into tennis?

Warren: Through Maggie, Jim's wife. She was an excellent tennis player. I believe she was state doubles' champ and had a national ranking. She was very active and that's how we got interested.

One thing, we were exposed to a tremendous number of athletic activities in our growing up. I think more so than most kids are. There aren't really very many sports that we haven't participated in, in some form or other, even on a limited basis. That to me is very healthy. If all kids could have a chance to ride a horse a few times and ski a couple of times and do different things, they could find out what they could do best.

Fry: And this becomes a lifelong hobby.

Warren: But my dad never did a lot of sports himself that I can ever recall him doing.

Fry: You never went up to the snow, to Tahoe, to ski or anything, did you?

Warren: Not with him. We used to go all the time when I was in high school. They had buses going every weekend, and we used to go up Friday night with a sleeping bag and sleep by the fire, at the Donner Summit Lodge or wherever. We were the hippies of the 1950s.

Fry: You mean outdoors by the fire?

Warren: No, inside. They used to let you sleep right by the fire, in the lounge of these big ski lodges, when there was only maybe two or three of us. Herb Jackson, Bob Reed, and myself spent many a day in the snow. But that pretty soon got old with the lodges, and soon we couldn't do it any more. That's the only way that we could justify the expense of going up, to go Friday night and sleep two nights there. We took our food with us and we'd ski all day Saturday and Sunday and then come back on the bus.

Fry: That way you didn't have to pay hardly anything.

Warren: All we had to do was pay for the tows.

Fry: You really had a good thing going there.

Warren: Yes, it worked pretty well.

School Days

Schwartz: The location of the mansion in the middle of town must have affected the family style of living compared to Oakland, say.

Fry: You must have had a lot less privacy.

Warren: Oh, I'm sure we did. We probably had less privacy. But our days were spent at school. We all went to school in the same general area. In fact, all the schools connected--the fence lines connected. Crocker Grammar School, [California] Junior High, and McClatchy High. And the fence lines were all interconnected. So we just all got off at one place and scattered to the winds, and then we could all come back to the same place.

Fry: Oh, I see. And this was Pat Patterson taking you, right? The guard and the chauffeur. Did your parents drive at all in Sacramento?

Warren: My parents never drove an automobile after they came to Sacramento. I do have some memories of my mother and father driving a Lincoln Zephyr and I believe a Chrysler Airflow when we lived in Oakland. To my knowledge, my parents have never driven since.

Fry: Once they got to Sacramento.

Warren: I don't believe they've driven a car in Sacramento. Well, my dad may have driven a few times in Sacramento, but it didn't take long before he got away from that. He used to walk to work a great deal of the time and also had available to him a state driver who did most of the driving to and from work and other functions. I suppose they could learn to drive again, but having not driven since 1941, it would be very terrifying in today's traffic.

Fry: Yes, it would. But that's a lovely way to live.

Warren: Not to have to drive? Well, yes and no.

Fry: I'd like to be able to go out and step in my own chauffeur-driven car or even in an elevated train.

Warren: Yes. That's one thing that, personally, I would have liked to change about all the years my dad was in public office. The one thing that I would like to change more than anything was that of having a state driver.

Fry: Why?

Warren: I just didn't like it.



Fry: Did you feel conspicuous?

Warren: Yes, I just thought it was the one thing that set us apart from the other kids.

Fry: Was he in uniform?

Warren: He wore a state officer's uniform, but we were in a private-appearing automobile. But even so, every time you'd drive up to school, you'd get out, here's a policeman driving you to school. [Laughing] It's either one of two things, you know: you're in trouble with the law, or you're getting some kind of preferential treatment.

Schwartz: Did you feel then or do you feel now that this affected your opportunity to buddy up with other kids in school?

Warren: Not usually. I'm sure that some kids cooled off because of that. But once we were in school, I don't believe we really had a lot of problems with that.

#### Father's Campaigns

Schwartz: Did any kids ever make any distinction because you were a Republican and they were Democrats?

Warren: No. Probably the most prominent one was during the election in '48--that was the one where there was probably more discussion than in any other campaign my father was involved in.

Fry: You and your friends would have been thirteen or fourteen.

Warren: Yes. I was in junior high. I can recall very vividly that whole process and my relief when the results came out the next day and the Dewey-Warren ticket had lost. We were in San Francisco the night that the returns started coming in. I believe it was the Sir Francis Drake Hotel.

But I also remember everybody going to bed, just like the story says, feeling that a victory was in hand. But, as we all know, the next morning the results showed something else. I do have a number of recollections of my father not being quite as confident as a number of other people on the staff were with regard to the election results.

Fry: Did you get any cues from your father that it might be the other way?

Warren: No. Except he wasn't over-optimistic about it.

Fry: That's what I mean.

Warren: No, I can't ever recall him being over-optimistic. Certainly he was optimistic that they could win, but he was never to the point of saying, "It's all over," meaning that they had won.

Fry: You mean, in that election only? Or in any election?

Warren: In the 1948 election. I personally never did really get involved in the other elections that he was involved in.

Fry: You mean at the time you felt that way? Or now?

Warren: All the time that he was running.

Fry: Oh, you didn't want him to get--

Warren: Most selfishly, I didn't want to leave Sacramento because I'd built up some very strong friendships. I was at the age where I was just getting ready to enter high school, and I had things pretty well mapped out. I was going to play football with my friends and do all those things together, and there was this terrible possibility that we might have to go to Washington, D. C., and start over again. I personally did not want to do that, so it was a relief when I found out that we would stay in Sacramento for another period of time.

Fry: Do you remember anything about the campaign? Is that the campaign when you rode the train from Seattle down the coast?

Warren: Yes. I'm sure that was the campaign. Maybe I was wrong about the location. I think it might have been from Denver. We picked the train up at Denver and then came into Sacramento. We stopped at all those little towns.

Fry: Did you actually participate? Did you get to wave at the crowd, or anything?

Warren: Most of the time, I think, I was always in the caboose, where everybody stayed. But occasionally we'd come out on the platform. Some reporter would say, "Bring your family out here," or something like this, so we'd all go out and stand on the platform. But that was a barnstorming situation where you just stayed two or three minutes, or five minutes at most, and were on our way. Sometimes there'd be a big organized crowd out there listening, and other times there'd be just a handful of people.

Schwartz: Did you consider that fun?

Warren: I thought it was kind of interesting. But certainly not fun. It only lasted two or three days, so the duration wasn't too long.

Fry: You didn't participate much in any other campaign?

Warren: None of the campaigns.

Fry: Did any of you go to the governors' conferences and the conventions and so forth?

Warren: The three girls did, meaning my sisters, Virginia, Dotty, and Honeybear. Almost every year they went to the governors' convention, and they went to the national conventions, also. But they used to go almost every place with my folks when they traveled.

Fry: Were they really that interested, or was it--?

Warren: They were interested, because there was an awful lot of social activity at those events. There were all kinds of parties, and dancing, and different things to do. Sometimes there were escorts provided, such as a Marine escort, or something to that effect, for the girls.

Fry: I wondered if there were other kids their age there.

Warren: Yes. But I don't believe there were a lot of other kids at these conventions. They pretty much stayed with my folks and went to the different activities they went to.

#### My Brother and I

Fry: Why didn't you boys go along?

Warren: I just didn't like it. [Laughing] My brother Earl and I used to go down to Santa Monica, almost the day school was out, and spend most of the summer months on the beach skin diving or surfing or something to do with water sports.

Fry: I think Earl, Jr., told me that he even got a job once doing some skin diving.

Warren: Yes. He had a business. He formed a business (a partnership, I believe) with a Japanese individual who had some formula for processing sea urchins. I ended up being one of the workers for that venture for almost the entire summer. I can't recall ever getting paid for it.

Fry: [Laughing] Maybe you'd better mention that to him!

Warren: I'm going to talk to him: [Laughter]

Fry: At any rate, it sounds like you lived a very different life from your sisters who were back attending the parties around the governor's--

Warren: Oh, we did. Yes, we were always removed from that part of it.

Fry: Did you ever think that you would be in public life at all, or in politics? Did you ever consider it?

Warren: No, never considered it.

Fry: Did you play football in high school in Sacramento? What about your father's participation in that? Did he go to your games?

Warren: He went to probably two games a year. The timing was just never right. I don't think he was able to arrange his schedule to meet that of the football schedule. It was the same situation when I played for the University of California at Davis Aggies. I believe he saw one game in four years.

Fry: That was when you were at UC Davis.

Warren: Yes.

Schwartz: Did he influence you in selecting which college to attend? Did you consult with him, or how did you reach that decision?

Warren: I recall that I just made the decision to attend Davis based on my interest in horses and animals. I felt that I might be able to get into the cattle business if I got to an agricultural university.

Fry: Yes. Your brother Earl was interested in farming, too.

Warren: Yes. He was at Davis when I was also considering attending, but since he was five years older than me, he was out by the time I was ready to enter.

Fry: Was there a difference of four or five years between you and Earl?

Warren: Five years.

Fry: I see. So you'd visit him here at UC Davis when you were in high school?

Warren: Well, I'd always come over to Picnic Day. That was the biggest event---really it was probably the biggest event of this valley, Picnic Day.

Fry: I bet it still is, isn't it?

Warren: Well, for high schools. It used to be a very big high school event. Every high school in Sacramento was invited. There aren't very many now; there are three. So they were all invited, and everybody would come over, and it was really a good event.

Fry: Earl, Jr., was in charge of one of those.

Warren: He was in charge--yes, one year or so. That was really the major contact with the school.

## III GROWING UP

College Years

- Warren: When I graduated from high school, I was a mid-year student, and so I came directly over here to Davis. In fact, I think I got out on a Friday, or on a Thursday, and started school on Monday. As a freshman here.
- Fry: You didn't waste any time at all. In high school what had you been interested in besides sports?
- Warren: Well. There wasn't much, if I recall right, in high school. All we did was try to get ready to go to college.
- Fry: A general college prep course.
- Warren: All you did was, you had to get the languages and the math, you know, the required courses so you could get into college. So there was no specialization whatsoever.
- Fry: Were any one of these more interesting to you than others?
- Warren: Oh, I think probably physiology was the most interesting course I ever took in high school. It seemed to be more interesting to me than some of the required courses.
- Fry: What did you major in at Davis?
- Warren: Well, I started out--I was here for half a year in animal husbandry. And then I went to UCLA for a summer school and a semester.
- Fry: That would be while the family was down there at the ranch?
- Warren: In the summertime. In the summer they were there, and that was the year that he was appointed to the court. In September of that year

Warren: he was appointed to the court, and that was the semester I started at UCLA. I stayed at UCLA to get rid of some required courses. You know, history and first year freshman courses.

So I stayed there a semester and was kind of swooped up with the idea of being down by the beach all the time, and it was great to be in Santa Monica. Then I went to UCLA and that ruined my whole idea of going to college. So I came running back here as fast as I could. [Laughing] So I came back up here right after that semester and then I went through.

I switched to letters and science when I was a sophomore, and I had what they called a group major in psychology and physical education. They didn't have a major in either field at that time, because their letters and science had just started here. So they put two majors together, and they called it an individual group major.

Fry: That sounds more tailor-made.

Warren: Well, there were only about four of us that did that. We all went in at the same time, and it worked out real well. What it amounted to, we had to have almost the same number of units in each one of those fields. I think it was thirty units at that time. They did thirty units of psychology and thirty units of physical education.

Fry: That's a lot.

Warren: Anyway, it was a very interesting major. I don't know how it relates to real estate.

Fry: Were you interested in politics?

Warren: No. I didn't even take a political science course in all the time I went to school.

Schwartz: Were you playing tennis at that time, when you came to college?

Warren: No, I played tennis at the Uplifters Ranch in Santa Monica, and the only time I played was in the summertime. I took lessons from a very good tennis pro, a woman, an older woman who must be about 95 now. I think she still plays. We played quite a bit in the summertime.

Fry: Your brother Earl said this ranch had been more of a club at one time, and then it hit hard times during the Depression or something, so then it was transformed into sort of a family place. And there was a family friend who owned a cabin where you guys stayed. Who was that?

Warren: It was a log cabin, owned by the Musgroves.

Fry: Oh, it was?!

Warren: Yes. A real log cabin. These great big logs. Beautifully notched out.

I just can't understand why he didn't use it. He didn't use this beautiful cabin. It was a handmade, custom-made cabin. Everywhere you looked were all of these trophies: elk, moose, every animal you could think of, and birds and everything. It was a beautiful thing. Wish I had some pictures of it.

#### Hunting and Fishing Together

Fry: Did you ever go hunting with your dad?

Warren: We hunted every year.

Fry: Where did you go hunting?

Warren: We still do it. We hunt ducks in the wintertime, and then we used to go over to the Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Islands, which are the chain of islands off the California coast there. We used to hunt over there every summer.

Fry: What did you hunt there?

Warren: They have deer and elk, goats, sheep, wild boar, and quail. They're all privately owned, and they're used for raising cattle. The only thing that's on there is military; they have military bases on them. Small, military installations for surveillance.

Fry: And they have hunting preserves?

Warren: No, the fellow that owned the island would take us over there. I think they had nine fellows that worked there. They were just regular old cowhands. One was a cook, and the other eight herded the cattle all over the island, so we'd just get in a jeep and take off and hunt. It was just like a wild preserve. The island must be forty miles long and twenty miles wide. The animals were brought in many hundreds of years back. They're just wild animals, but they're just on this beautiful island.

Fry: Who went with you on these trips?



Warren: Well, let's see. There was Earl and myself and my dad. And Leo Carrillo was one of the fellows that first started going with us over on Santa Cruz Island. In fact, he may have made the first contact for us to go there and hunt wild boar on Santa Cruz Island. And then another close friend of Dad's, from Oxnard, Edwin Carty. Some way or another we got going to the Santa Rosa Island, which was owned by a fellow named Ed Vale.

Fry: And you still hunt?

Warren: We still hunt, but now it's pretty much confined to the ducks.

Fry: Where do you go for ducks?

Warren: We go to Colusa, or to Williams. Just north of the town of Williams to Wallace Lynn's. You've probably got that name down.

Fry: Yes, I have the name, but I haven't talked to him yet. Is that his own domain?

Warren: That's his own. Yes. He lives in San Francisco. I think we've hunted there since '42, '43, something like that. Every year. Haven't missed a year.

Schwartz: Do you always come back with ducks?

Warren: Yes. Almost all the time. Dad's a remarkable shot, for a person who only picks up a gun once or twice a year.

Fry: And he taught you kids to shoot?

Warren: He taught us how to shoot. Yes. We've been hunting since we were-- I think seven years old is when I started, and that was about the age that Earl got started. Jim has never been much of a hunter.

Schwartz: How did your mother feel about your bringing back ducks and game and all that? Did she do the cleaning of them?

Warren: We did the cleaning. We cleaned the ducks and picked them, and she'd finish them off and cook them. She did all the cooking. But we used everything we brought back.

Fry: Did you? Even the deer?

Warren: Yes. Well, the deer was always cut up right there where we shot it, normally.

Fry: Where did your dad learn to hunt? In Bakersfield?

Warren: I don't think so. No. I'm not sure where he learned to hunt. He always gets the biggest one, though, that's one thing for sure. He always gets the biggest deer, the biggest fish, or--

Schwartz: Is it something about charisma? [Laughter]

Warren: It could be! It could be! I don't know what it is, but he always seems to end up with the biggest of the bunch.

Schwartz: Did he carry his share of the load, too?

Warren: Yes.

Schwartz: I wonder how he learned how to dress a deer, and ducks and so on.

Fry: Maybe Leo Carrillo told him that.

Warren: He didn't. The boys did the cleaning.

Schwartz: Are you fishermen, too?

Warren: Yes. He still fishes in the summertime. He comes out and he and Wally Lynn go fishing. Mostly for trout. We've been on a number of trips together. That's one thing that I think we always make an extra effort to do is to try to get together. The boys get together as a family and go on a fishing trip or a hunting trip at least once a year for a couple of holidays. That's the only way you can ever get isolated enough to do any talking. Because otherwise it's in a San Francisco hotel or something.

Fry: Is this where you really got your man-to-man talk? Hunting and fishing trips.

Schwartz: What do you talk about?

Warren: Oh, he likes to talk about business.

Fry: You mean your business?

Warren: My business. He likes to talk about my business and what I'm doing and what plans I have for expansion of my business. He never talks about the court.

Fry: When Leo Carrillo would be with him, did they talk politics at all?

Warren: No. I don't think so. They just horsed around.

Fry: Was Leo Carrillo a kind of happy-go-lucky--

Warren: Yes. Oh yes. He was a real happy kind of a clowny guy. You know. Always horsing around. Always kidding everybody. And really it wasn't in any way a business relationship.

Fry: I think he was on the state park commission.

Warren: Yes, he was on the park commission. I think he was active in getting the Will Rogers Park in Santa Monica underway, and all that beach front along there.

Fry: Was your father especially concerned about this land acquisition effort?

Warren: Oh, I think he was pushing it.

Fry: He would have been quite familiar with the territory, having lived there in the summers.

Warren: Yes. I'm sure that he was very much interested in getting the beaches under the state, so we wouldn't lose them. He's always had an interest in that.

Fry: What about islands like that? Would he like to see them at least partially under public control?

Warren: Well, I don't know. I've never heard him comment about the islands out there. They've always been under private ownership. There hasn't been very much change in them in the last few years, and that's good.

Fry: It sounds like they still have their wildlife.

Warren: Yes. They're still very wild. They still bring the cattle in and dump them out in the ocean and let them swim to shore. There's a way of getting them on, back and forth.

Fry: Oh, to keep the island populated?

Warren: Well, no. They take all of the cattle out there for fattening. So they take them out on large cattle boats and release them reasonably close to shore, so they can swim to shore. That's how the cattle get off and onto the island.

Fry: [Laughing] That's a long way from lassoing them with a rope, and dragging them along the corral path. Is this where you developed some of your interest in ranching?

Warren: Yes, that was part of it. Just being around animals a lot, particularly around horses. My sister and I were around horses all the time.

Fry: Which sister?

Warren: Nina.

Fry: You were the two horse fiends?

Warren: We were the only two in the family that rode. Yes. We rode all the time. We had our own horses, and we rode in horse shows all over the state.

Fry: Are you able to have a horse here?

Warren: No. Only if we were further out in the country.

#### Father's Guidance

Fry: The other line of questioning that I haven't really gone into is the media things and reading material that were available in the governor's mansion that you remember seeing. I think before we turned the tape recorder on, you mentioned you never had a television in the governor's mansion, even though you were there until 1953. Did you particularly notice what kind of reading material you had? Magazines?

Warren: Well, it's a different life without a television set in the house.

Fry: Yes. It sure is.

Warren: We had the old standards. National Geographic, which we still subscribe to now, and Reader's Digest, and those magazines-- Saturday Evening Post and Life and Time and Newsweek. Those are the kind of magazines that used to be around the house all the time. The radio: we really used the radio. I can recall the radio being on all the time, particularly in the late evenings.

Schwartz: Was there a library that you went exploring around in?

Warren: Well, there was a library, but it was all full of legal books. Volume after volume. It wasn't the kind of library with good general reading literature. We were all pretty active physically during school years, so that we weren't home until five or six o'clock in the day.

Fry: Because you had football practice?

Warren: Yes. Because of that. And so, by the time dinner was over, it was getting reasonably close to the time to start doing some studying.

Fry: Right. Because you had a late dinner.

Schwartz: Did you have any rules about when the kids had to study, and whether they could listen to the radio before they did their homework, and that sort of thing?

Warren: No. That's one question we never had to ask. Occasionally my mom or dad would ask, "Do you have your homework done?" But we never had any strict rules about when the light goes out and what time you go to bed and when you do your studying. It was taken for granted that we were going to do these things. And they would get done and you would do them at your own pace.

It's much the same as not being told or guided too much as to what you might do in later life. You find out what you want to do, and you do it, and nobody tries to over-influence you, only provide direction.

Fry: Did you have a chance to talk over with your father as to what you would major in in college, and what you thought you might go into and so forth?

Warren: Yes, I had that opportunity on a number of occasions. That's normally what we were talking about when we'd get on a one-to-one relationship.

Fry: Out on those islands during hunting trips?

Warren: Yes. What courses I was taking, and what courses I planned to take next year, and what I had in mind for a future. Those are the times when we talked. But there was never any indication that, or implication that he would like to see me go into law, or follow into what he was doing in any way.

Schwartz: When you weren't on these one-to-one relationships, hunting and so on, did you ever have the feeling that he was preoccupied in his thoughts so that there was no sense in talking to him? You know how kids are today with that kind of an attitude.

Warren: Well, on occasions. I never had the feeling that I was being disregarded in any way. I can remember talking to him late in the evenings. We used to do that occasionally. He reads every single night before falling to sleep. It usually had to do with history of some sort. Dad is very interested in California history. All of us experienced talking to him, and he would fall asleep while we were talking to him. He may wake up twenty minutes later and continue his conversation with us as if he had never gone to sleep. I don't know how he did that, but it was just as if he had never slept. He would just pick right up where the conversation left off.

Schwartz: Does this account for his great energy that he has now, his ability to nap or what have you?

Fry: And even on those campaigns?

Warren. Yes. He's got a real good knack of relaxing and going to sleep quickly. You know, when he's down, he's out; that type of thing. And when he's up, he's moving about and intense on his task.

Fry: Did your dad bring work home while he was governor? Helen MacGregor said that, while he was D.A., sometimes he and she would have to go work in his study because there were too many interruptions at the office. She said she remembers a blonde head would come bobbing in to ask Daddy a question, and he'd say, "Just wait. Wait till five o'clock." Oscar Jahnsen, on the other hand, said he would just never bring work home.

Warren: He seldom ever brought it home that I can recall. I can remember him setting up--doing some work at home and using that as his office occasionally, like anybody would if they wanted to really bail out of their office and just go hide. They'd do it at home probably where it's quieter.

Fry: But once the kids were home from school and the family was there, why, he probably--

Warren: Yes. He didn't bring home much. He did much more when he got to the court. I think the demands for study, for just outright research, were much greater in the court than they were when he was governor.

Fry: Right. He had a big staff, and he somehow managed to get some very knowledgeable people to perform tasks for him as governor.

Warren: Yes. He had Helen MacGregor, and she was worth several people, I'm sure. She had tremendous ability.

Fry: Yes. She's worth several people right here on this project too, I'll tell you that. She's marvelous.

#### Other Influences

Fry: Well, then, the other questions I have are miscellaneous. I suppose you were in Cub Scouts or someone was in Cub Scouts, because I picked up the note that your mother was a den mother at one time. Was that for you or for Earl?

Warren: That must have been for Jim and Earl. I believe Jim and Earl were Eagles.

Fry: That would have been in Oakland.

Warren: Yes. I believe that's when my mom was active in scouting, and also when we got to Sacramento.

Fry: What about the role that Pat Patterson played? Was he more than just a chauffeur for you kids?

Warren: Well, Pat wasn't the only one. There were a couple of others too. Pat is a real great guy, and he was one of, probably, four officers that were there.

Fry: You mean they rotated during the week?

Warren: They rotated. There were three shifts--three eight-hour shifts--and then there was a relief and the relief worked into that schedule. There were three of them that were there almost the entire time: Pat Patterson, Paul Egbert, Jimmy Waters, and Archie Sparks.

These officers were important to all of us during our growth years. They were real people we could talk to and horse around with and yet permit them to retain their role. Pat--we probably kept our contacts up better with Pat than anyone, because he was in the same department I was in when I went into corrections work.

## IV LATER EVENTS: 1958-1971

Father's and Son's Work in Corrections

- Warren: He [Pat Patterson] became a parole officer shortly after I went to work with the Department of Corrections. He's been active in parole work and in correctional counseling.
- Fry: Oh. I didn't know you were in corrections.
- Warren: I was in prison for four years.
- Fry: Oh, you were! [Laughter] Is that where you went, right out of college?
- Warren: I went right out of college here to the Vacaville correctional facility, as a trainee, as an intern. And then I went to the prison at Soledad. We lived in Salinas and I worked in Soledad Prison for four years. Then I entered administration, and that was enough to run me out of state service work. Too much paper work--not enough outdoors.
- Fry: Before that you had been doing what sort of work? Work that related more directly to the men?
- Warren: In the prison? Yes, I ran the physical education program in the prison.
- Fry: Why did you choose this?
- Warren: Well, I was working for a psychologist named Paul Dempsey on the UCD campus part-time, who was doing some counseling in Vacaville, and he said, "I hear they have a job down there." I was a senior; I had one semester to go. He suggested, "You might be interested in going down and trying it for a semester and see what you think." So I tried it, and I really got enthused about the work. So I



Warren: applied for and received a full-time physical education and recreation director position for Soledad Prison.

Fry: I'm interested in what you say about administration, because one of the things that your dad had worked hard to reform in the state is the administration of prisons.

Warren: The present California system is most likely the best in the world. And the people in it are excellent. I just can't stand to be indoors, and I can't stand to process paper. When I went into it, I was in personnel and budget work in the department, and it just drove me out of my mind.

Fry: That's pretty different.

Warren: You work with people and then turn around and next thing you know you're just working with paper.

Fry: It was probably a promotion.

Warren: Oh, yes. It was a promotion.

Fry: This is the problem. If you get a higher position, then it's not fun any more.

Warren: Oh, it was a good job. It was a promotion, and it was a step that I had to take if I ever wanted to go any higher in the department, but if that was my future in the department, I wasn't interested in that part of it.

Fry: When was that?

Warren: Let's see--'58 to '62 was when I was at Soledad, and then in early '63 I came up to Sacramento for three years. We had been living in Davis since '62, so I gradually prepared myself for the real estate field which I entered in 1966.

Fry: I just wondered if at the time you were in corrections, it was still enough like the system that your dad had set up that you had a chance to evaluate it.

Warren: It was very much a continuation of everything that he had hoped for in the prison system. The same man that he had appointed--

Fry: Richard McGee?

Warren: McGee. Dad brought McGee in to set up the system and McGee was in charge of the Agency. He retired. The year I left was McGee's last year as agency administrator. Walter Dunbar and his staff were also very much responsible for the department's progress.

Fry: When McGee retired, were there any changes made?

Warren: Well, the changes were made when Reagan came in.

Fry: Yes. But between '58 and '66, at any rate, McGee's policies you feel were continued then until Reagan came in?

Warren: Yes. They were followed right through. He was the head man and he ran the whole system in California.

Fry: Mr. Schwartz may interview McGee. We're just beginning our series on the corrections system.

Warren: Yes. That's an excellent person to talk to, in terms of how my dad was able to get that change through the legislature.

Fry: You mean the timing?

Warren: The timing, with the problem of all the trusties up at Folsom being turned loose on the weekends to go to San Francisco to live with their girl friends and the like. It was beautiful the way it worked out. With the big problems they had, the timing couldn't have been better to step in and re-do the whole prison system.

Fry: That's interesting that you went into it. I hope that we can call upon you for some advice then, as we get deeper into corrections.

Warren: Heman Stark is retired also. He headed the youth correctional program.

#### Changing Political Tides

Fry: I have one more question. When you were in the governor's mansion, were there any incidents of political kooks there trying to get in or get at your father, that you were aware of?

Warren: No. I don't recall any incidents at all, where somebody tried to get into the house. I can think of times when people wanted to talk to him, and they were very mad and they wanted to express themselves. And they wanted to talk to him right now, so they'd come in the mansion, come in through the gate, and they wanted some action right now. But there was never any group activity.

Fry: They would meet Pat Patterson or one of the other officers?

Warren: Yes.

Schwartz: Would any of your teachers in high school or college ever say anything to you, expressing something that they thought would get back to him--

Fry: [Laughing] "Tell your father to vote for that bill!"

Schwartz: --or "I disagree with him here, or there," or "I think it's great," and that sort of thing?

Warren: No, not in school. I got it more from law enforcement, when I was working in the prison system. For experience when I was working in administration, I had a group of parolees that I worked with and I supervised their casework at night.

I took a lot of heat from the police. That was about the time when all the court decisions on human rights were being made, and so I took quite a bit. I still do.

Fry: The Miranda--

Warren: The Miranda decision, and all of those. I took a lot of criticism for that. They'd fire it at me hoping that maybe I would respond to it. I'm not my dad. It was his decision.

Schwartz: Do you think it affects your business in any way?

Warren: Now? That's something that's hard to measure. I really don't know. If people don't do business with me because of my dad, then I'm not really interested in doing business with them anyway.

Fry: Well, this is my final question. In the development of your own political viewpoint, did you kind of absorb by osmosis your dad's-- either as a starting point, or as something to hold on to?

Warren: Well, only from what I've seen take place in the state. You know, we never discussed politics in our family.

Fry: By politics, what do you mean? Parties? Or do you mean--

Warren: We never discussed the different philosophies of politics, Democrats versus Republicans, the right wing, etc. There wasn't really a right wing and there wasn't really a left wing when my dad was active in the governorship. There was a Democratic party and a Republican party, and in a lot of respects they were the same. I think we formed our own opinions about politics, just living in the state. I would agree with the progressive attitude that my dad had about government in the state of California and all the things that he initiated. I would hope that those things continue, but there were also areas where I have reservations, just like a lot of other people do, about some of the things that have taken place.

Fry: Taken place after your dad left?

Warren: After he left, and how far these were really intended to go.

Fry: Like what? The health insurance?

Warren: Oh, the welfare system in general. How far is it really going to go, the way it's set up, and whether his intention, had he been governor continuously, whether he would have allowed it to go this far.

Dad never said where he thought it would go. But I know he's a firm believer in free enterprise. And if you're a strong believer in free enterprise, you can't be overly strong in the area of welfare, because they don't always work together.

Fry: Or the reverse tax, or whatever?

Warren: Oh, you mean the negative income tax, and the basic income for everybody in the country, the guaranteed income? Those things are pretty far-reaching.

Fry: Yes. And they're coming from people like Senator Barry Goldwater, some that you wouldn't expect it to. It doesn't seem to be defined by party lines.

I was wondering if you, like Earl, Jr., did for quite a while, at least, associate pretty much all of your dad's philosophy, and all the reforms he was able to bring, with the Republican party up to a point, and then change over to the Democratic party, because that seemed to have more things in line with his ideas than the Republican party?

Warren: I am a Republican. No need to change. I vote like I want, not by party.

Fry: Did you associate these things with the Republican party, or did you not have a party affiliation connected with--

Warren: I never did see a great deal of difference, personally, in the parties, particularly when there was cross-filing. People had the opportunity to go where they wanted to, but you still had the party system for the selection of candidates. As soon as they did away with that [1958], I think you can see a real polarization of parties, and now there really isn't a middle ground any more.

There's some very strong right-wing Republicans, and many very liberal Democrats. Nobody seems to have a middle-of-the-road approach. Earl, Jr., may have gone that direction if he had gone into politics.

Fry: Because he was so deeply involved in it you mean, or because it was better for him to be a Democrat?

Warren: It was better. He was an appointee, at one time, of Governor Brown, and he was Brown's campaign chairman. You know, he was very active in politics, and so I guess it was advantageous or to his liking to switch his party. But I don't know as it does any good to switch your party, because some day it will just turn around on you and you'll [laughing] have to switch back again!

Fry: Parties keep moving out from under you.

Warren: It's just a bunch of labels, that's all.

Fry: Yes. Hiram Johnson had that problem too.

The Supreme Court Years: President Kennedy

Fry: One thing in Washington that I would like you to comment on: was your dad very close to Kennedy?

Warren: I'm sure he was.

Fry: Why do you say that?

Warren: I think that the assassination of Kennedy probably brought as much a change in anything that's happened to him that I've ever seen. As an individual. Both to him and to my mother. I think the assassination was just unbelievable to both. It changed their whole-- it changed them. It was just a major blow to them that that could happen in the United States. Because it certainly had never happened in his lifetime, and the fact that it happened to somebody that he was very close to. He was invited by Kennedy to many, many of the functions at the White House.

And then to have to head the commission was even worse. That commission did more to age him than anything I've ever seen. He's recovered from it, though. I think he's rejuvenated himself. But by the time that commission report was over, he was exhausted and aged. He had to sit through all those commission hearings and, word for word, listen to what was being said. That's every piece of testimony that was given at those hearings. And to have to sit through that detail about somebody that you really were fond of must have been a taxing experience.

Schwartz: In the same vein, I just wonder, did he ever talk with you about the "Impeach Earl Warren" signs and movement, and all that sort of thing?

Warren: He just laughs them off. He has a very good sense of humor about those things. He knows that people disagree with him. He doesn't resent it because they disagree with him.

Fry: The right-wing forces, which were led by Tom Werdel, I think, in the '52 election, were never a terribly big threat to him. Politically he really didn't worry much about them. Is that the way you understand it?

Warren: Yes. I don't think he had to worry too much about that. Of course, he was always able to cross-file, which was a decided advantage to him.

Fry: When he was on the Supreme Court, the right wing was busy in the South. A lot of hostile signs went up about him because of the Brown decision. When you told me that his work on the Kennedy assassination really changed him, I wondered if you meant that it had changed this attitude of his to shrug off any possibility of his own assassination. If a nut was going to get you, he was going to get you, and he didn't worry about it. Did this cause him to worry any for his own sake?

Warren: No. I don't think it worried him. It may have worried Mom some, but it didn't worry him. At least he's never taken any undue cautions or made mention of it.

Fry: He didn't tighten his security?

Warren: He didn't tighten his security. As far as I know he didn't have any security. I would imagine there must have been some communication with the FBI when he was out in California and around, and when he was in the vicinity, but as far as I know he didn't have any full surveillance on him.

Fry: Did he go into the South very much after he got on the Supreme Court?

Warren: Not much, to my knowledge. I think he went down mostly for the graduation ceremonies and things of that nature.

He always avoided talking about the court, and I think that's part of the reason why he didn't. His exposure wasn't near as great when he was on the court as it was when he was governor, because he just refused to discuss the court's business in public. When they would start talking about the cases, he just wouldn't talk about them. And pretty soon the press got the message.

- Schwartz: The boys never wanted to be involved in your father's political activities, but you obviously enjoyed hunting and fishing with him. Was that something that you set up in advance? You'd set a date for, and look forward to, or did it happen spontaneously each year?
- Warren: It always happens spontaneously, and it seems like it always comes at a very difficult time. You know, Dad will call up and he'll say, "Can you go hunting tomorrow? I've got a chance to go to Mexico, and there's two seats left. Can you go?" And you have to decide right then.
- Schwartz: I'm interested in the hunting and fishing together. This sounds like a rather frantic experience. But what about way back, when you first started, when you were small kids? You learned how to hunt and fish through him. Was it still frantic, even at that time, or did he set a time?
- Warren: Oh, it was usually a little bit more planned in the summertime. We'd know a few weeks in advance that we were going to go.
- Schwartz: Did he ever change it, and say, "I'm sorry, we can't go now"?
- Warren: No. He was usually pretty good. I don't recall being disappointed too many times regarding cancellation.
- Schwartz: If he did cancel out, then you'd do it later?
- Warren: Then we'd do it later on, yes. Usually the cancel-out was not his fault, but something else happened. I think he makes an extra effort to make the fishing trips and the hunting trips go.

Earl Warren as Grandfather

- Schwartz: I have one final question. You talked about what impresses me as a very fine relationship between father and children. Do you raise your family the same way?
- Warren: Yes. I think so. I do mine. I raise them very much the same way. At least I hope I am. We haven't had--in my relationship with my parents--very many crises. If there is, it's been something that's involved all of us. A health thing, like my sister, or something like that.
- Schwartz: Are there things that you've decided, like, "Well, one thing that I'm going to be sure about when I'm a father, I'm going to do this," or "not do that because my experience has been unhappy" (or a very happy one)?

Warren: The only thing I can say is that I hope to convey to my children my expectations to them, and that as long as they're in this house, we're a family unit, and I'm the father and Carolyn's the mother, and that's our relationship with them. They're growing up, and we're helping them grow up (and I might add they're helping me to grow). It sounds kind of overly simplified, but I don't think I've set anything in my mind that says "Nobody's going to walk in my door if they have their hair any longer than a certain acceptable length" or those kind of things.

I think times are changing very rapidly, but the important thing is that the family stays as a unit. And if they can stay as a unit with all the rest of the stuff that's going on, you've still got a chance with them.

Fry: Your father seems to be coming out publicly and giving a great deal of support now to the younger generation during this time when we have the generation gap so wide, and in a number of cases so senseless. But he, in his speeches and so forth, seems to feel that it is in the youth that further reforms can be made.

Warren: Yes.

Fry: Now, these are his public speeches. Do you pick up the same thing?

Warren: Yes, very much so. He's a believer in progress, and very much concerned.

Fry: How is his relationship with his grandchildren? Have you read that letter that John Weaver published from one of the grandsons? It was in the L. A. Times.

Warren: Yes. This is strictly my observation. It's personally warm, but it's very distant. I'm sure that he feels very strongly about all of them, but there are so darned many of them. And the only time they ever get together is when they're all there. So we all get together, and there are sixteen grandchildren or whatever it is, and he really can never establish any close personal relationship with any one. He has a hard enough time remembering their names. He sees them once a year, and "Who's Leslie, and who's Linda, and who's so-and-so?" It's warm, but it's really very distant in reality.

One of the interesting things is that Mom and Dad have taken the grandchildren one at a time--as the kids get old enough they've taken them back to Washington and let them stay there for a week or ten days. They get to know that one grandchild for that period of time, and they get to go around and see all the sights of Washington, D. C. If there's going to be a relationship they're going to establish it there. My oldest one is just at the point where she'll be going in the next couple of years.



Fry: When you've got that many grandkids, to get them back across the country for two weeks must be quite an effort. Your father's schedule is still kind of on the incredible side!

Warren: He's still pretty busy.

Fry: Well, I do thank you for letting us come in and ask you all these questions.

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